



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIASON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE ROAD
SAFETY MUSIC COMPETITION ON SATURDAY, 29 MARCH 2008.**

Protocol observed

- ? The increasing fatalities involving pedestrians on our roads in the past years make it necessary to emphasise the importance of walking as a transport mode. In KwaZulu-Natal, 79% of learners walk to school and about 18% of workers use walking as the main mode of transport in the province.

- ? As the KZN Department of Transport, we dedicated the 2007/2008 financial year as the year of pedestrian. This saw us embarking on a massive road safety education campaign aimed at improving pedestrian safety.

- ? Indeed, we all know that our road safety campaigns over the last festive season, under “Operation Just Right”, resulted in the decrease of pedestrian fatalities from 175 in 2006/7 to 124 in 2007/8. It seems Easter was not that different. We lost 15 pedestrians this Easter Holidays whereas we lost 21 pedestrians last year in the same period.

- ? Our road safety initiative in the form of music competition is a culmination of a province-wide programme that has already gone to many areas in the province. Our InterFaith Road Safety Programme forms part of the KZN Transport Department's mass mobilisation plans to spread the gospel of road safety in order to reduce the number of road deaths on the province's roads.

- ? Our Road Safety messages continue to reach new and broad audiences because of the creativity of our initiatives. Every year we work with religious communities in promoting our road safety messages.

- ? Our partnership with artists has not gone unnoticed or un-rewarded. Musicians, in particular, have made a major contribution towards spreading road safety awareness messages over the years.

- ? We therefore commend this partnership with emerging artists through our interfaith committee. We know that artists have access to audiences across the cultural, political, linguistic and digital divide.

- ? Our job as KZN Department of Transport has always been a tough one - saving lives on the roads. We do it with the best that we have and I am confident that the policies and programmes we have in place will continue. Our legacy will live on.

- ? It is our hope that one day we will achieve the goal of having a KwaZulu-Natal that will be free from road crashes. In order for this to be realized, road safety education and enforcement must be intensified.

- ? Struggling for a better life is ongoing but it is a bigger struggle to stay alive – and making sure you stay alive on the roads and making your life better is what our Department stands for.

- ? With these few words, I want to thank all artists who sacrifice their energy and time towards conveying our road safety messages. This must be applauded and I hope that all road users will listen carefully to the road safety message provided by our artists.

I thank you