



**Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the Gala Dinner held in Maseru on the 29th September 2010, in Lesotho.**

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Programme Director: Cllr. Mluleki Nkosi;

Lesedi Executive Mayor, Cllr. Busisiwe Modisakeng;

The South African High Commission Representative: Mr. Hamman;

Maseru City Council Mayor: Cllr. Ranteli Lekoane;

Maseru City Council Town Clerk;

The Regional Secretary of ANC Sedibeng;

Members of the Mayoral Committees present;

Representatives of various Political Parties;

Representatives of Khulumane Support Group;

All Councillors present;

Representatives from the Lesotho Ministry of Tourism

And most importantly, our distinguished participants in the programme – survivors and families of the victims of the unforgettable massacres which took place in the Sedibeng District;

The representatives of the South African High Commissioner in Lesotho;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Our Gracious Hosts, the People of Lesotho.

I take this opportunity to welcome all of you to this Gala Dinner. It has been a good three days of our visit here in Lesotho. I take my hat off to our gracious hosts, the people of Lesotho. Your warmth has touched our lives. I hope that all of you have very great memories to take home with you.

**Programme Director**, we in Sedibeng District Municipality, in pursuit of our commitment namely “Together with our communities - A final push towards reclaiming our heritage”, felt it would be a good thing to come here. This is so because the heritage and history of the people of Lesotho are totally linked to ours.

We share a common history and heritage. Our liberation soldiers used to find safety here in Lesotho. In our midst here today, we have Cde. Commander Elmon Matebesi, combat named Commander Muntu

Mzimba, who was so excited upon hearing that he will be a participant in our program – with a fatherly view to see his family which he left here in Lesotho back in 1985, when ANC/MK redeployed him to Tanzania, Angola where he ended up in Yukoslavakia.

Cde. Mzimba's departure followed closely after the cross border bombing on the house of the late Cde. Chris Hani by the apartheid regime.

The people of Lesotho have found a place they call home away from home in Sedibeng. We are very proud of this. The community of Sedibeng prides itself in the way we engage with our heroes.

At this stage, let me also use this opportunity to acknowledge in our midst, the presence of PAC struggle veterans, Cde. (Gabby 'Mphakalasi' Sandamela and his wife formerly from Evaton).

Twice we have had the occasions to take the survivors of the Boipatong Massacre to Cape Town. They had a great time during the opening of the Parliament, where we also visited Robben Island.

I hope that you enjoyed yourself as well here in Lesotho. We have been to the spectacular Mohale Dam, Thaba Busiu and earlier today, we visited the Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

**Programme Director**, this is our project to show love and appreciation to the heroes and heroines from Sedibeng and it continues. This trip is indicative of that commitment. We will forever seek and give respect to our heroes for the role they have played in liberating our country and continent.

The community of Sedibeng appreciates. The entire nation of South Africa appreciates, we have as part of this trip been able to strike a partnership.

This partnership is built on the respect and honour we have of your family members who have given their lives so that we can live. In honour of those who have given us our freedom, let us make our own history by making Sedibeng the best place to live.

It is as we spend the last evening here in Lesotho that our paths have crossed, both at a personal level and institutional level. I hope that we will go back to Sedibeng with much more in common than we had when we arrived here.

I hope you will find ways and means to engage with my Office as the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng District Municipality. Together we will make Sedibeng a place our future generation will be proud of. The only place we are proud to call home.

It is with the above as our foundation that we hope that you will play your role in ensuring our victory in the 2011 Local Government Elections. I hope you will also take with you the good memories of the time we all spent here in Lesotho.

To our gracious hosts here in Lesotho, I know I speak for all of us when I say, “We all had a great time, we hope our pleasure in enjoying your warm hospitality and was your joy in hosting us”. We look forward to have you visit our Region so that you can afford us the opportunity to return the favour.

To our Basotho brothers and sisters, I also want to add on to the words of President Jacob Zuma, when he showed appreciation to the support you gave to South Africa over the 2010 FIFA World Cup Tournament. Lesotho topped all African states in terms of the number of people who visited South Africa during the period of the Tournament. It is not going to be easy for us to forget that.

With the powers vested in me by the communities of Sedibeng, I hereby invite you to this Gala Dinner as a token of our appreciation.

I Thank You.