

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE WATERBERG
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY EXECUTIVE
MAYOR CLLR N.R.MOGOTLANE DURING
THE HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATION HELD
ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT MAKAPAN
VALLEY WORLD HRITAGE SITE IN
MOGALAKWENA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.**

Programme Director,

Mayor of Mogalakwena Municipality Cllr Mothibi,

Chairperson of the District Local House of Traditional Leaders,
Kgoshi P.T.Matlala,

Magoshi a rena,

Speakers and Chief Whips in the District.

Members of the Mayoral Committees in the District,

All Councillors present,

Municipal Managers in the District,

Senior Management from Sector Departments and Municipalities,

Officials from government and municipalities,

Community members from our District,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

THOBELA

It is a great honour for me to address you at this heritage site. On behalf of the citizens of Waterberg we want to salute our democratic government led by our glorious Movement, the African National Congress (ANC), for reaffirming the significance of Liberation Heritage as part of the Cultural Heritage of South Africa. Our liberation heritage celebration here today is used as a vehicle to foster social cohesion, nation building, economic development and inclusive citizenship.

Programme Director, the theme for the 2011 Heritage Month is **“Celebrating the Heroes and Heroines of the Liberation Struggle of South Africa”** The aim of the 2011 Heritage Month is to help remind and reconnect the nation with its rich and diverse collective liberation heritage. The objective is to promote national identity among all South African society. It is upon us to raise awareness and illustrate the meaningful importance of liberation heritage to the youth. The youths are the future of this country and knowledge of their Culture and Heritage is of paramount importance.

Programme Director, We are meeting here during the Heritage month. It is during this month that we celebrate the contribution made by our heroes and the heroines who played a major role in the liberation of our country. It is during this month that all organs of civil society celebrate the achievements of our forefathers and the role played by Traditional leaders and Traditional Healers in the struggle for liberation.

The history of the Liberation Struggle in South Africa was a result of the imposed oppressive systems engineered by Western countries and/ or Colonial States. The scramble for Africa by European countries intensified efforts by indigenous Africans to resist subjugation. All over Africa the struggle for liberation against political, economic and social independence had far reaching implications.

Programme Director, South Africa underwent various phases of oppressive and repressive systems namely:

- The Pre-Colonial era was destabilised by an imperialist colonial system of land dispossession and economic exploitation in which harsh taxes such as Hut and Poll Tax of 1096 were introduced to forcibly convert indigenous peoples from being land owners to cheap labourers;
- The resistance movements during the Pre-Colonial period were mainly led by unsung Heroes and Heroines such as Kings, Chiefs and Warriors- in our case we have Kgoshi Mokopane who gallantly fought against the Voortrekkers led by Heman Potgieter.
- This period particularly after the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, led to the shift from traditional approach of resistance to a modern approach of political mobilisation. On 8 January 1912 the South African Native National Congress and later called the African National Congress (ANC) was established. There were other political formations that followed but the objective remained, which was the attainment of political and economic freedom. These resistance movements together with other successive political, labour, students and arts and culture movements produced and continue to produce prominent Heroes and Heroines.

Programme Director, the 2011 theme of “ **celebrating Heroes and Heroines of the Liberation Struggle in South Africa**” will assist in branding South Africa as one of the greatest theatres of struggle, spaces of pain, victory over oppressive systems of governance and most importantly a world recognised model of reconciliation and nation-building. We are gathered here today to construct awareness through exhibitions, dance, songs and site visits so as to reinforce our collective memory and promote national identity. These sites, like Mankweng World Heritage Site are related to the liberation struggle icons, events and collective memories of communities, groups and individuals.

Programme Director, names of iconic figures and collective memories of our past history and present forms part of the South African Liberation Heritage. We are celebrating our proximity to great leaders of our land who are internationally recognised and held in high esteem and stature. We are talking of O.R.Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Chief Albert Lithuli, Chris Hani, Water Sisulu, Lillian Ngoyi and many of our Heroes and Heroines. South Africa also acknowledges the support and solidarity provided by its neighbouring African Nations States during the era of oppression and there are Heritage Sites and Infrastructure named after this iconic African leaders. Samora Machel Monument in Mpulanaga and the Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in North-West are some of the example.

Ladies and gentlemen, there are untapped heritage and tourism sites in the District. Many of them are in our rural areas and we must be able to identify them so that we develop a database for all of them. Let us make liberation heritage our heritage as the Waterbergers.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to call upon all of us to take part in the 2011 Census. It is the responsibility of every one of us to be counted. The Census assists government in the planning process for efficient service delivery. It is very important to allow census officials in our homes to do their job. Working together we can do more.

IN THANK YOU

