

**SPEECH NOTES FOR KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,  
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR WILLIES MCHUNU ON THE  
NATIONAL POLICE DAY IN KZN ON WEDNESDAY, 06<sup>th</sup> MARCH  
2013.**

Programme Director;  
Chairperson and Members of the Portfolio Committee;  
Members of the Provincial Legislature present;  
Provincial Commissioner;  
All Deputy Commissioners;  
Labour unions, POPCRU and SAPU;  
Business Against Crime;  
All our social partners in the police service;  
Faith-based organisations;  
Representatives of CPFs;  
Representatives of Community Crime Prevention Structures;  
Departmental officials and police officers;  
Distinguished guests;  
Members of the media;  
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honour for me to get this opportunity to once again address you as you celebrate the National Police Day in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. As we all know, the National Parliament approved in 2008 that a day would be set aside every year to remember our police officers who have passed on, particularly those who died in the course of performing their duties.

As we are gathered here, all nine provinces countrywide are having similar activity. We are doing it concurrently in line with the national directive because it is important that we take time to remember them because they were, and always will be, a part of us as colleagues and significant contributors towards the promotion and preservation of peace, law and order in our various communities and society at large.

This day also gives us the unique opportunity once every year to focus our attention on giving the necessary recognition and praise to the brave men and women in blue.

But in what seems to be a paradigm shift of the nature of crime in South Africa, today's event comes at a time when the province and indeed the whole country, is facing a serious challenge of the on-going abuse of women and children, including violent attacks on defenceless old women and young girls in their own homes and neighbourhoods.

The high number of these incidents reported recently indicates that the situation is out of hand. It has become evident that as a country we need to do more to nurture and strengthen the process of rebuilding a caring society in which the rights of all are respected, especially the rights of women and children.

Needless to say, while we rely on our government's existing and new future programmes that may be initiated to address the situation, it is true that our police officers remain on the frontline in the fight against crime.

Hence, today we are here to convey our deepest appreciation and give credit to all our police officers, whose tireless dedication to duty has ensured that the majority of the citizens and visitors in this province are safe at all times.

We acknowledge their determination to go beyond the call of duty. You always put your lives on the line to ensure that peace and social stability prevails. You risk your personal wellbeing on a daily basis for the rest of us. And today we salute you for that.

We have always reiterated the fact that the SAPS in our province have their hands full dealing with extraordinary challenges. We know that KwaZulu-Natal is one province where the police have the extra burden of having to deal with perpetrators of political violence, taxi feuds as well as criminality at a level that can be said to be beyond average when compared to other provinces in this country.

However, given the latest statistics on the crime wave over the past two financial years, we can nevertheless say that collective efforts to sustain a broad onslaught against criminality are yielding positive results. Even the extent to which criminal incidents, especially domestic violence is being reported to the police and in the media, show a society that is increasingly becoming sensitized to the need to expose and report crime of whatever nature.

According to these statistics, the progress that we are making in dealing with crime is manifest in the reduction in the rate of criminal activities, especially the most serious crimes.

As Government, it is our duty and obligation to ensure that the trend which has seen a decline in crimes such as murder, car hijacking and robbery in the past financial years should continue. This is a clear indication that Government is working tirelessly to make South Africa, and particularly our province of KwaZulu-Natal, a safer place for all. And it is thanks to all of you.

The past few years saw our programme of Building a United Front Against Crime being taken to greater heights. We saw communities responding to the call we have always made to community formations, youth bodies, families and individuals to actively take a bold stand against crime in their homes, streets, neighbourhoods, communities and the entire Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Some of us may have already heard that the Provincial Government led by the Honourable Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize is rolling out a massive campaign against drug trafficking, involving a specialized team of police investigators.

This campaign has already started to bear fruits. We have seen the people of Chatsworth, Wentworth and Inanda partnering with us and effectively supplying the police with information that has resulted in high profile arrests of drug lords that have avoided much-deserved arrest for a long time.

Another key element to the strategic direction in the fight against crime is the structuring of community participation. I must salute members of the SAPS as drivers of the Government's relentless efforts in the formation of the Community Police Forums (CPF's). It is you who are working closely with such structures in combating crime and promoting awareness.

The task of facilitating meaningful dialogue and interaction between the police and the communities must be sustained and improved continuously.

We want to improve the legitimacy of these structures, especially in respect of adequate representation of the communities they serve, as well as their interface with other local structures, such as ward committees and municipalities.

On the other hand, we have embarked on a programme to educate and capacitate voluntary crime prevention associations to better understand the laws of our country and to organise themselves into legally-recognised associations.

This programme includes the formation of an umbrella body called the KwaZulu-Natal Community Crime Prevention Association which was launched by the Premier in November 2012.

We are working very closely with the Association to support the realization of its aims and objectives. We are convinced that building a bridge between the police and these structures is critical to effective policing in this province.

We will continue to implement the resolutions of the Provincial Summit on Police Killings which was held on the 16 of August 2011. That entails engaging in a joint effort with all structures and interest groups in our communities to stop police killings.

We remain dedicated to ensuring that our hard-earned political freedom is not threatened by crime. We are hard at work to ensure that law and order, peace and stability become a reality.

In trying to achieve this it is important that we encourage members of the public to use proper statutory bodies to identify the rotten potatoes within the Police Force, and deal with them harshly, instead of condemning the whole force for the wrongs of a few amongst them.

I want to concur with Premier Mkhize in his State of the Province address for the 2013/2014 financial year when he says: "Identifying the fight against crime means that criminals must be made to feel that the tide of societal disapproval has turned against lawlessness and lack of respect for the rights of others. This is a long and hard fight, but we have made a good start".

In conclusion, as Government we want to encourage SAPS members to make use of the existing platforms to take care of their psychological needs as they sometime get traumatised due to the hazards of their job.

We are well aware that as human beings police officers can be prone to emotional instability as a direct result of the challenging nature of their work, coupled with the demands of being breadwinners, caregivers and partners to others.

Hence, we encourage staff to take full advantage of psychological intervention services that are at their disposal. The human mind is made in such a way that it finds relief when we acknowledge the pain, suffering and difficult situation we may be going through at home, work or society. Talk about your challenges to loved ones, friends, colleagues and church leaders.

Masculinity and acting strong can never relieve the pressures you endure quietly at work and at home. It is wrong to say men don't cry, they must cry, even if it is not in public, but it is not a shame or womanly to express emotion – the human body needs that once in a while or whenever necessary. As you do recognise your vulnerability, you tend to come to terms with your situation. It is only then that you can begin to sort it out legally or professionally without resorting to violence or unbecoming methods that may in your case amount to defeating the ends of justice.

Staff must be reminded from time to time that taking one's life and those of loved ones or members of society over trifling matters that could be resolved amicably through talk does not only deprive your family of a breadwinner when you die or go to prison, but it also undermines the credibility of the police service as a whole.

Hence, we must continue to promote programmes that encourage staff to refrain from expressing whatever frustration they have through violent or action that is uncalled for. Staff must see value and reason in using legal and acceptable methods to deal with whatever challenge – be it at work, home or society they serve or live in.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all of those who have continuously remained true partners in the fight against crime and criminals. It is true that when, and if, we all stand up to do something, we will win this war against crime.

**I thank you**