



SPEECH NOTES FOR THE KZN MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE DURING THE SOD TURNING FOR THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITY IN ULUNDI ON THURSDAY 16 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.
- As government, we are under no illusion about the magnitude of the task at hand and the obligation we have in ensuring that the public transport system is responsive to national policy imperatives and contributes meaningfully to economic development and growth.
- Therefore, the sod turning for the construction Public Transport Facility today bears testimony to our commitment as government, to the development of an effective and efficient public transport system that is fully responsive to the needs of our people.

- The Department is moving away from promoting individual taxi and bus ranks. The focus now is to ensure that all modes are integrated into one facility. This will assist in promoting public transport operations within the province, it will also benefit commuters.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Ulundi Municipality and KZN Department of Transport. The Department is committing to make funding for the design and construction of the facility. Ulundi Municipality is committing to avail land and maintain the facility.
- Public transport can only improve if we work together as a collective. While it is true that government has a responsibility to regulate the industry and ensure compliance with safety standards, the communities similarly have an obligation to ensure that operators provide the level of service expected by the commuters.
- Indeed, the little strides we make as stakeholders and communities as a contribution to the broader agenda of improving public transport system must be acknowledged and appreciated.
- 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, as government we are working to ensure that the socio-economic rights of children as enshrined in our Constitution, including the right to education, health, care and support become a reality and a matter of top priority.
- Therefore, I am extremely proud and grateful today that I am handing over ten computers to learners at Nsikayendlu School.
- As government we will continue to do everything possible to assist our communities in whatever challenges they face in their areas.

I thank you.