

EPHRAIM MOGALE

LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

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Members of the Limpopo Legislature

Speaker of Capricon District Municipality: Hon. Cllr Lekganyane Maria

Mayor of Musina: Hon. Cllr Caroline Phiri

Deputy Chairperson of SALGA: Hon. Cllr Florence Dzhombere

SALGA PEC Member: Hon Cllr Kgaretse Lekalakala

Honorable Speaker, Chief whip and Councilors

Director General, Office of the Premier: Ms Rachel Molepo-Modipa

HOD and Representative of various Government Department

Municipal Managers and Section 57 Managers

Senior General Manager of DLGH: Ms Nnana Manamela

Provincial Electoral Officer of IEC: Ms Nkaro Mateta

Programme Manager of DBSA: Ms Nombulelo Sinxoto

Programme Manager of Community Development: Ms Mpho Selepe

Gender Focal Organization and Persons

Representatives from various Organised Labour (Unions)

Members of the Media

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Dumelang, Lotshani, Gooie more, Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a great honor today to stand before you during this important month of celebrating and honoring our great leaders who sacrificed their lives for all of us to be liberated. It

was during this month of August in 1956 on the 9 when thousand of committed women gathered on the steps of Union building in Pretoria to say “enough is enough” with the restrictions and impending laws by the apartheid regime.

When we gather and celebrate this month, we must always remember the good deeds of our leaders and mother who sacrifices their lives to liberate us from the terrifying and horrible conditions of practices by the apartheid regime. We should celebrate and commemorate women who stood and practice what our elders teach us when they say “mosadi o swara thipa ka bogaleng”. The likes of our heroins of our struggle who led the march and paved the way for our freedom, just to name few: Mme Helen Joseph, Mme Rahina Moosa, Mme Lilian Ngoyi, Mme Albertina Sisulu, Mme Winnie Mandela and our own member of this legislature Mme Lydia Komape and many more.

Programme Director, please allow me to salute the leadership of SALGA- Limpopo for organizing this important gathering, to look at ourselves as women and share expertise and experiences within this important sphere of government that is closer to the people who majority are also women. During 2010, just after the historic first world cup in Africa, SALGA hosted us under the theme “Women in Local Government” and this year they are taking it further for us women to share experience on challenges faced by elected women leaders and managers in the local Government and strategies to strengthen their role and leadership to effectively deliver services to our people.

Program Director, MEC and distinguished guest, let go back as we did remembering the women action in 1956 by recalling decision of the African National Congress on the issue of gender equality. It was during 2005 National general Council that ANC took a resolution of 50/50 resolutions and the implementation of this during the local government election of 2006. This resolution and its implementations was commitment made by ANC through its President OR Tambo during closing session of 1981 ANC Women Session in Luanda that “women have the duty to liberate men from antique concept and attitude about the place and role of women in society and in the

development and direction of our revolutionary struggle”. The 2006 local government election as former ANC and State President, Cde Thabo Mbeki wrote in ANC Today that “ the result of 2006 local government election mean that our country has move further forward towards the achievement of our movement’s goal of gender equality and the emancipation of women”. Delegates this is the foundation and experience we are building our democracy and development of our communities on today.

During 2006 local government election, Limpopo Province become number four with 48.8% representation of elected Women ANC Councilors, after Northern Cape, Gauteng and North West, above the national figure of 46,08%. I am mentioning all this because; there is a saying that “a nation that does not know where they come from will not determine their future”.

Former President Thabo Mbeki in his letter on ANC website reminded us that we must do everything possible in our power to empower women, specifically women councilors as Cde OR Tambo said “women assume their proper role outside kitchen, among the fighting ranks of the movement for fundamental social transformation, and at its command posts”.

Today, 55 years of the historic women’s march to union building, the adoption of 50/50 gender parity during ANC conference here in Polokwane and 17 years of our democracy, women are still face with tantamount challenges they had during those time. Meanwhile we acknowledge and applause the inroad the democratic dispensation had made in leveling the playing field for women to participate in all the spheres of government, democratic process and economic emancipation of women of this country, women are still faced with challenges, in particular rural women, women leadership in rural local municipalities as follows:

- **Leadership**

In government, we are making an inroad which, for example, today we women account to 43% of cabinet at national level and a decrease in women representative of women during the recent local government election. Women

leadership or representations shrink from 40% during the last local government election of 2006 to 38% during the 2011 local government election. To elaborate more, for example in Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality, out of 33 elected councils, both wards and PR only 11 are women and 22 men which make 33.3% women and 67.7% men. In some municipality within our province Limpopo, there are no women in all key positions of

- **Employment**

Employments within the local municipalities are of serious challenges. This includes the high unemployment rate we are experiencing at local level. We must remember those municipalities are point of entrance of government, closer to the people, where we experience this unemployment and poverty on daily basis. The majority of Municipal Managers, Section 56 and 57 managers are still dominated by men. Just to give you statistics of my municipality, Ephraim Mogale, only one member of both sections of management is a women, simply meaning that between 90 and 95% of senior managers are men which left women with only 5%. As women we are faced with the reality that despite the employment Equity Act (EE) and the 50/50 resolutions of the ruling party- ANC, we are failing to implement the too, leading to continuous status co.

- **High and responsible positions in private sector**

According to the 2011 Women in Corporate Leadership Census of the Business Women's Association, women hold on 4.4. % of CEO and Managing Director Positions; 5.3% of Chairperson Position; and 15.8 % of all directorships. This statistics reveal to us that the private sector of this country is failing the women and undermining our abilities, skills and experiences.

- **Abuses**

Programme director, despite the democratic and progress constitution which the whole world applause this country for and many laws which advocate the protection of all members of society, women and children remain vulnerable for

the abuses in this country. On daily basis when one open a newspaper or listen to the news, women are raped, get beaten, killed, emotionally abused, the list continues. Most women are the victim of the people they know, very closed and even sometime trusted. Our of people who are trusted with the enforcement of the laws are also perpetrating this abuse to an extend that women are hopeless in reporting the abuses to the agencies. One turns to agree with United Nation Women (2011) that justice institutions, including the police and the courts deny women justice. It is unfortunate that even some of the women perpetrated these abuses.

- **HIV/AIDS**

South Africa, and Africa in general, in particular Limpopo province as one of the province regarded as the poorest, we are faced with the challenges of HIV/AIDS pandemic. The most affected people are women who are infected by the disease; have to take care of affected and infected men and children. While we applaud the position and direction of our government at both national and provincial for the action and awareness which lead to the reduction in the HIV/AIDS Cases, we must accept that we are still faced with challenges. The recent Medical research Council statistics revealed that Limpopo Province is experiencing the reduction of the HIV positive result from 7.4% during 2009 to 3.4% during the current year (2011), which we warmly welcome. But we must bear in mind that the 3.4% the research revealed to be infected, are rural communities within our municipality.

- **Lack of information**

There is as saying that information is power. I fully agree with this statement, our communities, mostly lack information about their rights, where to go to get assistance. Our local government in most case distribute information and create awareness campaigns during the week, which fail to address the whole community because other are at work, and other moving around looking for employment because of the high unemployment rate we have in this country. The

challenges of our media in playing their role of “educating and distribution” of information about local municipalities and the role of women with those structures.

In conclusion, Hon MEC, and the delegates, all of the challenges we identified has solutions which lies with us. We are lucky in South Africa that we have Constitution and laws that advance the pride of women. We got Constitution, Equity Employment Act and many other laws which when implemented, we cannot continue complaining of equality and the imbalances even after the 17 years of democracy. We need to be vigorous in the implementation of these laws that will result in the improvement of the lives of women in this country. Failure to do so will lead to women continues complaining and crying without enjoying the fruit of our democracy. As ANCWL President Cde Angie Motshekga said that the historical gender injustice will remain like hurricane that wreaks havoc in women lives in spite of many advances we have made to improve material condition of women if we all fail to act and act now. She continue by saying as women we must stop internalizing the pain and challenges we faced as women by protecting our abuser and the failure to achieve 50/50 gender equity at all levels, we must assesses the efficiency and enforcement of all laws at all sector and levels, specially the Employment and equity Act within the local government.

I thank you.