



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR. B.H. CELE DURING THE SOD FOR  
P368/P373 AT UMSINGA ON TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009.**

**All protocol observed**

- Our coming here today confirms that as a democratically elected government, we do follow up on our promises. I do not have to mention how many times we have come to this area of Umsinga.
- We all know that Umsinga is one of the areas in the province that have been declared as priority areas for service delivery due to the high rate of poverty and unemployment. It is on that score that the KZN Department of Transport allocated a total budget of R120 million in 2008/2009 financial year to deal with the service delivery challenges in the Umzinyathi District.
- We have injected cash in the road maintenance, the construction of new infrastructure and poverty alleviation and empowerment. Our projects include among others, the construction of Dicky Bridge, Sphongweni Road, Nxamalala Road, Nyonini Road, Ezingulubeni Road, Mbalane Bridge, Matimatolo Road, Nhlesi Road stone pitching, P32, Zonyama Road and KwaLeje Pedestrian Bridge.
- I am therefore delighted that today another milestone is recorded in the lives of people of Mhlangana area, as we do the sod turning to mark the beginning of the upgrading of the road P368/P373 from gravel to blacktop which will take about 43.5 km at the tune of R70 million.

- The road will be continually upgraded to blacktop surface for every consecutive financial year, such that this financial year (2008/2009) the first five kilometres will be completed for Phase 1, and the next financial year (2009/2010), Phase 2 of about 15km will be completed. The same sequencing of phases will be followed until the entire 43,5km road length is completed.
- This road serves a large community with schools and health services. These services are not accessible via vehicular traffic due to poor state of this access road. This road serves about 5 000 households and about 20 000 people.
- Our government's policy says that during the construction work, cost must remain an economic benefit to the communities that project will serve. All contractors are compelled to source all materials from the local suppliers and employ all artisans and labour from the nearby communities. The job creation during this upgrade is estimated at 6 000 person days.
- But I want to emphasize that when we bring these projects we do it for people irrespective of which political party they belong to. My appeal is that you use our Departmental community structures such as RRTFs and CRSCs that we have put in place in all communities. I am appealing to you as communities to refuse to be manipulated by politicians and officials who use your weakness for their political gain.
- Indeed, this is not the first time we have government in the history of South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal in particular. But our people have only begun to see change in their lives through our democratic government's development programmes. You can speak to our 3 258 Zibambele contractors who are maintaining our roads under Umzinyathi District.

- In closing, I want to emphasize that the Department of Transport has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that our people have a safe and reliable transport system in the province.
- When completed, the design speed of this road will be 60km/h over most sections with speed reduction measures installed at steep grades and non-standard curves to reduce the speed to 40km/h.
- I am emphasizing road safety here because it has become clear that there is no use to build roads that will kill our people. We need to strengthen our road safety awareness campaigns wherever we are, so that we build roads in order to develop people, and not to kill them.
- Finally, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the community of Umzinyathi District on all road and bridge projects they have received and yet to receive. Our goals are indeed centred around the lives of our people.

**I thank you.**