

**ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP CLLR TLOTLANANG
MOGOTLANE THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF WATERBERG
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DURING THE OLDER
PERSONS' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THE
26TH MAY 2016 AT OASIS LODGE IN MOGALAKWENA
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AT 10H00.**

Programme Director,

Mayor of Mogalakwena Local Municipality Cllr Parks Sebetjane,

Chief Whip of the District Cllr Morumudi

Speaker of Waterberg District Cllr Sara Lamola,

MMCs and Councillors,

Representative of Limpopo Older Persons Forum,

Leadership and members of the District Older Persons' Forum,

Acting Municipal Manager, Mr Makondo,

District Senior Manager of the Department of Social Development

Mr Makwela,

Members of the Older Persons from Local Municipalities,

Municipal Electoral Officers present,

Officials from Sector departments and municipalities,

Members of the Media,

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen.

Thobela..Good morning!

Let me from the onset welcome you all to this Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Waterberg District Older Persons Forum. Thank you for making time and space from your busy schedules to attend this AGM. This shows the dedication you have for the advancement of the needs and interests of older persons.

Our gathering here today takes place exactly a day after the celebration of Africa Day by the entire Africans on the 25th May which also marked 53rd Anniversary of the African Union (AU). The theme for celebrating Africa is: **“Build a Better Africa and a Better World”**.

Africa Day celebrates the day when the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the African Union (AU), was formed in 1963. It acknowledges the progress that we, as Africans, have made, while reflecting upon the common challenges we face in a global environment.

The African Union, comprised of 53 member states, has brought together the continent of Africa to collectively address the challenges it has faced, such as armed conflict, climate change, and poverty.

Programme Director, Africa Day was preceded by the Freedom Month which according to our national Calendar is the April Month.

This year`s Freedom Month marked exactly 22 years since fellow South Africans became part of the history by participating in the first democratic elections which born the current dispensation of the democratically elected state.

As a young democracy we need to therefore position the sphere of local government in the fore front of bettering the lives of the people and pushing back the frontiers of poverty.

It is the period that calls on us to reflect and ponder how far we have gone in pushing back the frontiers of poverty and deliver on our mandate bestowed on us by the ruling party which is the African national Congress.

We want to thank and honour all those in the African National Congress and its alliance for working so hard for the past two decades in restoring the dignity of the people of South Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, I strongly believe that the contributions you will make in this meeting will enrich our joint programmes for the development of older persons in the district moving forward. Your contributions will also lead to a common goal of advancing the rights of senior citizens. Working together we can change the way our society perceives and treats older persons.

I am referring to the constitutional rights which are also captured in the Older Persons Act 13 of 2006. The Act calls upon all South Africans to create opportunities for the active participation of older persons in society while working together to address the challenges facing them.

This AGM must promote unity amongst older persons and further provide a platform to share ideas and experiences, because it is only through sharing experiences from your own localities that you can help one another advance the course of older persons in unison.

Don't let others be left behind. Let all of us share some of the challenges we face at the provincial and local level and let this broader forum together find ways to lift up all of its members. Let each one teach one!

Programme Director, this AGM is informed by the two important aspects. The first one is the adoption of the Integrated District Annual Operational Plan for 2016/2017 and Terms of Reference in line with the reviewed and amended Constitution of the South African Older Persons Forum (SAOPF).

We thank all who invested their energies and worked tirelessly in drafting the plan and terms of reference. Your contribution will surely add value to the structure and the performance of the Forum. All your inputs are crucial and they contribute to the improvement of the lives of senior citizens.

Secondly, you will have the opportunity to vote for a new executive committee of the Forum. I appeal to all who will be voting to do so in the interest of the Forum and older persons in general.

Gender equality is a goal that we must always strive for, so when you elect a new executive committee, ensure that it is balanced so that this forum can lead us on gender response policies with regards to older persons.

Programme Director, when the Department of Social Development adopted the Golden Games nine years ago, this was based on the Madrid Plan of Action on Active Ageing. The Madrid Plan of Action is a brain child of the Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in April 2002.

As identified back then, the three main priority areas of the plan remain focused on Older Persons and Development; Advancing Health and Well Being Into Old Age; and Ensuring an Enabling and Supportive Environment.

This guideline continues to serve as a framework for our approach to the Golden Games. Some of the outcomes we seek to include nation building and the overall improvement of the health profile of older persons so that they continue being productive members of our society.

Ladies and gentlemen, as Waterberg District Municipality, we noted with serious concern about the problems and challenges you faced during the 2015 National Golden Games in Kimberly. It cannot be that our senior citizens should be treated in such a manner.

Challenges of accommodation, beds, meals and attire are some of grievances raised. These problems must be raised seriously before any other games are organised so that they are no issue anymore. Let the Department of Social Development puts its house in order going forward.

Programme Director, we shall be going to the Local Government Elections on the 3rd August 2016. We believe that all the older persons in the district have registered to vote.

Our government led by the African National Congress has done more to create a better life for our people, but we still have a lot of work to do. The ruling party needs a fresh mandate to implement progressive programmes that will empower of communities. And the only way is to vote. Go and vote correctly for a better life for all.

As we go through the proceedings of the day, let us remember that we are working together to create a society which enables older persons to participate actively and freely with their rights protected.

We look forward to receiving your progress reports on the work that has been undertaken in the past year; and we anticipate even further the fruitful engagements that will put forward tangible solutions and action plans to the things that hinder our progress in advancing the interests of the elderly.

We salute your dedication and hard work and wish you a productive meeting. Together we move Waterberg Forward.

Thank you