

**OPENING AND WELCOME SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE
MAYOR OF MDM, Me. FANISWA CHAINE AT THE OPENING
GALA DINNER OF THE DISTRICT GROWTH AND
DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT OF MOTHEO HELD AT MANGAUNG
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY CITY HALL ON THE 05th MARCH 2007
AT 18H30.**

MEC for Local Government and Housing, Ntate Mafereka,
Members of the Executive Council of the Free State Legislature,
The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Free State Legislature, Ntate Mxolisi
Dukwana, Me. Charlotte Lobe respectively,
Members of the Free State Legislature present,
The Executive Mayor of Mangaung, Me. Gertrude Mothupi,
Members of Mayoral Committees present,
Executive Mayors and Mayors from other municipalities,
Speakers from other Municipalities,
The Chief Executive Officer of South African Tourism, Ntate Moeketsi
Mosola,
Representatives from Human Rights, Youth and Gender Commissions
respectively,
Representatives from Labour Movements,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we meet this evening, Programme Director, it is with a purpose to
welcome participants to the long awaited District Growth and development
Summit of Motheo. The summit aims at identifying possible areas of

economic growth from various sectors of economy that forms the core development of the Motheo economy.

It is a welcome of its own nature, where participants are also being challenged prior the beginning of the summit in order to prepare themselves for a mammoth task of a summit for the next coming two (2) days.

Looking into the challenges that are facing the country today, one is tempted to believe, while agreeing that, significant development in changing the lives of people has been done but much has to be done in ensuring the growing economy, poverty reduction, job creation, transformation of health institution, improving sanitation and infrastructure and ascertaining that, the thought of a better life for all is achieved.

The focus this evening, as we arrive at our different accommodation areas while we ready ourselves for the next two days of the summit, should be;

As responsible citizens of South Africa but Motheo District in particular, the selected few with skills, knowledge and vigor; what is it that we are looking forward to contribute towards the achievement of the upcoming summit's objectives?

Indeed, there are various sectors we both are from, rather brought together to task by Motheo District Municipality with a purpose of jointly developing a realistic and achievable strategy for economic growth and development of the District.

Programme Director, when listening to the vigor in which President Thabo Mbeki hopes for and the emphasis he put on eradication of poverty and job creation every time when he speaks to the nation, I really feel that, we all need each other both as politicians, business, non-governmental organization, intellectuals, I mean everybody learned or not; to pull our efforts up together in accelerating the process of service delivery towards the attainment of the strategic goal of our struggle, that is the creation of a non racial, non sexist, united and democratic South Africa.

In his 2007 State of the Nation Address, President Thabo Mbeki reminded all South African Citizens of what we said as the country to the people of the world in 2004 through his inauguration Address as the President:

“We are greatly encouraged that our General Elections of a fortnight ago confirmed the determination of all our people, regardless of race, colour and ethnicity; to work together to build a South Africa defined by a common dream.....”

He continued to say;

“None of the great social problems we have to solve is capable of resolution outside the context of the creation of jobs, the alleviation and eradication of poverty. This relates to everything from the improvement of the health of our people, to reducing the levels of crime, raising the levels of literacy and numeracy and opening the doors of learning and culture to all.....”

It is clear from this assertion that, we have a lot to do to better the lives of our people. About three (3) years down the line since the address, the challenges are still facing us to date.

I strongly believe, through the upcoming summit, as Motheo District, we shall come out of it with practical and realistic strategy that is not only going to focus on economic growth, but also on how the redistribution of the said growth is to be done, in ensuring the realization of a better life for all.

Programme Director, I must confess that, I am moved by the reaction from all invitees to the summit and I believe we shall all join hands and in ensuring the success of the summit. We shall further agree that, the success of this country and Motheo District in particular, is not a success of an individual but that of a collective. I therefore call you all to task for the next coming two (2) days. As I make this call, I remember the words that were once said by John F. Kennedy when he said:

“And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”

It is only when we understand that, it is us who can change the way the country looks and make it what we want it to be.

In Conclusion, Programme Director, I would like to welcome you all to this Gala Dinner of its kind and to the District Growth and Development Summit which we shall officially open tomorrow. Enjoy your stay with us this evening.

Thank you.