

**EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S ADDRESS ON THE OCCASION OF THE
INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY MEDIA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS BY
MOTHEO DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY: May 14, 2010,
BLOEMFONTEIN**

Programme Director

The Mayor of Mantsopa Local Municipality, Cllr D. Ntsepe

The Speaker of our Municipality, Cllr J. Erasmus

MDM Councilors present here today

Councilors from our constituent municipalities

The Acting Municipal Manager

Senior Managers

Representatives from the Media Fraternity

Distinguished guest

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel honoured that you chose to be in our midst this evening on the occasion of the Innovative Community Media Achievement Awards of the Motheo District Municipality, to various media houses within the media fraternity of our country, particularly in our district, Motheo. I am overwhelmed by a measure of significance you attach to this occasion. This is self evident from the amount of time you unselfishly devoted to be here with us on a matter some hold so less significant in their daily encounters.

You would have otherwise joined some exciting soccer festivities taking place here and elsewhere in our country during a weekend which officially marks 30 days of our diverse cultural tapestry organized under the banner of FIFA 2010 WORLD CUP, but you chose to be here with us. For that reason alone, we want to thank you.

It is our pleasure to have you in attendance this evening to be part of this august gathering, to witness yet another significant episode of a partnership between ourselves. Program director, our strategic partnership with print and electronic media wouldn't have come at a

better time than this for it involves some of the key elements that will make our government's strategic objective realizable. It is only through innovative partnerships that we will be able to assist in building the communities, unifying and empowering them to participate in matters of their own development. Undoubtedly, any sustainable local development which is intended at expanding the frontiers of a better life to all our communities is only possible through a shared vision, priority, commitment and unity of purpose.

Today my mind races back in time when we first braced ourselves for this partnership, in an event that suddenly began a close working period that lasted almost two decades. It is an epoch making event in that it marks the culmination of a process that started as far back as 1994, when our government first proclaimed in our democratic constitution that the right to freedom of expression and association shall be entrenched and protected.

Today marks an important occasion in the history of that partnership. It is an occasion on which we ought to remember how our people in unison first declared that human rights are essentially about the right of all South Africans to live in peace and justice, free from any fear of being subjected to inhumane treatment by men folk, but most importantly, to live in conditions where their freedom of expression and association is entrenched and protected. We are gathered here to give fresh impetus to the struggle to realize the objectives of that declaration as enshrined in our Bill of Rights.

We are gathered here on this occasion to celebrate how these gallant struggles were waged to reclaim the freedom of speech and association. We are gathered here because the time is now that all of us young and old, rich and poor, free and oppressed must join hands and say "Side by side, we will protect all of these freedoms".

The time is now that as we celebrate your achievements, we must unreservedly support campaigns, initiatives and programs of

government to raise the plight of the noble victory of the freedom to associate and express oneself.

The time is now that all of us have to earnestly share unity of purpose to mobilize a sustainable cooperation as a firm basis to confront challenges of our country, including the violation of our basic human rights. We are today officially launching these Innovative Community Media Achievement Awards as an appreciation of your endless efforts to advance the noble goal of the freedom of speech.

To this extent, I wish to welcome you all and i declare these Awards the official indication of our appreciation of your achievements.

Thank You.