



## **SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN VRYHEID ON FRIDAY 01 MAY 2007**

### **Protocol observed**

- Today is a very sad day for the communities of Vryheid, this region and the entire KwaZulu-Natal. It is also of particular sadness to the families, relatives and friends of those about whom we are gathered here today.
- It is indeed true that accidents are unpredictable. That is why we call - what is normally referred to as accidents - crashes. However, what happened in this area on Monday morning was not an accident. It was something preventable. Our numerous campaigns are exactly designed to help prevent these kinds of things from recurring.

- Once again, we have experienced a crash which has cost the lives of many people. The loss of even one life is a tragedy, but the loss of eight young people and the injuries sustained by three others, is a disaster for their bereaved families and friends as well as their communities.
- No matter how many words of condolences we may utter today, the pain that these families and all of us gathered here feel will never diminish nor disappear. What remains is for us to do something about such things so that we may minimize conditions that lead to them happening. We can not bring them back, but we can certainly do something to discourage such from taking place;
- The latest preliminary reports have revealed that a Colt van failed to negotiate a bend and collided with a Tata Indigo and this caused a pile-up involving three vehicles. The Colt then burst into flames leaving two people inside dead, a male and a female, as well as three more in the Tata (two males and one female).
- The Toyota Corolla was occupied by a family of six - two children, aged 15 and 17, were killed instantly. Parents and one other child were hospitalized. Their one-and-a-half-year old sibling was unharmed.

- May we remember those that passed away:

1. Beryl Mhlaba (21)
2. Bongisisa Mavuso (26)
3. Thami Mdlalose (24)
4. Judene Oberhozer (21)
5. Pieter Willem (17)
6. Ntokozo Masondo (14)
7. Mthokozisi Masondo (11)

**May their souls rest in peace.**

- As we stand here today and remember those who lost their lives and wish those who were injured a speedy recovery, we commit ourselves to making concerted efforts to ensure that tragedies such as this one do not happen again and again and again in our province.
- Our communities have suffered enough. Political violence killed more than 15000 people in ten years before the democratic elections. HIV/AIDS continues to ravage our population. We can make a difference on our roads, if we all pull together and all take responsibility for our actions.

- As drivers we need to be responsible, especially when in charge of human lives. As passengers we need to be very aware of safety and our role in ensuring that we travel under safe conditions i.e. safe vehicles and a driver that is fit to drive. In other words not a drunken driver or a driver that does not have drivers' license. To this end, we have our Mpimpa Hotline for you to phone when you see something wrong happening on the road in order to help prevent catastrophes like these from happening again.
- You can call 086 221 1010 – your voice can save lives!
- Let us all remember that one death on our roads is one too many! You can make a difference.

**I thank you**