

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF  
MOTHEO DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, Me. FANISWA CHAINE AT THE  
CELEBRATION OF THE WOMEN'S DAY.**

The Chairperson of BloemWater Board and Board Members,  
The Executive Mayor of Mangaung Local Municipality,  
Members of the Executive Council and Mayoral Committees present,  
The CEO of Bloemwater, Me. Nolene Morris,  
Municipal Mangers present,  
Senior Managers from various fields of work,  
Employees of Bloemwater,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year marks the 51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of 1956 August 9 Women march against the pass law. 2007 also marks the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary commemoration of the launch of the Progressive Women Movement of South Africa that was launched last year during the August month and yet, today, Bloemwater join the women of South Africa in this important month of women.

Programme Director, it is said that, *Mosadi o tshwara thipa ka bohaleng*. This is one of the Sotho saying that describes the character of a woman. Women are people who do not fear danger rather confront it particularly when they are faced with difficulties. They always find a solution in a problem and that defines their nature.

As we celebrate the Women's Day three days from today, we should remember that the struggle is not yet over in ensuring women emancipation because we have just begun a long journey to our freedom as women.

We are faced with many challenges both socially; economically and politically. We need to ensure that we overcome all these challenges; amongst them, leadership, literacy, poverty, abuse of women and that of children. These struggles can not be won over night as the more the country get transformed, the more challenges continues manifests themselves in the society.

Programme Director, I must say that, the nation might believe that women are given more advantage in this government compared to their male counter part; but this is not true if we look into placement of women in positions of authority.

If I may make reference, we may all look in private companies, women are very few in high echelons of power and even in government, most women are placed in middle and lower management positions, this simply shows the need for us to begin striving towards leadership positions and furthermore ensure that we support each other every step of the way.

Programme Director, what I referred to as challenges; have been there even before 1956 as we may trace the history of women struggle. The significance of the Women's Day is that, it is the day on which women swell the streets in Pretoria and said in one voice: Enough is Enough with the apartheid pass law. The law that forced African men and women to carry passes along with

them everywhere they gone and failure to do so was equivalent to jail punishment.

This law was applicable only to black people in general but Africans in particular. If you were white, the law was not applicable to you. The struggle continued for women emancipation even after the battle was won against the pass laws. Women struggle as was categorized as triple oppression. Women characterized their oppression in three fold, that is, women are oppressed as being women, as employees and in terms of race.

The significance of this day is for us as women to look back where we come from and where we are and shape the future. It is at this time of our history, where our struggle has taken a turn to being both confrontational and complementary in nature, we need to be more focused on the future as to where we would like to see ourselves as women in five (5) to ten (10) years both socially, economically and politically.

Programme Director, looking on challenges I referred to earlier and positioning them to Bloemwater as an institution; I need to say we are on track with challenges. I became very proud as a woman to realize the commitment taken by Bloemwater to appoint a woman at the helm of the institution wherein she is entrusted with a responsibility to steer the institution both administratively and strategically.

I also have to say, every one of us has a potential to grow and we only have to work hard towards our success much as the society we are part of, is mostly steered by men and we need to close the gap if we really want to

realize our fair representation at all disciplines of society not because we are women, but because we have a capacity to deliver.

We need to manage our ambitions in line with our potentials, capacity and career path. We need to boldly say, we must be firstly viewed as human beings before we could be regarded as women. This analysis is the one that has demeaned women for many decades and must come to an end.

Let us work our way up the ladder of success and support each other, then we can succeed.

Programme Director, before I conclude; I would like to remind the audience that, the women's struggle is not only waged in this country but in the world. I believe we all remember the case of Aminah Lawal (Mama) whom we won her case because women were united in action, the outstanding case of Constable Rasuge which still has to be resolved as to whether is missing or dead, the truth still has to come out.

As we celebrate this month and day, we need remember all women who were killed, raped and continue to suffer domestic violence and put them on our prayers as well as children who continue to suffer all these forms of abuse.

In conclusion, I would like to call upon all of you in this hall to join all activities in this month as convened by women in celebration of the women's month and remember, the struggle is not yet over.

Thank you!