



SPEECH NOTES FOR THE KZN MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SHELTER IN NONGOMA ON SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER 2008

All protocol observed.

- In KwaZulu-Natal and in South Africa generally, we are still faced with a situation where previous town planning did not accommodate our public transport. This is a task that municipalities must respond to squarely in designing their public transport plans, infrastructure development, and land use policies.
- In terms of the National Land Transportation Transition Act (NLTTA), public transport planning and infrastructure implementation is a responsibility of Municipalities. However, small municipalities cannot take full responsibility with regard to that due to the lack of skills and capacity.
- It is on that score that the Department of Transport has been providing financial and technical support to almost all municipalities in the past financial years. However, processes that have been followed in the past financial years have been viewed as planning phase without implementation.

- It was for this reason that the Department changed its focus of assisting municipalities from planning to the actual implementation of projects identified through the planning processes.
- Three district municipalities were identified as beneficiaries of Public Transport infrastructure implementation in this financial year: Zululand, Amajuba and Umzinyathi.
- Today we are officially opening 30 public transport shelters that have been built within Nongoma Local Municipality which falls under Zululand DC. A total budget of R4m was spent in erecting these shelters.
- Our government's policy says that during the construction work, cost must remain an economic benefit to the communities that project will serve. I am glad therefore that in constructing these shelters, local people were utilized.
- These facilities bear testimony to our commitment as government, to the development of a safe, effective and reliable public transport system that is fully responsive to the needs of our people.
- The official openings and sod turnings that we do all over the province highlight the very important task we set ourselves to change the lives of the people of KwaZulu-Natal. I want to emphasize that when we bring these projects we do it for people irrespective of which political party they belong to.

- We are aware that in some areas people are requested to produce membership cards for political parties before they are service delivery. As communities you must not to allow yourselves to be manipulated politicians who use your weakness for their political gain.
- When the democratic government took over in 1994, the challenge was not only to address historical imbalances but also to face new challenges imposed by globalization; challenges such as crime, AIDS, poverty, unemployment etc. It is in this context that we set our selves a goal of achieving a better life for all.
- However, a better life will not just float in a foundation-less space. It is based on certain fundamentals and preconditions. Preconditions for a better life include peace, democracy and development.
- In conclusion, I want to appeal to you as communities to look after your infrastructure. Don't vandalise your property because it was brought by the government. In fact, as tax payers, it is you who pay for the infrastructure you get.
- As government we will continue to do everything possible to assist our communities in whatever challenges they face in their areas.

I thank you.