

COGHSTA MEC MR BASIKOPO MAKAMU - KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE CAPRICORN DISTRICT INTERGOVERNMENT RELATIONS FORUM

VENUE: EUPHORIA GOLF ESTATE

DATE: 06 MAY 2022

TIME: 10:00

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CAPRICORN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, CLLR
MAMEDUPI TEFFO

THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF POLOKWANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR JOHN MPE
MAYOR OF LEPELLE-NKUMPI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR MERIAM MOLALA

MAYOR OF BLOUBERG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR MARIA THAMAGA

MAYOR OF MOLEMOLE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR MASILO PAYA

THE SPEAKER OF THE CAPRICORN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, CLLR MASEKA PHEEDI
AND SPEAKERS OF LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES PRESENT

THE CHIEF WHIP OF THE CAPRICORN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, CLLR CHUENE
MALEBANA

AND OTHER CHIEF WHIPS OF LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES PRESENT

MEMBERS OF MAYORAL COMMITTEES AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

TRADITIONAL LEADERS WHO HAVE GRACED THIS EVENT, YOUR PRESENCE RAISES
THE STANDARD OF OUR GATHERING – WE APPRECIATE YOU

MUNICIPAL MANAGERS AND OTHER MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS PRESENT HERE

COGHSTA DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS

AND MEDIA PERSONNEL PRESENT – WE TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FACT THAT THIS
WEEK THE WORLD COMMEMORATED PRESS FREEDOM DAY – WE VALUE AND
CELEBRATE YOU AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO PRESS FREEDOM...

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A few days ago South Africa joined the rest of the world in marking Workers' Day, otherwise referred to as May Day. The day is indispensable to our history and struggle for liberation. The fight for workers' rights was just one in the many demands the majority of South Africans had in the struggle for wholistic freedom. Since our democracy, our government, as led by our cherished movement, the African National Congress, has seen to many improvements to the conditions and environments in which laborers work. We are confident that the astute leadership of our President, his excellency Vho-Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa will see to further advances and heeding to the cries of our workers.

In this dire economical state the globe finds itself in, our organized workers are indispensable to our efforts to develop our economy. Workers and their trade unions are at the economic heart of our country. It is they who put the food on our tables and build the facilities that deliver much needed services to our people.

Workers are the centre cog in the service delivery machine that is local government. I therefore encourage you as leaders in your different municipalities

and roles to work closely with organised labour to advance the rights of workers, and in the process, see to the unhindered delivery of services to our people.

I myself practice this in the department which I lead. Our colleagues from NEHAWU can testify of the robust and progressive deliberations we hold, my interactions with them have proven to be vital to the broader work of the department.

Programme Director,

It gives me great pleasure today to congratulate the executive mayor of the Capricorn district municipality, local mayors under the district, Speakers and councilors in their various capacities for being elected in the positions that you occupy. While it may have been a hard-fought victory for yourselves personally, it is however a call to service from the people who have elected you.

It is vital to remember that you may belong to a political party, but while in office, your responsibility is not towards the political party you have sworn allegiance to, it is to your entire community. The delivery of basic services and the general improvement of the quality of the lives of South Africans under your municipalities are obligations that fall squarely on you and I.

For this reason, these Intergovernmental Forums, that are constitutionally empowered, become pivotal as they allow a confluence of information, minds and other resources that are within our grasp to serve our communities.

They are aimed at creating a perfect platform for engagement, with only one purpose, that is to deal decisively with all service delivery issues affecting our institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2022 marks 28 years since the dawn of our democracy in 1994. We are fast approaching the 3 decades milestone of the country's constitutional democracy and local governance. As such, this development comes with a deep call and yearning for a more mature – well-oiled and functioning local sphere of government for our people.

Local government is at the coalface of what and how the fine concept of governance and democracy are meant to be to our people. The freedom that we hold dear can only be truly fully manifested to our people, if local government functions as a peg for the provincial and national government's full expression.

Our democracy can only be fully expressed if our local government has a healthy financial outlook and provides the basic services that are due to our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We meet at a time when the COVID-19 Lockdown levels have been at their most relaxed in a little over two years because of the outstanding work done by our government and health workers.

I have observed over the past two years how some of our districts and their IGR Forums surrendered to the challenges of COVID19 and did not hold their quarterly meetings as they were required to. But I must give credit where it is due. You here at the Capricorn District, held your IGRs faithfully. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on this. Municipal Managers and Mayors alike, while you postponed your IGR meetings in some instances, you were always true to hold them at the agreed date. For that you deserve an applause.

Now that we are, as a country, at a point where we can meet physically, I expect you to continue holding these forums with no challenges. There is consequently no reason for the forums not to take place once per quarter.

As you set your sights to the months and years ahead, I encourage that Municipal Managers continue to diarize these Forums, and for you Mayors to set aside time to attend them. I want to discourage you from the temptation of constantly swapping members of the forum, this has the unenviable result of depleting the forum of institutional memory. Adhere to the internal rules of the forum, and follow up on the resolutions taken at these meetings. This will further solidify the running of this important structure.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a government, we are swiftly moving towards integrated budgeting and planning through the District Development Model, as championed by President Ramaphosa.

The two are not only concepts, nor are they operating in silos. DDM and Intergovernmental relations are how we operate government coherently and effectively. They are closely linked, and in fact, draw strength from each other.

The DDM is driven by the Premier of the Province through the Premier Intergovernmental Forum and supporting structures, including the very structure we are establishing today.

The Office of the Premier, CoGHSTA and Provincial Treasury are coordinating the process to finalize the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) of municipalities, as well as District wide 5 year IDP's and the long term DDM District One Plans per district.

The 5 year IDP will serve as a tool to implement long term district one plans reflecting priority catalytic projects for each district space. All priority projects in the District One Plans, based on the comparative and competitive advantage of each district space, within all three spheres including Provincial and local spheres of government as well as State Owned Entities, should be aligned to the LDP priorities and DDM principles and monitoring to be reported on quarterly basis.

The District Development Model aims to improve the coherence of government service delivery, and IGR forums such as this one here in the Capricorn District will play a very important supporting role to the success thereof.

Programme Director,

We recently held a virtual meeting to discuss the Recovery Plans for your Municipal Infrastructure Grants. We know that as a district the underspending on the MIG rests on over R176 million.

We cannot for any reason or moment be evaded by the monumental purpose of this grant, which is for the eradication of municipal infrastructure backlogs in poor communities to ensure the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, roads and community lighting. Each mayor and municipal manager here have presented their plans to spend this money within the end of June deadline.

Mayors, I want to plead with you to monitor that the money is spent according to the recovery plans you presented, that copies of these plans are submitted to our department to ensure we oversee this process and that the deadline is adhered to.

There is no reminder necessary of the dire need to develop our communities especially when the provisions are made available.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Two weeks ago Premier Chupu Mathabatha, Treasury MEC, Seaparo Sekwati and myself met with the Auditor General, Tsakani Maluleke to discuss the province's Municipal Audit Outcomes for the 2020/21 Financial Year.

You will be aware by now that according to her report, 4 municipalities regressed, 4 improved, while 14 and 5 maintained unqualified and qualified audit outcomes respectively. On that note, I want to unreservedly celebrate the Waterberg District Municipality for achieving a Clean Audit Outcome.

Most of the municipalities under the Capricorn district have remained on Unqualified audit findings. However, it is important for me to particularly encourage the Polokwane Municipality to improve on its standings as it has been stagnant on a Qualified outcome since the 2016/17 Financial year.

While in the most parts we have seen the steady financial health of most municipalities continue from the previous year, we are concerned about the four municipalities that have regressed.

They are Mopani District, Capricorn District, Bela Bela Local Municipality and Greater Giyani Local Municipality. This is seriously concerning. As a district

Municipality, much is expected of CDM, and I want to say to the mayor that we expect improvement and for your municipality to lead accordingly.

But it is more disturbing that both Bela Bela and Mopani have sunken us back to the world of disclaimers. For this reason, myself as the MEC for COGHSTA, will institute a Rapid Assessment Programme at Mopani District Municipality, Giyani and Bela Bela Local. We will leave nothing behind in ensuring that we resurface from the lower levels of disclaimer audit outcomes.

According to the Auditor General's report, the total unauthorised expenditure increased from R1,9 billion to R3,6 billion. Among the top five municipalities that have been found to have contributed to this unauthorized expenditure in our province are Polokwane and Lepelle-Nkumpi on R614 million and R257 million respectively.

The non-submission of procurement documents and non-compliance with the MFMA generally are also worrying trends.

It was also an observation and a concern raised by the Auditor General that there is a high reliance on consultants by our municipalities. Section 62 of the MFMA places responsibilities on the accounting officer of a municipality to manage the

financial administration of a municipality. We understand that in some instances there is a capacity challenge, and in those situations, we encourage that these consultants are used to provide a skills transfer so that their lifespan with the municipality is reduced.

The high vacancy rate of critical positions in the municipality is not something that should be allowed to continue either.

It is incumbent on you colleagues to change this trajectory and improve the financial outlook of these municipalities. COGHSTA, Treasury and SALGA are at your disposal, use them wisely.

In addition, we have recently launched the provincial Municipal Public Accounts Committee to help enhance oversight in municipalities. I encourage a good working relationship between the various speakers of municipalities and MPAC Chairs. MPAC researchers as well must be given support to hold the various executives at municipalities accountable.

In closing ladies and gentlemen,

I want to remind you that only good governance and ethical leadership is expected from all of you. In the main, the people of Capricorn District are looking

upon this leadership that has gathered here today, for solutions to all their challenges. We dare not fail them.

I thank you.