

**SPEECH NOTES FOR THE KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE LAUNCH OF OPERATION HLASELA IN THE INK AREA ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2010**

Programme Director;  
Members of the Provincial Legislature;  
Members of both the Transport and Community Safety & Liaison;  
Your Worship, the Mayor of eThekweni;  
Councillors from the INK area;  
Religious leaders;  
Representatives from different community structures present here;  
Distinguished guests;  
Members of the media;  
Officials from the city and the Department;  
Ladies and gentlemen;  
All Protocols observed

We thank you for having honoured our invitation to this important gathering. We guarantee you that our being here today will be well worth it in the near and distant future of the INK area.

On January 21, 2010, the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government called a historic gathering in Elangeni Hotel to unveil its new plan to deal decisively with crime. This gathering was in a form of a Provincial Symposium themed *'Build a United Front Against Crime'* and was addressed by, among others, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Dr Zweli Mkhize, myself as the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, academics and different community structures.

Most of them are represented here today at a provincial and local level. The main objective behind that gathering was to create a platform to draw on the Province's collective wisdom and to conceptualise what needs to be done to bring this programme of a 'united front to life'.

From that gathering we got what we wanted, that was a way forward that is informed by the wisdom of a collective with a common goal which is to fight and defeat crime simply by pulling our combined powers together.

As part of the KZN Provincial Government's programme to deal with crime, renewed emphasis is being placed on the relevance of a united multi-pronged approach in responding to crime. Such an approach combines aspects of crime prevention, crime combating, improving socio-economic conditions and strengthening of human solidarity among citizens. This approach has led to the initiation of a new provincial programme called *'Build a United Front Against Crime'*.

What is important in this approach is to develop a problem-solving framework which looks for multi-agency solutions to identified problems and also uses a range of crime and violence prevention methods.

This united front we talk about has a number of elements such as, to mention but a few, looking at the family as a basic unit in society, promoting responsible citizenship, civic mindedness, building of community cohesion, crime reporting and information sharing, etc...

This united front that we speak of seeks to bring to fore committed and creative civil society formations that will go all the way, side by side with government in the fight against crime. It seeks to bring about ethical, involved and generous business community. From this programme we are saying help us to bring about effective community-based crime prevention programmes that will result in the restoration of a healthy community life and improvement of the physical and moral environment.

To roll out this 'Building a United Front Against Crime', the Department of Community Safety and Liaison is unleashing what it calls Operation Hlasela. Operation Hlasela simply means, we are waging a war against crime and its perpetrators. This we do by employing a simple technique; Simple but very effective.

This approach is what we like to describe as a Targeted and Focussed Approach which is a concerted drive to streamline and integrate all our programmes that will lead to targeted and sustained interventions in identified problem areas. In practice, this will involve identifying problem areas and moving in with relevant interventions involving all Directorates. That, ladies and gentlemen, is what we are here to do.

We are here to target and focus on all the crime related challenges that plague this area and we are not leaving until we rid INK of crime and its perpetrators. You my friends have been invited here so that you can tell us what you are going to do to help us win this battle. We are not going to prescribe what roles each and every one of the structures you represent should play to contribute, but we do expect that each and every one of you will come forward and say how they are going to use their influence to help the INK area get the safety and security it deserves. Having said that, we expect that by the time we finish here this afternoon, we will have identified our roles and made some commitments on how we shall go about playing them.

The upsurge of crime levels in the INK area is a great concern not only within KwaZulu-Natal but Nationally as well. One thing is for certain when things such as that happen, and that is the people most affected are ordinary men, women and children whose lives are so intertwined in crime that they start losing hope that there is a possibility of living in a crime free area.

There has been a lot of shocking incidents reported in this area. Crime stats of 2009/2010, media reports and our own police station evaluations all tell one story of a high rate of fear as a result of Trio-crimes

here that are amongst the highest in the country. Surely that can't be a proud record for the people of INK, so the question is 'what are we all going to do about it?'

On 28 April 2010, I as the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison met with INK councillors. It was in that meeting where the call was sounded very loud for Operation Hlasela to be unleashed in this area. The idea being to start with KwaMashu and then roll out the programme to other areas.

Rather than adopting a prescriptive approach, the approach being taken here is one of identifying which government Departments are in the best position to deal with a particular issue and making recommendations based on this.

Based on the Provincial Implementation Strategy of this Build a United Front Programme we can safely say that we know right from the onset that one of the desired outcomes from today's gathering will be the establishment of Community Safety Forums (CSFs) in the near future in the INK area.

The CSFs will serve as an engagement mechanism between communities and the criminal justice system and all other relevant role players. It will also serve to promote local government responses to safety and security issues.

We also envisage that Street Committees will be established in the promotion of safety at local level and Community Police Forums (CPFs) would play a central role in setting up and ensuring sustainability of these committees.

CPFs in turn would be supported by the Department of Community Safety and Liaison. Heads of Health and Safety within Municipalities would also work closely with CPFs in establishing and maintaining Street Committees.

In conclusion, this is a call for greater innovation and commitment in our partnerships and joint initiatives. For such an approach to succeed, it is needless to say that it is imperative that all sectors of society take joint responsibility for addressing crime. Our response to crime can only succeed if we are able to harness every possible resource to address the challenges which face us.

Most importantly, individuals, families and communities can and must play a greater role in building the type of society we want to live in and bequeath to the next generation.

We will get there, but it won't be easy. It will take us all who are represented here to identify and claim our role in this united front against crime. It will take individuals and families supporting and guiding each other to become upstanding citizens. To win this fight requires a well functioning criminal justice system

(CJS), cohesive and caring communities, schools, youth, Faith-based Organisations, business, civil society organisations, and every organisation represented here to partner with government.

I hereby call upon all of you to use this opportunity to get involved constructively in the fight to clean up the INK area, your home.

**I thank you**