



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE AT THE  
ZUKUZAKHE INDABA IN MARCH 2008**

**Protocol Observed**

- ? It is my pleasure to welcome you to our Vukuzakhe Indaba.
  
- ? At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the various stakeholders in the construction sector who are with us today.
  
- ? Despite the fact that our Vukuzakhe programme has performed well over the past several years, we need to review our Vukuzakhe programme to ensure that emerging contractors benefit from the current boom in the construction sector.
  
- ? The Department has invested billions of rands in the Vukuzakhe programme and contractors have created a substantial number of jobs, mostly in rural areas where unemployment is high.
  
- ? However, there are many who are swayed by negative perceptions that, given the advances of modern technology, labour intensive methods are inferior in terms of time, cost and quality. In South Africa, we have been determined to prove the opposite.

- ? We have deliberately chosen a hard road of learning in order to infuse the principles of labour intensity and poverty alleviation into the delivery of social and economic assets. Our determination is based on the recognition that our people are our best assets - and labour-based methods enable us to train and develop our people for the modern world.
  
- ? Our backlog of uneven development coincides with the need for new levels of infrastructure investment to deliver South Africa's *Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA)*. ASGISA aims to achieve an economic growth rate of 6% and to halve poverty and unemployment by 2014 in line with our commitment to the UN *Millennium Development Goals*.
  
- ? In recent years we have become aware of some instances of fronting within Vukuzakhe. Indeed, this has been raised in a number of meetings. I want to assure you that my department will not tolerate fronting on any of our programmes. We will root it out and deal harshly with the guilty parties.
  
- ? I will ensure that our monitoring systems improve qualitatively rather than quantitatively in order to ensure that the targeted audiences do benefit from these programmes.
  
- ? You can be rest assured that there will be 100% compliance in respect of all our programmes and anyone, be it a public servant, consultant or Vukuzakhe stakeholder, found guilty of any form of corruption will face the full might of the law.

- ? We have come a long way together over the past years. Especially if we recall how the pioneers of the Vukuzakhe Programme had to endure accusations of being racist and unconstitutional because Vukuzakhe was an unashamedly BEE initiative.
- ? Some even threatened us with court action unless we open the Vukuzakhe Programme to all race groups. Today that is all history. Our political leaders have now created a much more enabling and progressive legal environment to pursue the objectives of social and economic justice.
- ? In charting the way forward we need to acknowledge that we are building on very solid foundations. There are not many broad based black economic empowerment programmes in South Africa that can boast the same record as Vukuzakhe.
- ? Some of our Stage 4 contractors now get contracts from other departments, often for considerable sums of money. Their dependence on the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport is thus decreasing as we speak.
- ? In conclusion, with our 32 Vukuzakhe associations and 38 000 contractors in the system, we have proved that we have the leadership in the Department, the leadership in the community at large and the leadership among the contractors themselves, to rise to the challenge that we have set ourselves in the construction sector.
- ? Indeed, it would be remiss of me not to ask you to join me in a round of applause for all those that have made the Vukuzakhe programme the success story that it is.

**I thank you**