



**Keynote Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the Annual New Year's Celebration with the Survivors and Families of the Victims of Protest Actions in the District held at the Vaal Teknorama in Vereeniging on the 01 January 2011, in Sedibeng**

---

Programme Director, Cllr. Sello Pitso;

Speaker of Sedibeng District Council: Cllr. Kedibone Mogotsi;

Members of Mayoral Committee;

Fellow Councillors;

Gauteng Provincial Legislature SRAC Portfolio Chairperson: Hon Nompoti Nhlapo;

Bishop Zondo and your wife from Rivers of Living Waters Ministries;

Reverend Musa;

Reverend Moerane;

Pastor Lebusa and all Religious Leaders here present;

Chairperson of Khulumani Support Group;

Officials of Sedibeng District Municipality here present;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Distinguished Guests;

Yesterday when some of you were either sleeping or enjoying yourselves somewhere as you prepared to welcome the New Year, I had an opportunity to join thousands of members of the Rivers of Living Waters Ministries at the George Thabe Stadium as they welcomed the new year in style.

The mood and the atmosphere were jovial and resembled the period when we won the first democratic election in 1994. This is the mood that I wish to see all over the Region throughout the 2011.

I can recognize some of your faces from that revitalizing, stimulating and fortifying **Candle Light Celebration** hosted by the Rivers of Living Waters Ministries held on one of our historic grounds of Sharpeville.

For those of you who were not there, you have missed out big time. I am told that some of the people who were at this celebration, are not necessarily members of the Rivers of Living Waters Ministries. These people took time off the usual stuff and decided to welcome 2011 with their Lord God

I am very proud and happy to be spending the first day of this New Year with you. After a very eventful year that 2010 was, it is a great honour to be among the heroes and heroines of Sedibeng, our historical District. With the rich history we have in this Region, it is pleasing to know that we

still have our living and breathing historians with us. Sedibeng is indeed very proud of you.

Last year on this day, we spoke about the challenges we were about to face, the challenge of people speaking on our behalf, making false stories as they went along. These are the same people who held some of you hostage while they sowed disunity in the communities under the guise of service delivery protests.

On behalf of the peace loving and law abiding citizens of Sedibeng, I thank each and every one of you who stood firm in the face of this harassment. If people who are motivated by greed will go to such great lengths to intimidate our heroes and heroines, they surely cannot expect us to afford them respect.

**Programme Director**, the great measure of a nation is the manner in which it treats and affords respect to its heroes and to that end we need to ask ourselves as the Sedibeng District Municipality: Who are our heroes?

Do we give them the respect and honour that they should be getting? The answer to that is clear, you will agree with me when I say that, we in Sedibeng District Municipality are doing the best we can together with you, our heroes for indeed, we don't do anything for you without your involvement.

This past year alone, we undertook two successful trips with you, the first trip to Cape Town and another one to Lesotho. Our commitment to you remains solid.

You alone remain the only link to the rich history which makes this Region stand out. Without you, the Constitution of South Africa would be having a different address. Sedibeng is the home of the South African Constitution. We committed ourselves to carrying out the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. The whole world celebrated with us.

Together we agreed that we will ensure that the Isak Steyl and George Thabe stadiums will be ready for the teams playing in the 2010 FIFA World Cup. We delivered the two stadiums and FIFA and the Local Organizing Committee were happy. We successfully hosted Switzerland and the Ivory Coast as their base camp.

Our local coaches and youngsters were trained by the best from PCSV Eindhoven. As part of the legacy, the CCTV which are everywhere throughout our Region, continue to assist in cutting down the crime in our Region.

We have delivered on many of our commitments. The 100 Days Service Delivery Programme is fast coming to its logical conclusion. The streets are tarred and paved. The Sharpeville Cemetery in Phelindaba is almost

complete. The Vuka Cemetery, where the fallen heroes and heroines of Boipatong are laid to rest, is complete. The tombstones of our loved ones are built and unveiled.

Mitta Molete's house is complete and is fast becoming a home. We are working over-time to ensure that our communities are proud of what we are doing. Together with our communities, we continue to carry out the good work.

We have made sure that our emerging businessmen and women are allocated some of the work that is currently taking place in and around our Region. The Sharpeville Hall will see a marked improvement by the end of this year.

We have turned the face around in the last five years. Together with you we remain steadfast in our vision to make Sedibeng a proud home of our heroes and heroines. Five years ago, Boipatong was a dusty patch and a dark city.

Look at it now, almost all the streets are tarred, the floodlights are the order of the day. We are busy with the tarring of outstanding roads.

Sharpeville on the other hand is not far behind, we are putting tarred roads and paving without fail. The Constitutional Walk is taking shape to

be ready for the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Signing of the Constitution later this year.

George Thabe Stadium is ready to host professional football again. The old Police Station has been turned into a Craft Hub. Together with you as our Ambassadors we will continue to make this District a pride and joy off all who live here.

Sebokeng is enjoying a major facelift. With streets in Zone 13, 11, 07, 03 and other zones getting new much needed tarred roads and paving. The community is happy and work will continue unabated this year. Evaton is enjoying the tarring and paving of roads.

We have set aside R 40m of Municipality funds to assist where the Evaton Urban Renewal funds fell short. The Multi-Purpose Hub in Mafatsane is just about complete. The same can be said of the first Fire Station in a township. This is situated in Evaton on the old Golden Highway.

We will do more with your support. I am looking forward to working with you as we move into the Local Government Elections this year. We have travelled this path before together and emerged victorious. I have no doubt that we can and will do it again. I know that 2010 has made us stronger in view of the challenges we faced together.

It is therefore no surprise that former State President, Nelson Mandela, named the District, “The Cradle of Human Rights Struggle”. For that we are grateful to all of you here present. The nation cares and appreciates. We can never say thank you enough.

You are our heroes, Sedibeng District Municipality is made great by you all conquering deeds, it is on your shoulders we stand tall, it is on the shoulders of giants like you that we are able to see far into the future.

**Programme Director and fellow guests,** I am looking forward to continued engagement with all of you in this New Year, our engagements needs to be intensified as we move to bring about a resounding victory in the 2011 Local Government Elections.

These elections will also be bringing to an end 5 years of eventful relationship with you, one which was embedded in our IDP and other initiatives which were led by my Office and the Municipality.

In the 5 years we have toured the length and breadth of our country – visiting historical places of interest and communities with our similar experiences. We have been to Cape Town twice and also undertook a political journey to the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho.

It is very crucial that as we are now coming to an end of our political term of Office and an era which will now usher a new term, we must continue to evaluate our joint programmes and assist government to take a direction decided by yourselves and not politicians or any other person. This will be in the spirit of doing things with you.

With the powers vested in me by the people of Sedibeng and the African National Congress, I declare these celebrations open and take this opportunity to welcome all stakeholder organisations represented, our heroes, to partake of the humble offerings of our appreciation.

I wish you all a prosperous New Year, May all your wishes and dreams come true this year.

**I Thank You.**