

**ADDRESS BY THE REGIONAL CHAIRPERSON COMRADE
MAHOLE SIMON MOFOKONG DURING THE INDIGENOUS
GOSPEL COMPETITIONS HELD IN SHRPEVILLE ON SUNDAY
THE 16TH march 2014**

- Programme Director
- Organizers of the Indigenous Gospel Competition
- The leadership of Sedibeng Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture
- Participating Choirs
- The community at large
- Ladies and gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

Once again allow me to greet all of you at this important event of promoting innovations through arts and culture in our region, in line with the strategy of the national Department of Arts and Culture.

Your competition is held on the grounds of the area that played an important role in the history of the liberation struggle in our country which led to the declaration of March 21st originally known as Sharpeville Shooting Day into a Human Rights Day and the public holiday in the calendar of our country by the democratic government.

EFFECTS OF MUSIC TO HUMANBEING

Music is so calming to a human being such that it has got no age, is for every age. Mothers sing lullabies to their babies and are able to put them to sleep. It is also believed that babies in the womb hear music. When young, pre-school children listen to music, it helps them understand the beginnings of mathematics and many other subjects. In fact it develops their thinking and reasoning ability.

Music is therapeutic. It is used in medical settings as a way to soothe and help heal victims of post traumastress syndrome. It also helps people grieve, when music is played and sung during a memorial.

Music does everything for every one of us. It helps us in every mood and lifts us up when our spirit is down. We go to events of different types musical and we move from low-highfrom the music. What is it that attracts us to music? Why do we have ipods today with thousands of songs? It's because music is a part of the earth and our nature.

There is a saying that when Africa work- Africa sing, when Africa Cry-Africa sing, when Africa moan-Africa sing, when Africa is in

sorrow-Africa sing, when Africa goes to war-Africa sing. Therefore to us the African people and humanity in general music is part of our being.

Art and music are basic human functions. Humankind and art cannot function without one another. We have the burning desire to create, whatever it may be and however tiny or grand. The interaction with sound is unavoidable, either to make it or take pleasure in it. People have always found music significant in their lives, whether for enjoyment in listening, the emotional response, performing, or creating.

THE ORIGIN OF MUSIC

MUSIC IS AN important part of our lives. We connect and interact with it daily and use it as a way of projecting our self-identities to the people around us. The music we enjoy – whether it's country or classical, rock n' roll or rap – reflects who we are.

But where did music, at its core, first come from? It's a puzzling question that may not have a definitive answer. One leading researcher, however, has proposed that the key to understanding the origin of music is nestled snug in the loving bond between mother and child.

Richard Parncutt, an Australian-born professor of systematic musicology, endorsed the idea that music originally spawned from 'motherese' – the playful voices mothers adopt when speaking to infants and toddlers.

THE HISTORY OF GOSPEL MUSIC

The Gospel Music experience cannot be told in a short story, or even in a melody of songs, for it is far too rich, far too harmonious and deliberately stimulating. It is a living experience, always changing, always giving, and always becoming the foundation that gave moral, physical and spiritual support to a great and powerful people.

Gospel Music is a shining beacon of hope, a fantastic journey of joy divine, and a triumphant victory in God that comes from deep down in the souls of God's Chosen People. The greatest melodies and the most stimulating songs have been given to this Nation and the World through the African American experience.

There has been no other event in history that has been more compelling, convincing, or persuasive than Gospel Music. Some of the most beautiful music of all times was born out of intense grief and suffering, and Gospel Music is no exception.

After thousands of years, the sound of Gospel Music is still enthralling and captivating because it stands against the social background as a shadow of today's community problems and dilemmas. From the 1930's to the 1960's desperate circumstances controlled our lives; despair and hope, life and death; but Gospel Music mirrored our predicaments as a collective group of people, it reflected upon our social status, and eventually reverberated in our made up minds that God was indeed on our sides.

GOSPEL MUSIC AND THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

We have come a long way with a relationship between black gospel music and the liberation movements. During the vintage years of apartheid, black gospel and the liberation struggle were at the fore front.

Many churches in the early twentieth century became independent from the missionary churches. One of the reasons why Africans sought independence from missionary churches was because their way of living differed from those of their counterparts.

Gospel music was used throughout the liberation struggle by the liberation movement to attract the masses, encourage youth participation, invigorate meetings, and instill confidence.

The “freedom songs” were based on familiar spirituals and gospel songs, typically performed in a gospel style.

Indigenous Gospel music also known as Clap and Tap or ‘banabamoya’ started to be great part of recreation in the seventies and eighties in the different townships and the villages of South Africa.

In the 1980s the recording industry of South Africa started to finance the recording projects of this music. Most choirs grasped this opportunity and started to record their own albums. Most of these choirs were from Soweto, for example **Barorisi Ba Morena, Jerusalema e Ncha and the Holy Cross Choir.**

Bob Marley once said “One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain.”

Mr Marley confirms my assertion of music being a ‘healer’ of soul. Let this festival heal those who are unwell, moving those who dance and unite South Africa as we lead to the elections on the 7th of May.

ON ELECTIONS MANIFESTO

This event takes place seven weeks before the forthcoming elections. As the ANC we have our elections manifesto which is the product of the broader consultation with all the formations in our country with the theme: ***Together we Move South Africa Forward.***

This is a call that as South Africans as blacks in general and as Africans in particular we must all unite behind the only party and organization that has a proud history the African National Congress.

As the ANC our Manifesto is dedicated to Nelson Mandela one of the best leaders our movement produced. We have done so to continue with the former President Mandel's legacy of humility, hard work, honesty, dedication, discipline, selflessness and fairness. Madiba was the world most respected and celebrated icon of the 21st century there is no one like him yet. He was the product of the organization that served our people selflessly for 102 years without fail.

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

During his State of the Nation Address our President Comrade said that South Africa is better today than it was in 1994. Indeed it takes only the blinds and those who are not realistic not to agree with him that South Africa is today different from what it was in 1994. Indeed South Africa is a better country to live in than it was before 1994.

He further said that our monitoring and evaluation indicates that many services continue to improve. For example, social grants and identity documents now take a shorter time to be processed. But many others still require further work.

I'm sure you will agree with me when I say locally here we have been able to transform the labor dometries or the former black townships into proper human settlements with all social amenities like clinics, libraries, schools as well as shopping centers.

We have been working with all our people to fight poverty and unemployment and reduce inequality. All these we achieved despite negative global economic situation. We have a good story to tell as South Africans since the ANC came into power in 1994 and the following are but few of the examples:

- Since 1994 five million more people are in work with the 14 million people employed.
- Twice as many young people attended the university.
- More than 1.4 million students benefited from NSFAS.
- Over 3.3 million free houses were built for our people.
- About 12 million households have access to electricity which is 7million more than before 1994.
- Around 92% of South Africans have an access to portable water compared to 60% in 1994.

It is for this reason of continuing with the work mentioned above that we call on all our people that your vote is very important and on the 7th May 2014 all of you must go all out to vote and not just vote but vote for the African National Congress.

- Build an inclusive economy that creates jobs
 - Promote local procurement by directing the state to progressively buy at least 75% its goods and services from South Africa.
 - Empower, educate and create jobs for youth through job placement and internship schemes – allocate 60% of employment in infrastructure and other projects for youth.

- Promote youth employment and training incentives schemes
- Consolidate the Public Works Program creating six million work opportunities by 2019
- Promote investment and access to credit in the productive economy
- Ensure decent living conditions and sustainable human settlements
- Improved and expanded education and training
 - Make two years of pre-schooling compulsory, eradicate adult literacy and attend to teacher development
 - Further improve the quality of basic education up to the senior grade
 - Expand the FET college sector with greater support and adequate funding for students
- Ensure quality health care for all
- Expand comprehensive social security
- Fight corruption and crime
- Build a united nation and promote social cohesion

Conclusion

As I conclude let me indicate that we are aware that this sector of clap-and-tap gospel music feels that it is not promoted enough by the government and it is not accessing opportunities like being booked to perform by government as is the case with others.

It is for this reason that the national Department of Arts and Culture has launched a Strategy called Mzansi Golden Economy to promote innovation through arts and culture which music is part of.

I thank you.