

COGHSTA MEC BASIKOPO MAKAMU KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON
THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF KGOSHI MAILE
CLIFFORD SEBELA UNDER GREATER TZANEEN LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY, MOPANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

DATE: 13 MAY 2022 – SEBELA VILLAGE

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE MOPANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, CLLR PULE
SHAYI

MAYOR OF GREATER TZANEEN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, CLLR GERSON MOLAPISANE

CHAIRPERSON OF THE LIMPOPO HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS, KGOSHI
MALESELA DIKGALE

THE QUEENSHIP OF THE MODJADJI ROYAL FAMILY – WE HOLD YOUR PRESENCE
HERE VERY HIGHLY AS IT LIFTS THE STANDARD OF THIS OCCASION

SENIOR TRADITIONAL LEADERS PRESENT HERE

KGOSHI MAILE CLIFFORD SEBELA, WHO TAKES CENTRE STAGE AS THE REASON WE
HAVE GATHERED HERE TODAY, WE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR HAVING US

THE SEBELA ROYAL FAMILY AND ROYAL COUNCIL

MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL HOUSES

PASTORS REPRESENTING DENOMINATIONS OF CHURCHES

ESTEEMED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

I greet you,

Thobela,

Programme Director,

Young leaders are as the arrows that piece into the invisible membrane of tomorrow, their eagerness and the fire in their veins is the vigor that often thrusts a people into new unimagined heights. It is on their shoulders that much of the hope of the elders rests. However, you will know, that zeal without the wisdom of grey hair can often lead to destruction.

It is precisely for this reason, ladies and gentlemen, that I find great pleasure in presiding over an event such as this, where a young visionary Senior Traditional Leader in Kgoshi Maile Clifford Sebela is given this fitting task in the presence of his people, and while surrounded by a supportive and wise council of elders.

It is indeed an honour to lead this ceremony on behalf of our honourable Premier, Chupu Stanley Mathabatha, and our entire Limpopo provincial government. Rest assured Kgoshi, that while the Premier would have desired to be physically present with us for this inauguration, he has indeed given it both his support and blessing.

Programme Director,

The stars have aligned. The Inauguration of Kgoshi Sebela today takes place during a significant month, not only for our country, but for the continent of Africa as well.

Since 1963 the month of May has been globally recognized as Africa month, these 31 days have been set aside to celebrate African diversity and success.

To highlight the cultural and economic potential that exists on the African plain. The celebrations acknowledge the progress that Africans have made, while reflecting upon the common challenges we face in a global, regional and local context.

While culture and diversity are central to undoing the damage done to our people by the evil tentacles of colonialism, the significance of this month transcends just that. It goes to the essence of South Africa's constitutional democracy.

As we celebrate Africa Month, we dare not forget the role played by our Traditional Leaders in our country's claim to liberation. We are alive to the critical stand they made in the face of gunpowder and hatred in the struggle for liberation.

They were there when our glorious movement the African National Congress was born in 1912, they have fought wars of resistance.

They were there and fought against colonization of a special type and apartheid, until the democratic breakthrough of 1994. So we owe, in large parts, for our freedom, which was not free, to our Senior Traditional Leaders.

We dare not forget the role played by, among other traditional leaders, Nghunghunyane, Sekhukhune and Makhado. They took up their cudgels despite being outgunned, to defend their land, their dignity and freedom.

Some lost, and some won, but their sacrifices and leadership is the foundation to which our democracy is founded. Our country still bears the scars of the battles of our past, and for many of our people, the trauma is still a reality today.

Many advancements have been made by our government, but there is still a lot of work to be done to undo the effects of our oppressed past.

Programme Director,

As we meet today, we do so as descendants of these valiant fighters, in a different setting, to cast our eyes to the future with excitement, to promote unity, reconciliation and development.

We acknowledge that much as history has not been kind to our people, it has not spared the Sebela Traditional Authority. Under the apartheid regime, your chieftaincy was revoked when infighting and disunity infiltrated your royal house in the early 1970s.

Today, under this democratic government as led by the African National Congress, we celebrate with you, as your Senior Traditional Leadership status is restored.

It pleases us as a government to see your traditional royal authority being reaffirmed and strengthened in the fashion that it is on this special occasion.

The sacrifices of Freedom Fighters, alive and fallen, are suitably honoured.

But let me say this, that while it was the persistent efforts of the late Kgoshigadi Sodi Sebela, and the Tribal Authority under the reign of the late Kgoshi Masekane Sebela, that eventually saw the Kgatla Commission restore the status of this royal house.

It will be the unity that we have seen when the royal family unanimously chose Kgoshi Maile Sebela to lead it, that will guarantee its future hereafter. We urge you continue in this togetherness.

We are aware that in the period underwhich the Sebela Royal Family's status was relegated to headmanship, they served under the Bakgaga Ba Maake Traditional House.

It is indeed pleasing to see that representatives of the Maake Traditional Authority are here with us to support this inauguration. This kind of selflessness and endeavour to build is what our institution of Traditional Leaders needs to sustain it for the benefit of our people.

As the MEC for COGHSTA, I have witnessed in many occasions instances where recognitions and inaugurations of Senior Traditional Leaders are delayed because of conflicts in royal families.

Accompanied with the delay to inaugurate, is the derailment of the promotion of social cohesion and economic development in the community.

The Sebela Royal family has set an outstanding example for how the transfer of the role of Kgoshi is meant to be handled by royal houses.

I have also seen at times instances where community members who are not part of the Royal Family attempt to force their opinions on the choosing of an heir in the royal family.

This is unacceptable and must not be promoted. There's a saying in my language Xitsonga, and it says "a hi xigholonyani xi kokaku donki, i donki yi kokaku xigholonyani". It translates to – "it is not the cart that pulls the donkey, it is the donkey that pulls the cart".

Matters in the royal family must be left strictly for the Royal Family. I call upon community members to respect these and other traditional customs.

Programme Director,

It is evident that this Royal Family has invested much in the life of Kgoshi, giving him the necessary nurturing and education, preparing him for the responsibility that is officially confirmed on his shoulders today.

Kgoshi, much will be expected of you, but we believe that you were born for this position, and therefore, you are more than ready for the work ahead.

In line with our country's constitution, you are called upon to promote democratic governance, gender equality, human dignity, enhance culture and tradition, and promote the fair administration of justice among other expectations in your community.

As a province, not many of our Senior Traditional Leaders have youth on their side. And as one who is fortunate to be walking into this responsibility at such a time in your life, there is much that both government and your people will require of you.

Your ingenuity, your potency, innovativeness, and your courage to lead with bravery and selflessness are just but some of the qualities we look forward to witnessing in your reign.

Our government, as led by our glorious movement, the African National Congress, has seen to it that the institute of Traditional Leaders is recognized constitutionally. And as such, it has privileges and responsibilities set aside for you to fulfill.

Among these, Kgoshi, is the responsibility to create an atmosphere for your people to thrive economically. I was recently in Nkuzana village, where the working relationship between the traditional authority there, the Collins Chabane municipality and business developer Dr Mike Nkuna, has seen to the building of a monumental development for that district.

The Nkuna SmartCity is a catalytic development, and an example of what happens when Traditional Authorities working hand in hand with their local municipalities, create conducive environments for business to thrive.

As a Senior Traditional Leader, you have a responsibility to work closely with your local municipality, to identify strategic land for development, supported by municipal planning policies such as the Spatial Development Framework.

But in the same breath, we encourage both developers and municipalities to ensure that they include Traditional Leaders in the work of developing the land. There is much potential in advancing gains in agriculture, real estate, and retail.

The inclusion of the community through their Senior Traditional Leaders will unlock much potential.

Do not treat them as visitors in the boardrooms where Municipal Frameworks such as Spatial Development are discussed, they are an integral part to the community's eco-system of growth and economic development.

Programme Director,

Over a year ago on the 23rd of April, the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act came into effect. Besides formally recognizing the Khoisan Leadership, the Act will reconstruct our traditional councils.

It is an immense transformation to the institute of traditional leaders, as it instructs that our traditional councils reform to constitute components of people that are both elected by the traditional leader, and another component that will be democratically elected.

This second group will be made up of different members of the community inclusive of women, young people, and other otherwise marginalized groups.

The deadline for the finalization of the programme is just under a year away in April next year, and I am proud to announce that there is much progress made in the preparations.

The budget and project plan have been approved, a task team has been established and the department of COGHSTA is in the process of appointing the members of the Working Committee.

Workshops for Senior Traditional Leaders on the constitution of these councils have already been concluded in all districts but Mopani. A date is currently being set for one to be conducted in this district soon.

Furthermore, Premier Mathabatha has approved the appointment of the IEC as the implementing agent, for conducting elections for the 40% component of the members of the traditional council, that will be elected by the community.

I want to encourage you, members of the community, to participate when the time comes to for the democratic election of this second component.

I implore you to elect people who will work hard to put the best interests of the community's development first. Thereby ensuring that Traditional Councils can be further strengthened to be centers of community development.

In Conclusion programme director,

To the Sebela Communities and villages under the reign of Kgoshi Sebela, here is your leader. He has been duly elected by the Royal Family as is African custom. He has also been recognized by our Premier Mathabatha as is constitutionally directed.

The success and future of this community is on his shoulders. We encourage you, community members, to support him accordingly. Today, Kgoshi, in front of all of your loved ones, community members and his ancestors, and on behalf of the provincial government, ably led by Premier Mathabatha, we hereby duly officially inaugurate you.

Kea Leboga