



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE DURING
SIYABAKHUMBULA ON SUNDAY 07 DECEMBER 2008**

Protocol observed

- Our gathering here today is a clear indication that government is working tirelessly to ensure that South Africa becomes a better place for all. We all know that in order to adequately reduce the carnage on our roads, a concerted approach by all sectors of our society is required.
- Our country cannot afford to continue to lose many lives and experience serious injuries every day. Not only is the pain and suffering immeasurable for victims and their families, but the cost to the economy is more than R43 billion per annum.
- 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.
- We have taken an initiative as a Department to visit road accident victims to establish how life is after they were involved in accidents or lost their breadwinners.

- The stories they tell about their experiences bear testimony to the hardship of loss that we have to endure in silence each time tragedy strikes on the road. But you will endure it silently, not me – as MEC for Transport it is my responsibility to say enough is enough!
- We have begun our festive season which is a period synonymous with increased activity and festivities as locals, visitors and tourists traverse the length and breadth of our province. It is also a period with unacceptably high levels of deviant driver behaviour which contributes to the high levels of road carnage.
- During this period, large crowds are expected to support the various beach festivals, church gatherings and other planned activities throughout the province. These events provide opportunities for antisocial behaviour and a potential for creating disaster.
- If road safety is not effective, then we are left with no option but to crack the whip. We shall not hesitate to use our full law enforcement agencies to force people to toe the line on our roads. You have been warned.
- To this end, the KZN Department of Transport continues to be innovative in its efforts to reduce road accidents and fight against unroadworthy vehicles on South African roads. Some of you may have seen on TV that we have launched our brake roller tester which is the very first mobile inspection facility in South Africa.

- The acquisition of this equipment has been as a result of extensive research and a study tour of best practices in the world undertaken by this Department, which resulted in the identification of such advanced technology from London. It was subsequently purchased from Australia after it was designed and manufactured especially to suit South African conditions.
- This mobile inspection facility will allow law enforcement to detect, prosecute and suspend vehicles found to be unroadworthy for offenses such as defective brakes, steering and suspension components anywhere in the Province, without the vehicle being driven to the nearest testing station.
- In conclusion, I would like to urge all religious communities to continue to play a more active role in spreading the gospel of safety by ensuring that our safety messages go right down to grassroots level.
- Finally, I wish to stress that we must continue to strive to increase respect for human life, and treat road carnage with the seriousness it deserves.

I thank you