

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MEC OF LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (COGHSTA) MR. BASIKOPO MAKAMU ON THE OCCASION OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT IN YEAR MONITORING MEETING: POLOKWANE, CAPRICORN DISTRICT**

**Tuesday, 08 December 2020**

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**“THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN.”**

Head of Department

Colleagues

Good Morning

My first official engagement upon my deployment to COGHSTA was a workshop on initiation schools hosted by the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders. I later presided over the launch of the initiation school season.

Then followed a rigorous briefing programme on the business of each branch. I came out of this programme informed enough about the mandate of the department, to pronounce with authority on it.

Once I had settled in the department, I got to engage with the Limpopo Provincial Legislature and its committees such the Portfolio Committee on COGSTA, Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Standing Committee on Public Participation and Petitions, and other oversight structures of the Legislature, National Assembly and National Council of Provinces.

The performance of the Department is also the subject of monitoring and evaluation by the Transversal Audit Committee and the Office of the Auditor-General.

The monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the Department is not limited to recognised and legal bodies. Our clients, the publics that we serve, also pass judgement on the performance of the Department through the media and public participation programmes like the one we hosted in Musina recently.

Today you have convened as the Senior Management Service for what is supposed to be a monthly exercise to discuss the In Year Monitoring Report of the Department. We are required to monitor progress on the Department's Operational Plan, produce, consider and to act on monthly and quarterly reports, which are to be submitted to the Executive Authority and Treasury.

Carried out to its finality, In Year Monitoring is an early morning signal to make us aware where we are lacking or falling short.

Early detection of shortcomings enable us to mitigate and overcome them before they get out of control and overwhelm us.

In line with the best practice guidelines on In Year Management, Monitoring and Reporting your agenda covers the whole spectrum of the mandate of the Department, including IYM reports from April to date, the Audit Action Plan and Progress and Progress on Procurement Plan 2020/21.

Looking at the agenda, I am hopeful that the Department can return to its multi-award winning pedigree. Our stationery still bear the legend, "Brought to you by multi-award winning Department," as an indication that we have not given up regain our greatness.

I am convinced that we can still be a multi-award winning Department. The colleagues, who made the Department a multi-award winner, are still here. What we need is to be place them correctly and support them accordingly. The reviewed organisational structure and the staff recruitment plan must see us to the attainment of this greatness and improve performance on our mandates.

I am aware that this meeting finds us in the midst of a pandemic the world has never experienced. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused us a lot of distress and disrupted how we work.

For a long period, we had to stay away from our workstations, work virtually from home and retain at work only those colleagues designated as essential services workers.

We lost huge portions of the budget to the fight against the coronavirus. These budget cuts affected and continue to affect our performance immensely. We have no choice but to make the best with what we have under circumstances imposed on us by the coronavirus.

Life has reverted to normal though. All the sectors of the economy are now open. Colleagues are back to their workstations.

Your return and of all the other colleagues spread across the province is worth celebrating. That we registered no casualties is worthy a double celebration.

As we celebrate our survival of the first wave of the pandemic and the reopening of the economy and other activities, let us get down to working and making a success of our mandates.

Among the items on the agenda is ICT Infrastructure and Network to support the new normal.

The pandemic has imposed the new normal on the world. Either we adapt to the new normal, or we die. Matters are as simple as that.

In the early days of the National Lockdown, we learnt and mastered to work virtually. This is the new way of doing things. It is no longer for the nerds who are ICT-savvy, but for all of us. We must put in place systems and structures to harness the Fourth Industrial Revolution to enhance our performance and be part of the highly competitive global village.

I owe you a word of gratitude for literally carrying the Department on your shoulders to this stage during a trying period in the history of humanity. Scientists are working hard against the clock to find a vaccine, and there is hope for a breakthrough soon and a return to a life of risks of the coronavirus.

Returning to the In Year Monitoring, let us sharpen our monitoring tools for early detection of weaknesses and underperformance. Early detection will save the Department time resources, time and effort. Who knows, we may even attain the elusive clean audit!

In your work to fulfil the mandate of the Department you have my utmost support and confidence. I am with you all the way. Your work is recognised and commended in the department and everywhere in the province and in the country. I carry your good work to all the forums I participate in. I am the number one fan of your work.

I am the proud supporter of Team COGHSTA under the leadership of Me. Ngaka Dumalisile.

I wish you fruitful deliberations during this session of the In Year Monitoring Meeting. Let us emerge from here in a better position to take up our responsibilities with precision for enhanced impact in our day to day work to deliver on our mandates.

By way of information, I am glad to announce a great breakthrough in bringing to the end the protracted demarcation dispute in Vuwani. Yesterday we signed a settlement agreement with the Pro-Makhado Demarcation Task Team which sees Collins Chabane Local Municipality resume service delivery in Vuwani and surrounding areas.

In the same breath on Thursday, 03 December 2020, we met with the Executive Committee of Limpopo Provincial House of Traditional Leaders and Vha-Venda Senior Traditional Leaders to mediate their differences, which saw the latter withdrawing from the House. Much progress was made during the meeting, and we

are confident that a resolution will be found and the Vha-Venda Senior Traditional Leaders will resume their places and participation in the House.

I thank you.