



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE AT THE MEMORIAL  
SERVICE IN UMSINGA ON THURSDAY 04 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**Protocol observed**

- Gatherings of this nature, especially when children are involved, are certainly among the saddest and most difficult moments for us at the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport.
- Umsinga is one of the areas that are closed to my heart where I have seen the lives of our people changing because of our Operation Kushunquthuli. But unfortunately, today is another story.
- Research has shown that a very high percentage of accidents are preceded by a road traffic violation, which makes the improvement of road-user perceptions, attitudes and behaviour a matter of urgency. What happened in this area last week could have been prevented. But somebody did not do right.
- This country has been experiencing about 15 000 fatalities on our roads annually. The estimated cost of the impact of deaths and injuries sustained as a result of road accidents is now R43 billion.

- However, unlike the HIV scourge, I believe that we have the remedy, the cure and the vaccine. The question posed at all of us is whether or not do we wish to prevent this carnage from ravaging us further.
- Soon we will deprive drivers of the privilege of driving on our roads if they are reckless because every bad driver is a potential killer. Soon we will have to take your license if you are a repeat offender and thereby preempt your committing a crime of murdering someone on the road.
- Unfortunately, we learn bad driving habits from our parents, brothers, sisters, relatives and role models and particularly the media. We even have people who glorify these bad driving behaviors. How often do we hear people bragging about how fast they had driven between Johannesburg and Durban or between Durban and Pietermaritzburg?
- How often do we see people quickly putting on safety belts as they approach a road block or see a traffic police officer ahead? How often do we witness a driver breaking a traffic law?
- We would like to express our sincere condolences to all the bereaved families during this time of extreme grief.
- The names of the deceased are as follows:
  - Bhekithemba Ngubane (16 years);
  - Vincent Msimang (15 years);
  - Fundani Shange (16 years);
  - Nsindiso Luswazi (15 years);
- **“May their souls rest in peace?”**

- In conclusion, we always say that as government we do everything possible to assist the families in whatever way we can during these difficult moments.
- We can still 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 other human lives. As passengers we need to be very aware of safe and legal travel, and not make ourselves vulnerable to abuse. Let us all obey the rules of the road and **JUST DO RIGHT!**

**I THANK YOU.**