



**Keynote Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the handing over of the Gravestones to the families of the Nangalembe Night Vigil Massacre held at the Zone 7 Stadium, Sebokeng, Sedibeng on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

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Programme Director,

Speaker of Sedibeng District Council: Cllr. Kedibone Mogotsi;

Members of Mayoral Committee;

Fellow Councillors;

Chairperson of Khulumani Support Group;

Officials of Sedibeng District Municipality here present;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Distinguished Guests;

It is my great honour and pleasure to greet you all at this important occasion this morning. I take this opportunity to wish you and your families the best in this New Year. We have travelled a very long road to be where we are today.

Today marks 20 Years since the passing of your loved ones and our heroes and heroines in our road to the freedom and liberation of South Africa. As families you have paid dearly for this to happen. Just like most families and communities throughout South Africa and beyond, your sacrifice was not in vain.

Our country South Africa and Sedibeng District cares and you belong. We have travelled this long road with you as families of our fallen heroes and heroines. We will continue as one Sedibeng family to reach greater heights. Sedibeng prides itself of the rich history and heritage which came as a result of your sacrifices and this we will not forget.

It is in the light of the above, that together with the South African Heritage, in consultation with you as the families of our heroes and heroines, went about to ensure that we set up these headstones. This road was well worth it as we cannot afford to have our history, your history to be forgotten.

We thank you for the patience as well as the honour you have given to us by placing the last resting place of your loved ones in our care and custody. I hope that we have done justice and the heroes and heroines who rest here will realize that indeed their blood was not spilt in vain.

In recognition of the sacrifices which were made by your sons and daughters on that fateful evening twenty years ago, Sedibeng has grown

from strength to strength. We take this opportunity to thank you once again for your enthusiasm during the trips we took together to both Cape Town and Lesotho. We appreciate your availability a great deal. These trips have helped us as the Municipality to focus on the plight of the families of our heroes and heroines. We are very proud to share this day with you.

It is in the manner which a nation treats its own heroes that we are able to tell that the nation cares. Sedibeng cares and South Africa holds its heroes very highly.

It is for that reason that we in Sedibeng are very proud of this piece of land on which our heroes and heroines rests. Unlike other areas throughout the country, we have here in Evaton, another Heroes Acre to mark our contribution to the liberation of all the people of South Africa just like the other Heroes Acres in Sharpeville Cemetery and the Vuka Cemetery, both of which houses the remains of the heroes of the Sharpeville and Boipatong Massacres respectively.

It is with pride and humility that Sedibeng District Municipality acknowledges that no longer will communities and the country as a whole pass this area without casting a proud eye. This is so because everybody who passes by these hallowed grounds will be reminded of the valiant acts of those who rest here.

The sacrifices made by all who rest here will be remembered by all who will so much as cast an eye in this direction. The stories of their selfless act will be told by generations to come.

We as Sedibeng District Municipality will on our part, ensure that the story of their lives is told to generations to come as part of the recording of our oral history.

In recognition of the role played by your sons and daughters, Sedibeng District Municipality has gone out of its way to construct beautiful tarred roads with paved side-walks in Zone 7. These will be handed to the community today.

These streets will serve to mark our continued commitment as Sedibeng to the historic deeds of our communities. We are also in negotiation phase to build a statue in Zone 7 to mark today's event.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity and thank the families of our heroes to hand over these stones. I hope that we will be invited again as Sedibeng to unveil them with you in accordance to your culture and custom. The community of Sedibeng is waiting for you at the Zone 7 Stadium to mark this historic occasion.

I thank you