

**STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE  
PREMIER OF LIMPOPO MR SELLO MOLOTO TO THE SIXTH  
SESSION OF THE THIRD DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATURE,  
LEBOWAKGOMO**

**12 FEBRUARY 2009**

Mr Speaker and Deputy Speaker,  
Executive Mayors and Mayors of local municipalities,  
Honourable Members of the Executive Council,  
Honourable members of the Provincial Legislature,  
Honourable members of the National Assembly and NCOP,  
Speakers of Municipalities,  
Leaders of Opposition Parties,  
Chairperson and members of the House of Traditional Leaders,  
Our esteemed Magoshi, Tihosi and Mahosi,  
Former MPs and MPLs,  
Leadership of ANC and other political organisations,  
Stalwarts and Veterans of our struggle,  
His Grace the Right Reverend BE Lekganyane of the Zion Christian  
Church,  
His Grace the Right Reverend EJ Lekganyane of the St Engenas  
Zion Christian Church,  
Leadership of the South African Council of Churches and other  
religious denominations,  
Our Director General and the senior management of our provincial  
administration,  
Leadership of Chapter nine and ten Institutions,

Youth, Women, Business, Labour and Community leaders,  
Media representatives,  
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,  
The people of Limpopo

***‘Uhuru na kazi’ – Freedom and Hardwork***

The closing of this third democratic legislature comes at a time when there is great excitement all over the country about the oncoming general elections, and the celebration of the first 15 years of freedom and democracy. Nothing can best satisfy the pride of South Africans than the mere knowledge that we are a free people; freed from the shackles of hatred and oppression which once made us the fugitives we were in the land of our birth. We are no longer a nation of homelands and bantustans. We can no longer be described merely by the colour of our skins.

Our government has outlawed from the statute books all derogatory terms that once classified us in the prisms of those who sought to oppress us. At least from the point of view of the law, we are prohibited from hurling racial insults at each other. Built in the conscience of any South African, is a self knowledge that we are one people, distinguished only by our race, our gender, the language we speak, the religion and culture we practice, and whether we are rich or poor. Engraved in our hearts is an invincible spirit that refuses to surrender even when we are confronted with challenges which seem

to be insurmountable. It is this hope, determination and resilience that saw us emerging triumphant in 1994 when we attained our freedom.

Fulfilled and content as we are, for having achieved these milestones on such a short period of time, we are rather sad and worried that our meeting here, coincides with a difficult episode in humanity's calendar. Indeed, one of humanity's bleakest moments in recent history - a man-made catastrophe which threatens not only the survival of economies across the globe, but human beings too. In recorded history such man made catastrophes would always have been preceded by a conventional world war, but in this case it is a catastrophe of its own kind.

Never has it occurred since the 1930's that the world is affected by such a dramatic decline in socio-economic prospects for the majority of its citizens than it is the case now. Of course much has been said and written about the current global economic downturn. It has now spilled over to domestic economies of rich and poorer countries ever-since the advent of the sub-prime mortgage crisis in the United States.

Some economists have called it the second great depression to happen since the infamous 1929 great depression.

(1) Others have dubbed it the "economic turmoil" of our time;

(2) Some have called it the eventual collapse of the "Money God";

(3) In other quarters it has been referred to as the burst of the economic success' "bubble";

(4) Many believe it is a consequence of what happens when individual's wants are exaggerated over people's needs (greed);

(5) Others have been careful to see it as just a simple crisis of overproduction of goods beyond certain sustainable ecological limits.

Honourable Speaker

Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that this challenge is real. It is now affecting the entire globe and especially the developing countries like our own. For our country and the continent generally, this crisis can be seen as more devastating for our people, since it will certainly compound our current socio-economic problems of underdevelopment, unemployment and poverty. It will further create obstacles for development. The potential for reversing some of the gains we have made since 1994 is also huge. It has been predicted that South Africa could slip into a recession by the end of this year, but signs are already showing at this stage, that the country is already feeling the crunch of this meltdown, with the formal unemployment rate of 26% and high levels of poverty.

One of the sectors that is heavily taking the knock from the current economic volatility is agriculture. Everywhere, farmers have been cutting their production capacity in half due to high input costs and non-availability of markets. Big commercial farmers and agro-processing factories are re-adjusting their projections as input costs

like fuel, chemicals, electricity, water and fertilisers hit the ceiling. The result of all this, as we know, has been a deepening problem of food insecurity as the country's agricultural capacity diminishes from being the major food exporter to a net importer.

Over the years the agricultural sector had its own fair share of problems. These will include the complex challenges of land claims and natural disasters or the ever-changing unfavourable climatic conditions. These have led to the decline in the sector, resulting in the shedding of jobs over a period of time. This new global phenomenon will obviously exacerbate the problem of shedding of jobs in the sector than ever before.

The primary mining sector commodities like coal, chrome, diamond and platinum of which our province is one of the major world producers, have also not been spared from this brunt. Anglo Platinum is in the process of retrenching 1 300 workers in Mokopane alone. Twickenham mine has already declared 180 workers redundant and are therefore facing possible retrenchment. Lonmin is shutting down one of its shafts in Zebediela which will result in 1 200 workers losing their jobs. Venetia Mine at Musina will be abolishing 368 positions and currently 137 workers have been given notices of retrenchment. Most subcontracting firms providing supplies to the mining operations in the province are closing down due to the reduction in value of contracts and downsizing, as many of the operations in the mines are being closed down. The projections are that more than 2 500 subcontract workers are going to be laid off.

Other sectors such as metals, engineering, and chemicals have already cut over 8 000 jobs by the end of last year. Overall, *Statistics South Africa* estimates that the country has already shed about 71 000 jobs in various sectors by the third quarter of last year. The objective reality is that this is rendering thousands of families destitute as breadwinners are retrenched, considering the fact that the dependency ratio in our province is very high at 1:8. This implies that on average every income earner supports not less than eight people in the family.

Honourable Speaker

Over and above retrenchments and job losses, this crisis seems to be also impacting heavily on the ability of people to service debt. The National Association of Automobiles Manufacturers of South Africa reports that each month, between 6 000 and 7 000 cars are being repossessed nationally. Banks are repossessing hundreds of homes a month from distressed homeowners and the numbers are rising as the financial position of families worsens. This figure has risen from about 55 000 homeowners in the first quarter to about 75 000 in the third quarter of last year.

In hindsight, it is quite obvious that this picture would have been far worse, had our government not formulated adequate regulatory framework of the financial sector. The National Credit Act came in handy as it was implemented in the latter part of last year. It is important to recognise the fact that this legislation was passed long before the actual global financial crisis erupted.

This was meant to protect our people against crass materialism and a consumerist culture that had begun to rear its ugly head in our society. This proactive measure should be commended because it had avoided what could have been an unprecedented national disaster.

Honourable Speaker

All these statistics which we have given relate largely to your lower middle class - people who have a consistent and reliable source of income. It is common knowledge that this crisis also has an impact on inflation as a result of increasing fuel and food prices. As things stand, the impact that this high inflation has on the unemployed and the poorest of the poor has not been adequately measured. Most unfortunately, for the poor, we may not be in a position to measure the impact through repossessions of their valuables. The only possible repossession the poor could experience is by taking out of their mouths - which simply means that they will go hungry and ultimately face starvation.

Honourable Speaker

Like we have indicated earlier on, calamities of this magnitude are often preceded by war. Globally, the international community was caught off-guard because with this current disaster there were no adequate early warning signs. As such, there was no readiness, common purpose, common approach and collective solidarity which are normally brought about by a war situation.

Chances are that valuable time may be consumed by theoretical debates and arguments about the causes and the appropriate responses to these challenges rather than viable practical responses.

In our province and country, it should not be forgotten that this global economic meltdown happened at a time when the country was on a buoyant mood, prompted by the success of our macro-economic outlook, which had resulted in one of the longest and sustained economic growth rates in recent history.

In the midst of this challenge, government had to immediately develop a rescue stimulus plan to counter the negative effects of this crisis on our people. We chose not to cry over spilt milk, but rather to look at these challenges in the eye and devise means to overcome them. At a national level for instance, we have now been forced to alter some of our plans by adjusting the projected economic growth rate lower. The hallmark of this stimulus plan revolves around increased investment in the roll-out of both social and economic infrastructure. We are quite certain that the MEC for Provincial Treasury will soon outline measures and adjustments to be taken by the province in cushioning citizens and industries against the full impact of this global financial meltdown.

Honourable Speaker

Over and above this global economic meltdown, the world is still reeling from other extraordinary setbacks that continue in different ways to dampen humanity's spirit.



These include challenges such as global warming and climate change, energy shortages, the widening of the gap between rich and poor, poverty, crime, HIV and AIDS, and the endless wars in various parts of the world. These have unfortunately left others wondering whether these are not the sights and signs of the times often talked about in the scriptural book of Revelations.

Compounding all these worries has been the unacceptable economic and humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe. South Africa, our province in particular, has over the years been carrying the burden of political and economic instability that has been happening in that country. The situation worsened late last year with the outbreak of Cholera which as we speak can longer be attributed to the Zimbabwean situation but has now become our own problem.

This outbreak of Cholera has assisted in reminding us of the challenges we still have to overcome in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The common public health and hygiene message of our health promotion campaign has been put to a test. Cholera and many other waterborne diseases remain preventable, and if we heed to this campaign message we can indeed be able to prevent them. Our Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) together with municipalities are called upon to fast-track the provision of clean potable water for domestic use.

Honourable Speaker

We are pleased that at last the Zimbabweans have found each other. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the leaders of Zimbabwe for finally agreeing to form an all inclusive government. This development will hopefully enable them to confront the socio-economic challenges they are faced with, and immediately embark on the reconstruction and development of their country.

Honourable Speaker

Notwithstanding this prevailing sense of powerlessness and hopelessness that is sweeping everywhere across the globe, we should take solace and encouragement from the wise words of wisdom and counsel from our former President, Honourable Thabo Mbeki, when he said *“gloom and despondency have never defeated adversity. Indeed, trying times need courage and resilience. Our strength as a people is not always tested during the best of times, but rather when the times are harder. We therefore should never become despondent because today the weather is bad, nor turn triumphalist tomorrow because the sun shines”*.

In fact, our observation is that many nations faced with various national calamities and challenges often tend to turn these challenges into opportunities and advantages by uniting and developing a viable national response. In many instances, they emerge stronger after they would have overcome the challenges or adversities they faced. Such adversities may even be used to correct difficulties and weaknesses which may not have been possible under normal

circumstances. Historically, many nations have made their dramatic advances in development under conditions of distress.

Honourable Speaker

As it is said, *“in every dark cloud there is always a silver lining”*. Whatever the circumstances we may face now, we must always be steadfast in our determination and unwavering in our commitment to extricate ourselves from these real or perceived difficulties that are currently holding us back.

The current darkness is nothing new compared to the perils which our forefathers and mothers conquered during their lifetime. Problems such as these do not start with us, nor will they end with this generation. Even during Biblical times, there were episodes of hardship which mankind had to endure through the cause of his evolution and development. At any given time, there would have been commitments which would have been made in the form of covenants which would serve as a constant reminder to mankind of the hardships suffered.

Honourable Speaker

The 2004 elections manifesto gave us the mandate of “Building a people’s contract to fight poverty and create work”. In setting out to define and achieve this mandate, we developed a Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS) whose objectives include: improving the quality of life of our people, promoting economic growth

and development, building institutional efficiency and effectiveness of government, fostering social and economic regional integration, and above all, addressing priority programmes such as disability, women empowerment, youth development, poverty alleviation and HIV and AIDS.

We are pleased to note that in the five years since the strategy was adopted and implemented, the entire society is mobilised behind it. Government is better organised, systems are increasingly becoming integrated and our management programmes are in a better shape. There are signs of improvement in dealing with corruption and related maladies, which remain some of the challenges government continues to be confronted with. These improvements reflect that our adopted strategy is indeed working.

There is also confidence and understanding amongst our people that government at all levels is steadily but surely tackling some of the most basic challenges affecting our people. The 2007 Community Survey issued by STATS-SA confirms many of these achievements on the social front.

As we end our term of office, we can confidently say we have done relatively well on the social front. In many instances, we have even exceeded the targets which we have set ourselves. These will include social security grants, no fee schools, breaking new ground on housing delivery and provision of free basic water and electricity. The remaining challenge in this sector would be the covering of the outstanding backlogs and improving the quality of services provided.

Equally, we still have to ensure that the provision of these services should be integrated in order to provide an adequate and sustainable social wage.

We can also claim that we have done relatively well on the economic front. The province has been experiencing a steady economic growth over a period of time. The latest global economic turmoil which we alluded to has a potential to undermine this growth pattern. The envisaged economic stimulus package which the President talked about in his State of the Nation Address will come in handy in this regard.

Honourable Speaker

In the previous State of the Province Addresses, we dealt at length with the challenges and threats to our freedom and democracy. It has been intimated time and again that the biggest threat to our freedom and democracy is this sense of entitlement, which in hindsight, has proven to be a major setback which undermines many liberations on the African continent. Realising the danger of this element, some of the liberation movements which attained freedom much earlier than ourselves, have correctly identified the means and slogans to deal with these falsehood and illusion. One such liberation movement was the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) led by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, who coined the slogan: *Uhuru na Kazi* - which means freedom and hardwork.

This expression was conceived at a time when Africans had been seduced to believe that after the attainment of freedom they would

not be required to work, as freedom alone was enough to guarantee a better life. There would even be instances where property and valuables of the former oppressors would have been taken unduly through the use of force. Everything which had to do with the past would have been deemed as wrong and therefore should be discarded. Ill-informed new experiments, populist and ill-conceived adventures had to be tested. These new experiments would have come at a huge cost, sometimes to the detriment of that poor nation. These sorts of actions have brought about serious setbacks and constrained development, than exploiting the potential which would have existed. The bulk of political instabilities and *coup de tats* which characterise Africa is prompted by this phenomenon.

Honourable Speaker

Equally here in our province and country, there are many others who still hold a belief that freedom means entitlement. Some of our people tend to think that freedom means getting everything free in the literal sense. The assumption is that government has to provide all these free services and amenities, while the masses of our people are passive recipients. Unfortunately, this is also the same mentality which is a source of many conflicts when it comes to government tenders and contracts. The important consideration of capacity and skills sometimes takes the back seat. The damage which this culture has caused to the moral fibre of our society and the efficiency and effectiveness of our government is of untold proportions and immeasurable magnitude. The bulk of service delivery related complaints and protests stems from this phenomenon. These

complaints and protests would relate to poor workmanship in government projects, poor quality of materials used, poor and harsh labour relations (sometimes even non-payment of subcontractors and workers). Every one of us knows about incomplete and abandoned projects which would have already been paid for.

It is our firm belief that we can only overcome this challenge of entitlement if our people were to be taught the true meaning of freedom and democracy. These will entail a deeper understanding that freedom and democracy are not only about rights, but also involve huge responsibilities and obligations. It is therefore important that we inculcate a sense of new work ethics and improved productivity levels, considering the fact that our economy is gradually moving from primary export commodity driven economy to skills and knowledge based economy. Therefore, the need for efficiency and competitiveness cannot be overemphasized. We are equally called upon to employ suitably qualified personnel in order to meet the challenges of our day and time. This would indeed be embracing the true meaning of the slogan: *Uhuru na Kazi -freedom and hardwork*.

Honourable Speaker

There can be no doubt that our current challenges require strong leadership that is prepared to curtail this culture from breeding further. Like Julius Nyerere and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) did in Tanzania, when confronted with a similar challenge, we too also deserve leaders who will rise up to the occasion and confront these issues head on.

There can be no justification for these sorts of practices because in actual fact, they undermine the essence of freedom and democracy which our people struggled and died for. To borrow from Vladimir Lenin in one of his classical collected works, *“whilst revolution is an act of spontaneity on the part of the masses, spontaneity on the part of leadership is often reactionary and counterrevolutionary”*. This teaches us that the hallmark of any good leadership is the ability to make hard choices and take tough decisions in the interest of the people, even if such decisions may be unpopular in some quarters.

At the end of the day, whilst slogans are important, they may not be able to provide solutions to all the problems we are facing. Honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, and selflessness remain the basic ethos of this good leadership we have just alluded to.

Honourable Speaker

Last night our province has had a rare honour and a privilege to host for the first time a FIFA friendly encounter between South Africa and Chile. Once more, we have distinguished ourselves as a destination of choice for many. Our sincere words of thanks go to the management of SAFA and FIFA for giving us an opportunity to host this prestigious event.

The enthusiasm shown by the people of Limpopo surpassed our expectation. We have shown the world that South Africa, Limpopo in particular will present the best soccer tournament ever in 2010. Judging by the previous performances of Bafana Bafana, it has



become clear that we now have a formidable team which is ready to compete with the best of the best in the world.

Honourable Speaker

Honourable President Kgalema Motlanthe has now announced the date of the fourth democratic general elections. As we enter the last term of the second decade of freedom and democracy, the challenges and strains that will eventually define our triumph remain real. It is in this context that we encourage eligible voters to go and cast their votes, for the historical burden bestowed on us by our forebears has not fully disappeared. The quest for humanity to be delivered from hunger, ignorance, backwardness and despair is yet to be fulfilled. However, we find solace and inspiration in knowing that humanity will always conquer.

Honourable Speaker

Let us leave here with a renewed sense of patriotism and loyalty. We should be more inspired and consider ourselves fortunate that we call this province home, and equally lucky that we have been called upon by history to make a contribution to her well being in various capacities in which we serve.

None of the things we did were ever going to be possible without the valued support and cooperation of the various stakeholders. Amongst these we can count on political parties, traditional leaders, civic organisations, faith-based formations, organised business, labour,

sports-people, academics and non-governmental organisations (NGO's) to mention but a few. We wish to pay a special gratitude to each one of them for working hard in order to reach the goal of human fulfillment.

Honourable Speaker

We are confident that, as they have done before, the people of this province do not only want to see Limpopo achieve its development objectives, but also have what it takes to accelerate this process. You are distinguished by your optimism, humbleness, loyalty, resilience and above all, your determination and courage to turn any untenable situation to your advantage and favour. It is this attitude you have, which will continue to strengthen and galvanise the foundation we are building for generations to come. Your collective effort and wisdom has not gone unnoticed. We have come this far working together, united in action, we can do more.

The horizon is clear, go for it!

**I thank you!**