



## **SPEECH NOTES FOR KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIASON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE VISIT TO NKODIBE INTERCHANE ON SATURDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2007.**

### **Protocol observed**

- It is a pleasure for me to say that in KwaZulu-Natal we now have improved co-operation and co-operative governance involving the three spheres of government - national, provincial and local - all moving in the same direction. Some of the results of this cooperation are seen in the wonderful work that has gone towards the upgrading of the Nkodibe Interchange.
- Engineering Studies showed that this Interchange was required in 2016 if the traffic growth rate is 4% and in 2013 if the traffic growth rate is 2%. However, local conditions, traffic mix and accident statistics necessitated that these theoretical projections be over-ruled. Hence, the project is being implemented ten years earlier.
- Given the increasing number of vehicles that use this access road, it became necessary for our Road Safety section to play a crucial road in order to address concerns that were raised by the South African National Road Agency Limited (SANRAL) which conducted this extensive transportation study. It was recommended that a grade separated interchange be constructed.

- The design being a Diamond interchange with a loop ramp to accommodate right turning movements was considered to be a safer option. That is why we are here today. The project that we are showcasing today will cost approximately R43.5 million and it is now already 98% complete.
- The project involves the construction of the interchange on the N2 with provincial road P235 which provides access to the towns of Mtubatuba and Nongoma. P235 provides an important link to the interior of KwaZulu-Natal, the town of Nongoma, rural areas and Umfolozi Game Reserve.
- P235 forms part of the African Renaissance Road Upgrading Programme (ARRUP) in which the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport has invested millions of rands to date.
- One of the underlying objectives behind this project is to maximize local job opportunities and development of Black Enterprises. The procurement procedure to construct this interchange were in line with both SANRAL and KZN Department of Transport policies.
- The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport has structured the implementation strategy to ensure that the Vukuzakhe Emerging Contractors play a major role throughout the construction phase and that training and mentorship are critical features of the project.

- The N2 on which this project is situated, is the main route connecting Durban to the northern portions of KZN – the port of Richards Bay Harbour as well as Gauteng. The port of Richards Bay is the leading port in terms of volumes of cargo handled and is therefore the largest in the country in terms of land area. It also has a reputation for being the world's best-equipped port for handling bulk commodities such as liquids, coal, anthracite, timber chippings and granite.
- Richards Bay is the closest port to Gauteng, the industrial heartland of the country, hence the road linkages are extremely important for promoting economic development and the future expansion of the country's economy.
- Indeed, the economic impact of this project is significant. Not only will road users be the beneficiaries of this project, but it will provide economic uplift for the entire community. Already, the labor that is utilized in this project comes from the communities thus contributing to the development of skills.
- The 2010 Soccer World Cup is upon us. Therefore, projects like this Interchange, including Sani Pass which links South Africa and Lesotho and other projects in the province are indeed an indication of our readiness to accommodate and transport our visitors for this prestigious event with much efficiency.

- We ought to be able to overcome the challenges before we can be complacent that we will manage the more than 350 000 spectators that will participate and watch the 2010 Soccer World Cup.
- Our readiness for 2010 has also been shown through the construction of the new Moses Mabhida Stadium which will be finished in good time for the world soccer matches. More than R2.2 billion is being spent on the project. More than R4 billion will be spent on the construction of the new King Shaka international airport and the Dube Tradeport at La Mercy. All in all we have projects in the region of close to R20 billion underway in the province. On completion, the Dube Tradeport alone will contribute R12.4 billion to the economy and will create thousands of new jobs.
- In the final analysis, our objective is that all over our country where we have large numbers of people living together and having to travel everyday to and from work or to participate in other economic activities, we will have a national transport infrastructure with appropriate facilities that will provide easy access and meet the people's and the country's needs.

**I thank you.**