

**SPEECH (NOTES) BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY & LIAISON, MR WILLIES MCHUNU DURING  
ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCCER LEGENDS ON THURSDAY, 22  
DECEMBER 2011.**

**Greetings**

At times it becomes hard to believe that we have once again come to the end of the year, especially when you still have the picture in mind of the activities that we had at the end of last year.

But as I was readying myself to be part of this function, it just came to my mind that as we celebrate another Christmas, it is also true that unfortunately we have lost some of our soccer legends during the course of the year.

These are our heroes who would have wished to be with us at this time of the year. Among others, we would be celebrating with Robert Tiza Thwala - former Golden Arrows and AmaZulu player; Reginald Shelembe – former African Wanderes player; Steve Maseko – former Maritzburg City and Moroka Swallows; Henry Mthofi Khumalo – former Wanderers and Orlando Pirates player as well as Pat Khanyile – former Union Jack player.

Brothers, on this basis my appeal here would be that before we begin to celebrate, let us bow our heads and observe a minute of silence in memory of all our legends who were part of the game but have since passed on.

Programme director, I have always maintained that as Government and as the political leadership in this province of KwaZulu-Natal we are always encouraged when we see people coming out on their own and showing passion for their own welfare, growth and development.

It is true that sport is one of the best ways to build unity and improve team spirit amongst all of us. We must use sport as a tool to unite and build our country.

In fact, by the end of today, we must be able to build upon the concept of teamwork, especially the kind of teamwork that promotes cooperation and cohesiveness over competition. There must be no legend that thinks he is better because he is former player of a better team.

Also in the spirit of team work, besides the numerous health benefits, sport has and continues to contribute to social integration, as well as cultural exchange. Sport has no language, cultural and racial barrier.

On the same vein, as Government we want to urge our soccer legends to come on board and work with us as we execute our programmes that seek to make our peoples' lives better.

We know that the current Government has given crime a high priority along with other critical developmental imperatives such as health, education, rural development and the creation of decent work.

In line with this, there is a need to place strong emphasis on the relevance of a united, comprehensive approach in the fight against crime which combines aspects of crime prevention, crime combating, improving socio-economic conditions and strengthening of human solidarity among citizens.

Much work has been done in attempting to create an understanding of the various factors that give rise to the crime levels we see in our areas today. In view of the challenges of crime faced by KZN, as the provincial Government, we are spearheading a drive to 'Build A United Front Against Crime'.

Through this programme, we call for the mobilisation and involvement of all sectors of society in a concerted and sustained campaign called 'Operation Hlasela', to significantly reduce crime levels in the Province.

We say that, as Government, community leaders from different structures and as members of the community, we have to take a stand and work together side by side in finding solutions to the safety challenges which are threatening the wellbeing of our people.

On the other hand again, I want to remind everyone here that the provincial government is on a mission to revive our peoples' consciences.

We are saying let each one speak to their conscience as they use the roads or go about their daily business. We say that as we enjoy the festive season, let us not behave as if this is our last festive season on earth.

Consequently, the province of KwaZulu-Natal is rolling out the campaign dubbed 'Operation Val'ingozi'. Operation Val'ingozi seeks to revive our morals and consciences as individuals who contribute to societal safety and well-being or lack of it. Our message is clear: 'Speak to your conscience, don't break the law, don't kill people'.

Following the official launch of Operation Val'ingozi in Durban earlier this month, we decided to roll out this campaign so that it reaches all our stakeholders as we engage each other in building partnerships, promoting high moral values, respect for the rule of law and educational campaigns on road safety.

This function has therefore become a proper platform to take forward this campaign – we have to agree that we will become ambassadors and assist us in taking this initiative forward.

Before I sit down, I want to call upon soccer legends to come on board and ensure that it cannot be right that KwaZulu-Natal is always the worst province in the country when it comes to spreading the HIV and AIDS pandemic that kills in numbers.

As our young stars develop socially, it is your responsibility to guide them, show them how survived the storms of your times.

Finally, I want to emphasise what I alluded to earlier that as we enjoy the festive season, let us not behave as if this is our last festive season on earth.

With these words, I wish all of you a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year.

**THANK YOU**