

Address by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor: Cllr Mahole Simon Mofokeng on the occasion of the ANC Councilors District-wide Whippery Lekgotla held at the Lapeng Conference Centre, Sedibeng.

19th October 2011

- **Programme Director: Cde. Eric Tshabalala: Cde Chief Whip : Emfuleni Local Municipality.**
- **Comrade Chief Whip: Sedibeng District Municipality: Cllr. Christinah Sale**
- **The Regional Secretary of the ANC Sedibeng: Cde. Bheki Ngobese**
- **Deputy Regional Secretary of the ANC Sedibeng: Cde. Thulani Kunene**
- **Comrade Chief Whip: Lesedi Local Municipality: Cllr. Doctor Mkhwanazi**
- **Comrade Chief Whip: Midvaal Local Municipality: Cllr. Prisek Ramushu**
- **Comrade Speaker: Sedibeng District Municipality: Cllr. Busi Modisakeng**
- **All ANC Councilors making up the Whippery in our constituent local Municipalities here in Sedibeng.**

Our meeting today coincides with the 34th Anniversary of the banning of the newspapers and organizations of our people on the 19th October 1977 by the then apartheid regime, a day which was later to be referred to as the Black Wednesday. The fact that this pivotal Lekgotla happening in our District today and it is a Wednesday is not lost on us.

This coincidence brings to mind the current debate on the so-called Secrecy Bill. We have come a long way with the struggle for the freedom of expression to simply turn our backs on it now. We have championed this cause for the freedom of the press to be accused on turning against it at this stage of our democracy.

The 52nd Polokwane Resolutions on media regarding the protection of information continues to be ridiculed and criticized by the elements opposed to our ANC led democratic government and other some social movements that claim to fight for the rights of broader media.

It is in the light of the inability to have the Bill on Protection of Information passed into law despite the overwhelming majority that the role of the Caucus and your role as the Whippery come into sharp focus.

We are deployed by the ANC, we follow the decision taken by the ANC, to give expression to the mandate given to the ANC by the overwhelming majority of South Africa.

When such a mandate is given, we do not expect people entrusted by the ANC to suffer some personal moral withdrawal which may hamper the execution of the mandate given to us through our deployment.

It is for this reason that we expect the Whippery to ensure that there is no following the march of a different drum but the line of march as shall from time to time be determined by the ANC. Like a lioness protecting its cubs, the Caucus must play this role without fail as the supreme decision making body for cadres deployed in public office.

That's why as a governing party in a democratic and developmental state such as our own, we stand proud and confident that none of the ranting of the so-called social movements on the manner we do things is exemplary to our movement, nor our government, despite neo-liberal agenda by friends of the media on the ANC led government by comparing our democracy to the apartheid regime.

We are very fortunate to be the current crop of ANC Caucus Cadres to lead the way to the Centenary celebrations of this Glorious Movement. This places on us a challenge to be true to the history of this organization and to provide answers to the following crucial questions:

- Does the Caucus operate in accordance with the ANC tradition of collective leadership and does Caucus provide this leadership?

- Does the Caucus ensure that all Council Resolutions that are taken conform to ANC policy and our transformation objectives?
- Realizable recommendations on strengthening and resourcing the Office of the Chief Whip and Caucus – as implementing tool of our governing party programs in Council;
- Realizable recommendations to reposition Whippery to play an effective Leadership role, including providing assistance to the Party to monitor constituency work by party public representatives;
- Does the Caucus machinery make optimal use of available resources including Parliamentary Constituency Offices and what is the level of our influence in School Governing Bodies; Community Policing Forums and Non Governmental and Community Organizations?

It is as we find the answers to these questions that our lessons from Comparative Analysis and Studies on the Role of the Caucus shall provide us with a firm and strong basis to take our constituencies forward to the future they voted for in their millions for the ANC.

I do hereby challenge the Caucus to continue without fail to learn from the best practices of the Caucuses of the best parties elsewhere in the world in a quest to improve our work here in Sedibeng of political oversight and direction.

Our government is a caring government of the people by the people as enshrined in the Freedom Charter and Bill of Rights. We must not shy away from the 1955 Congress of the People, the clarion call which declares in the Freedom Charter that ***“The people shall govern”***.

Our understanding of a free, non-sexist, non-racial democratic and people centered government is informed by the Freedom Charter, with a view to build a developmental state which cares and creates opportunities for all our people regardless of race, creed and gender.

We also take note of the recent global financial crisis facing the Euro zone and the United States of America. Global Protests led by organizers of Occupy Wall Street which first started in the U.S. and spread throughout Europe as a result of economic meltdown indicates a huge challenge facing us as a young democracy and a growing economy in the face of globalization.

The same marches were repeated at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. This places a challenge on us as the leadership to provide a firm vision for our communities in all the things we do.

The planned march by the ANCYL for the nationalization of mines and expropriation of land without compensation are indicative of socio and economic burden on our democratic government.

On Monday the 17th October, we marked the 25th Anniversary of the death of President Samora Machel of Mozambique after his plane was led astray to his death in Mbuzini in Mpumalanga.

The launch of the Samora Machel Museum is indicative of the need to hold our history and heritage in high esteem so that the struggle for better life for all is not easily forgotten and it should assist in guiding us to do the right thing, Service Delivery for All.

In paying tribute to the people of Mozambique for their immeasurable contribution to our liberation in our country through the words of the President of the Republic of South Africa, Honourable Jacob Zuma: "Samora Machel used his own freedom and country's independence to assist those who were under the yoke of slavery, colonialism and apartheid'

He continues by saying: "We register yet again our sincere gratitude to the Mozambicans for the solidarity and friendship that was extended to us during our struggle for freedom"

It is at the time when the Gauteng Province is moving forward to the highly competitive Global City Region, putting systems into place for the realization of this objective that we in Sedibeng District Municipality and

our constituent local Municipality are dealing with the efficiency or otherwise of the two tier government system.

The challenges we face as a Region can be captured in a question form, namely: Can Sedibeng continue in its current form and shape in the nature of the ever changing national and international environment? Tackled differently, the question arises: Did the dinosaurs survive climate change?

It is while the second question answers itself on the basis of the evidence we have, that we as the current leadership have to find answers to the first.

It is in the nature of the challenges that we have to dig deep to ensure that the change which we are faced with is managed in a manner that will ensure that we are able to survive and thrive in the new developing political environment. This is the reason why we undertook the study tours to both Buffalo City and Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.

As the Sedibeng Region of the ANC, we have arrived at our Morogoro Moment. Our communities are looking at us. Are we going to fall short of their expectations, driven by narrow turf protection interests or are we going to deliver another set of Strategy and Tactics framework which will see the salvation of our communities for many years to come?

For me it is important that this Lekgotla must take an active role in this battle of ideas for the Strategy and Tactics as to which way we are going to jump. The evidence is there for all of us to see. We don't want to be forced into the deep end where we are guaranteed to fail but rather it makes a lot of sense to enter the pool within our competency to succeed.

It is as we prepare ourselves towards the Consolidation of Governance here in Sedibeng that I call on this august body to refuse to be side-tracked. I call on you to apply the vigilance which was demanded of the members of the ANC in defending the output of the Morogoro Consultative Conference.

Let us go out there to ensure that Sedibeng Region attains its objectives of becoming the Vaal Metropolitan River City on the roadmap it sets itself. We will succeed in this road because we have developed our path. We are well aware of the challenges which we face. We will not wait until the change is forced on us making it difficult to chart our own destiny. We should be our own liberators.

Our communities will be served better as we align all our planning for the future on the second Generation Growth and Development Strategy which will be finalized with you by the end of this year.

I hope that the IDP's which are undergoing public participation will give expression to the preferred future of Sedibeng.

It is with the above in mind that we are encouraged by the remarks of the Deputy Minister of Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs, Comrade Yunus Carrim in The New Age of the 20th September wherein he says: The two-tier system has been too costly and rather than being complimentary, has often resulted in duplication of structures and personnel”.

He goes further to argue that the matter will be tabled at the ANC Policy Conference in 2012. “We should simply have a single tier local government system. The districts could be scrapped and politicians, personnel and assets mainly absorbed into local municipalities and provincial structures”.

In taking the debate of the Deputy Minister Yunus Carrim forward, it is clear that in terms of the geographic space, our Consolidation of Governance happens around the Sedibeng District area, whilst ELM together with the urban node of MLM will provide the geographic space for our future Vaal Metropolitan River City.

On the other side of the coin, should ELM be declared a Metropolitan when we wake up tomorrow, it is an undisputable fact that the current

structures of governance in terms of policies, systems, as well as leadership structures both politically and administratively will undergo a radical changes and amendments to accommodate new realities.

This route to the Vaal Metropolitan River City will be informed by our Common Dream, the aspirations of our community to see the growth of our District which find expression in our State of the District and the Inaugural Addresses to provide a brighter future for the entire community of Sedibeng.

As the Chairperson of the ANC and the Ruling Party here in Sedibeng, I can assure this Lekgotla that the communities of Sedibeng are looking at this august body to provide them with a vision and strategy to reach that vision.

In conclusion, I submit to you the findings of the District Wide Mayoral Committee Lekgotla and its resolutions. I have the pleasure to inform that as Sedibeng we have adopted the 2011 Local Government Manifesto of the ANC and hope that all our Local Municipalities will do so.

The adoption of the ANC Manifesto will serve as a monitoring template to enable the Whippery to track the progress of the Municipalities against the wishes and aspirations of our people in the Manifesto as we prepare

ourselves for the process of review of the first generation GDS leading to what will culminate into the four year IDP.

We also believe that the Whippery will also play a key role in ensuring that there is proper alignment of our GDS2 with all the IDP's of our Local Municipalities to avoid the disjuncture we have experienced in the past, as we move towards a process of Consolidating governance.

The District Wide Mayoral Lekgotla held in Kievitskroon has also developed a Declaration which I hope will be signed by all concerned soon. I noticed with keen interest that in your programme that you intend to develop a reporting template. On my part as the District Executive Mayor, I have already developed a template for MMC's and the Municipal Manager, which I hope will complement yours as we share objectives and serve the same organization.

I have the pleasure to present to this august body of the ANC in government the finding and Resolutions of the District-wide Mayoral Committee Lekgotla.