

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP CLLR ROSINA  
MOGOTLANE THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF WATERBERG  
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DURING THE OLDER PERSONS  
INDABA HELD ON TH 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014 AT LEBU VILLAGE IN  
LEPHALALE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AT 11H00.**

**Programme Director,**

**Mayor of Lephalale Local Municipality Cllr Maeko,**

**Speakers and Chief Whips in the District,**

**MMCs and Exco members,**

**All Councillors present,**

**District and Local Leadership of the Older Persons Forum**

**Senior Citizens and members of the Older Persons forum,**

**Officials from Sector Departments and municipalities,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and gentlemen.**

**Dumelang... Thobela.**

This event takes place as we celebrate Freedom Month and the achievements of 20 years of Freedom and democracy in South Africa.

It is a month worth remembering as we recollect the brutal killing of one of the doyen of our Struggle, Chris Hani by the evil system. Together with other fallen heroes of our struggle, we take this opportunity to thank them for the important role they played in our struggle for liberation. It is through their efforts and the love of South Africa that we have a good story to tell.

Programme Director, this event takes place as we prepare ourselves for National and Provincial elections.

20 years ago the people of South Africa, in their millions, voted for the first time to usher the freedom that we enjoy today. It was in 1994, when our glorious movement, the African National Congress, took power and South Africa was liberated from the shackles of apartheid and oppression.

Programme Director, it will be unfair not to mention that our senior citizens and older persons gathered here today, fought gallantly in the struggle for our liberation. We want to thank you for the role you played during those hard and tough times. We are enjoying the fruits of freedom because of the contribution you made in order to free our country. We cannot tell a good story without you because you were the backbone of courage to fight for this freedom that we are talking about.

South Africa has a unique opportunity to leverage on this week as part of the build up towards 20 Years of Freedom celebrations. Older persons have been part of this journey. Additionally this week provides the unique opportunity of showcasing and sharing with the nation the services offered to the elderly by government. We also celebrate senior citizenship in the role and contribution they played in the attainment of democracy in South African and in building functional families.

As we celebrate the achievement of our freedom we also take into consideration the challenges that our elderly are still facing:

- Hardships endured by elderly include the burden of poverty and moral decay in communities.
- Crimes targeted at elderly due to their vulnerability such as rape and abuse of social grants money by care givers and families.
- The White Paper on Families refers to skip-generation households as follows:
  - Where grandparents live with, and are responsible to care for, their grandchildren.
  - Skip-generation households have often been described as “fragile” largely because the grandparents in the households

often simultaneously struggle with their own personal health, custodial matters, financial constraints and obligations as well as with the psychosocial and behavioural issues they face with their grandchildren.

- Most elderly in South Africa still provide economic support (basic needs for shelter, food and spiritual development of children) in the families with their little resources- mainly through social grants.
- They also still have to nurture, support and facilitate socialization, including instilling social values and norms. On the other side, they are catered for by the law under the umbrella of “Protection of vulnerable members” which provides care and support.

Ladies and gentlemen, our democratic government, led by the ANC, is committed to:

- Promote a caring government that aims to build a better life for all citizens, especially the vulnerable (elderly citizens).
- Issues facing older persons as highlighted in the in the 2030 Vision a plan to address them.
- Celebrating older persons within the context of the role they played in the 20 years of democracy
- Various measures, programmes, interventions and opportunities for older persons, e.g.
  - Social grants: Old Age Pension Grant
  - Healthy lifestyles: Promoting healthy living and chronic illness management services and information available
  - Crime: Strengthening protective mechanisms aimed at protecting and advancing the interests of vulnerable groups such as elderly and people with disabilities.
  - Education: Adult basic education and skills development

Programme Director, older persons are incredible assets to the nation. We must take care and listen to our elderly people; they have knowledge and wisdom that can strengthen our foundation of building a better life for all.

Government will never be able to achieve an enabling environment for the protection and promotion of rights of older persons without the active participation, cooperation and support of the community and especially organisations such as those of civil society and the faith based sector.

We call on all South Africans to respect, protect and promote the rights of older persons as contained in our laws.

We call on the youth to take play a key role in the development of a caring society, particularly for older persons.

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We call on all South Africans to respect, protect and promote the rights of older persons as contained in our laws. Working together we can ensure that we prevent any exploitation and abuse of older persons.

Programme Director, the International Day of Older Persons is celebrated on the 1 October each year. This Indaba is a prelude to the celebration towards the end of 2014. Let us make sure that what we plan today should form part of the International Day of Older persons later in the year.

Let me take this opportunity to call upon all of us to go and vote on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014. We also call upon family members to help our elderly to various voting stations to vote for democracy and freedom.

Working together we have done more to move our country forward.  
Please drive safely to our homes and arrive alive.

**I THANK YOU.**