



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE AT THE MEMORIAL
SERVICE IN MTUBATUBA ON THURSDAY 02 OCTOBER 2008**

Protocol observed

- Sometimes you wonder why life is so cruel. Our government is working tirelessly to ensure that South Africa becomes a safe and a better place for all. But our challenge now is that despite our commitment to safety of our people, we continue to lose people on our roads.
- 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.
- One unfortunate thing about these accidents is that they kill people who are economically active. People who drive their cars or travel in public transport are mostly working and have dependants. Another thing is that the impact of fatalities is seen on people left behind.
- 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.

- In spite of numerous campaigns and high profile visible policing, an alarmingly high number of drivers and pedestrians have continuously ignored their responsibility with regard to road safety. This attitude has unfairly jeopardised the safety of other road users and continue to put many lives at risk.
- As a country we seem to think less of the dangers that can afflict us on the road. Unlike most people who practice safe sex, most still do not see misbehaviour on the roads as a virus that will ultimately kill them.
- Speed, drinking and driving, fatigue, unsafe overtaking, ignoring of traffic signals and other traffic signs, general reckless, negligent and aggressive driver behaviour, unsafe crossing of roads, drinking and walking, poor vehicle maintenance; unsafe following distances are some of the main causes of accidents.
- I think it is time for all of us who have been driving for such a long time to re-evaluate and check our driving habits. Do we, for instance, indicate when we change lanes? Do we wear seatbelts regularly? Do we check our vehicles every time we set off on a journey? Do we obey the basic rules of the road?
- We can have reports and speculations on what may actually have contributed to this terrible event. Nonetheless, the writing is on the wall.
- We would therefore like to pass condolences to the families of the following:

1. Hlabisa Mbuyazi	38 years	Male	
2. Hlabisa Qhamukile	38 years	Female	
3. Hlabisa Sbongiseni	11 years	Male	
4.Gwala Fikile	57 years	Female	
5.Gwala.Nompumelelo	29 years	Female	
6.Hlabisa Slindile	18 years	Female	
7.Mbokazi Nhlakanipho	26 years	Male	
8.Shange Sabelo	21 years	Male	
9.Ngwane Bhekithemba	54 years	Male	
10.Mavundla Samuel	32 years	Male	
11.Mtshali Nokwazi	18 years	Female	
12.Gumede Amos	38 years	Male	
13.Mahlangu Jackson	42 years	Male	

- 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 other human lives. As passengers we need to be very aware of safe and legal travel, and not make ourselves vulnerable to abuse.

I thank you.