

SPEECH NOTES FOR KZN COMMUNITY SAFETY & LIAISON MEC, MR WILLIES MCHUNU, FOR A COMMUNITY SAFETY FUNCTION IN BLUFF TO THANK VARIOUS ROLE PLAYERS INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME, PARTICULARLY THE SAPS, ON SATURDAY, 3RD NOVEMBER 2012:

Members of the South African Police Service (SAPS)

Members of the Community of Bluff present here today

The Leadership and members of the Ward 66 ANC Structure

Representatives of NGOs and CBOs responsible for the safety and welfare of children and animals present here today

The representatives of the various security companies present

Members of the media

Ladies and general

All protocol observed.

As I greet you today as we celebrate the achievements of the various role players in the fight against crime at Bluff, I am filled with great pride and sense of relief and gratitude.

I am happy that we are here to celebrate, and not to mourn. As MEC for Transport, Community Safety & Liaison, mourning is very much part of my job description. I doubt many of you envy the job of MEC for Transport, Community Safety & Liaison in this gathering.

It is basically not an easy job of course because it involves mourning as we engage in awareness campaigns as part of road safety education or crime awareness campaigns. For instance, most recently we mourned the death of over twenty school children who died in different road related incidents.

It is a part of our work to mourn the death of the young and the old, rich and poor, talented and ordinary people who continue to die on our roads due to incompetent and

negligent drivers with little experience, drivers who unlicensed licenses or driving licenses that have been obtained fraudulently.

As a way of life, at the Department of Transport, it is our duty to mourn people who die as a result of drinking alcohol and driving, over-speeding, overloading and driving vehicles that are not road-worthy.

Now as MEC for Community Safety & Liaison I also mourn people, including members of the SAPS, who die as a result of crime in townships, rural communities, towns, cities and urban environments.

Just recently we found a sponsor to build a house for a poor family man who died after trying to rescue a young woman he did not even know as some guys were trying to rape her in his neighborhood. They shot the old man dead on the spot and we therefore took the liberty to honor that hero by building a house for his family because it was his dream to provide a better dwelling for his loved one.

But for a change we are not here to mourn. We are gathered here today to celebrate the achievements of the various role players who have made a meaningful input towards promoting peace at Bluff.

I have become accustomed to attending functions of this nature involving our men and women in blue that are drawn from different parts of the province. The idea of attending a community-based celebration to applaud the input of various role players in the fight against criminality is unique. I love it. The day we start seeing various communities following suit, doing what you are doing here today, is the day we will be closer to achieving the ideals of a crime-free society that we all strive for.

So you the people of Bluff are therefore trend-setters. You are role-models. At the end of the day, the fight against crime is indeed a collective endeavor and today we are here to thank you for your sterling efforts.

High on our list of structures and people that we wish to recognize, acknowledge and thank today for making the place we live in safer, are the members of the South African Police Service. We are here to say to members of the SAPS that are based at the

Brighton Police Station, thank you; thank you for being truly of service to the people who rely on you for their security and support in emergency situations.

We are gathered here to say thank you for being true, committed and respectable members of the law enforcement fraternity in our society. Today we are here to celebrate the results of your dedication to duty. We have enough reason to declare you as being amongst the shining examples of many hard workers and high achievers in the SAPS, in our province, and indeed our country as a whole.

Captain Le Roux and your staff members comprising detectives, the visible policing unit as well as support services, we would like to say thank you to you today.

Today we are saying to Captain le Roux your outreach educational programme in schools and community where you teach about community safety is a direct contribution to community safety. The relationship of the police and the community of Bluff is what it is today because of your outstanding efforts. So today we just wish to say we are grateful, Captain, for your sacrifices and going beyond the call of duty in your relentless endeavor to make Bluff, a safer place to live in. When we address people like you in such situations, Captain le Roux, in good IsiZulu, we say: Ukwanda kwaliwa umthakathi, meaning only a wicked person does not like growth.

Of course growth and community safety are interrelated – they are one. There is no growth when a criminal breaks into your home and steals your belongings. Growth is threatened when car theft is rife in our shopping mall parking areas. People become poorer or totally inconvenienced and disorientated when their private property and pets are stolen from them.

Today we also wish to congratulate the various private security companies that continue to complement the work of the SAPS at Bluff.

Members of the Community-Orientated Policing, we are very grateful for your work in the community.

Bluff Action Group, today we are here to say thank you to you too. We are proud of all the structures and individuals that are engaged in awareness work against cruelty to animals. It is our responsibility to discourage and end cruelty to animals.

It is indeed traumatic for an animal to be stolen, often by someone who cannot even afford to treat it and feed it like its owner used to do.

Like children, animals know their caregivers and they miss and love them. It is therefore cruel to steal them and we commend structures and individuals that have fought against this at Bluff.

Isaiah 54 – today is your day too – we are here to say thank you to you for taking care of vulnerable children that you take care of in your children's home. We know that it is easy for such children to be used by crime networks.

Connecting these children with their relatives and making an effort to rehabilitate them so that they are re-integrated to society to play positive roles, is the same as fighting crime because we all agree with the saying: prevention is better than cure. Those estimated plus or minus 50 children that you handle in every three months are potential criminals that deserve to be taken care of and helped. So we are glad that you are here for them. We thank you for that.

Lastly, but not least, we are happy with the work of the Community Policing Forum in this place. Their job remains to encourage communities to cooperate with the police so that the war against crime can be waged effectively.

We call upon all the structures and individuals who have played a positive role in keeping this place safer and freer from criminality to continue to do so. We are glad that you do respect your roles and the limits that are inherent in your roles. We want all of you to know that as role players in a community you are interdependent. In other words, each one of you is dependent on the other, and together you make a dynamic force that no criminal can stand.

The Department of Community Safety & Liaison has of late decentralized its services and it is now represented in various districts. We are doing this in order to live our

slogan which says: deepening activism against crime. Hence, communities like Bluff make us proud because your activism against crime is indeed very deep. We know that your socio-economic standing and passion for freedom from fear, is making it easier for you to collaborate with government or the police to step up the fight against crime effectively.

My Department also serves poorer communities that cannot afford private security companies. So we are glad that you have since resolved to use your favorable economic muscle to land a hand in the fight against crime in your community.

It is with great honor that I declare you as a natural part of my Department's call to communities to *Build A United Front Against Crime*.

With these few words, we wish to say: thank you to all of you for making Bluff safer, and we trust that the more areas like these we have in our city, our province, and indeed our country, the more we will be able to call ourselves truly liberated citizens of South Africa. It is our cherished desire and duty to ensure that you all enjoy your lives in a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist country that has a world-class constitution which protects the rights and values of all its people.

I thank you.