



SPEECH NOTES FOR KNZ TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON HON. WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LATE CHIEF APOSTLE FOR TWELVE APOSTLE CHURCH IN CHRIST SD PHAKATHI – UMGABABA - ON 07 MAY 2010

Protocol Observed

- I am pleased and honoured to be part of this important occasion to celebrate the life of a man who had a vision of shaping our society not only to prepare them for life after death, but also to ensure their wellbeing while they are on this earth.
- The Twelve Apostle Church in Christ is blessed to have had exceptional leadership in the name of Chief Apostle and President SD Phakathi, may his soul rest in peace. I believe that had he been alive today, he would have played a major role in reconciling us with our past and enabled us to build our province and the country. We would be working together to remove the adverse effects of the apartheid system on the majority of our citizens.
- Our country needs people of his caliber and most importantly we pray that his influence may filter through the rest of our people to be a responsible and caring society. Our government holds the view that religious organisations are making a meaningful impact in shaping societal behaviour and attitudes. Indeed, your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

- It is not my intention to dwell on internal politics of this Church, but I am informed that you have finally come to an end of a dispute that has even gone to various courts of law. We don't encourage conflicts in any institutions, but we recognise that naturally people always differ on some issues. It would have been inappropriate for the Church to resort to violence in dealing with internal conflicts.
- The Church must handle its affairs with integrity because if you do not, you will be assisting this valuable institution to earn itself a bad image. It must be the duty of the leadership and general members of this Church to ensure that every member of the Church is free to express his/her thoughts and opinions while respecting ethical principles and the constitution of the Church as well as the law of the country.
- On behalf of the government of KwaZulu-Natal, I want to emphasise the importance of the church to be part of the solution in ensuring that the government's agenda is fulfilled, that is, of proper education, improved health system, poverty alleviation, rural development, crime prevention and decent jobs for all. The wealth that our religious institutions have should be seen to be making a difference to the lives of our people.
- As MEC for Transport, I am very much concerned about what we see on our roads. We are faced with a challenge of reckless drivers who contribute directly to increased poverty in the country. Road accidents are robbing us of our economically active people who are workers and businesspeople. They rob us of our professionals who have just graduated and got good jobs or people who have just got married and have young kids.

- Another painful part is that unlike with sick people where families get to prepare and have a chance to say goodbye to their loved ones, with road accidents, families see the person leave in the morning and expect to see them return in the evening but they never do.
- What happened on Monday of 26 April is a proper statement of what happens when people are not careful and responsible enough on our roads. I cannot imagine the pain felt by the relatives of 15 people who were burnt beyond recognition in an accident involving a minibus taxi and a truck near Umzinto. These families are still waiting for DNA results to be able to identify their loved ones. Until they get those results, they live in agony.
- Therefore, in conclusion I want to emphasise here this evening that road safety is indeed everybody's responsibility and it has become a moral and religious challenge. I want to urge all the members of this Church to ensure that road safety also becomes a spiritual issue. Let us all be ambassadors of road safety.
- But let us also be part of United Front Against Crime. Let us not allow ourselves to be victims or perpetrators of crime.
- Finally as you have celebrations planned for the whole weekend, please drive safely as you move from one venue to the other and eventually drive home safely.

I thank you