

**REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON
MEC PAT NGOMANE ON THE OCASSION OF SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT FORUM GALA DINNER ON 08 OCTOBER 2016 AT BADPLAAS
RESORTS, CHIEF ALBERT LUTHULI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

Programme Director

The Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Cllr Muzi Chirwa

The Executive Mayor of Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, Cllr Dan Nkosi

Councillors from both the District Municipality and Chief Albert Luthuli

Chairperson of the South African Youth Development Forum, Mr Mcebo Zwane

Provincial Chairperson of the South African Youth Council, Mr Bheki Lubisi

**The President of the Progressive Youth Leaders Foundation who is also a
Communications Officer in my Department, Mr Justice Nyalunga**

Distinguished Guests

Government Officials

Management of Nkomati Mine

Members of the media

Good evening

It feels good to address young people on this special occasion that is purely organised by you young people of Mpumalanga. This is indeed a turning point and a proof that young people are taking a lead through innovations that seek to change society.

This gala dinner must lobby and advocate for integration and mainstreaming of youth development in all spheres of government, private sector, and civil society. It should also initiate, implement, facilitate and coordinate youth development programmes.

Through this networking session, which also serves as a platform for generating ideas, young people must develop skills to monitor and evaluate youth development interventions across institutions and mobilise their peers to actively participate in civil society engagements.

I must commend the South African Youth Development Forum and your stakeholders especially the youth structures for convening this important gala dinner in the name of developing young people of our beautiful Mpumalanga, a Province of the Rising Sun. This occasion should be able to produce solid outcomes that will assist disadvantaged young people in your own communities to be entrepreneurs and future role models of note.

These young people here have the responsibility to contribute to the development of our province and country at large. You have the responsibility to contribute to society in terms of working towards creating an enabling environment by influencing all institutions that are tasked with the development of our communities.

We all need to fight poverty, unemployment and inequalities in our communities. Together we can fight poverty by assisting one another. Other people believe that poverty exacerbates crime, alcohol abuse and mental diseases. Let us all unite in making sure that our people, in particular the youth in the province are not among those who go to bed on an empty stomach and end up affected by the above mentioned social ills.

Our people need food on the table. Now we must find ways of providing them with the resources to feed themselves. By empowering young people, we will be solving the problem of poverty in our communities at a larger scale. Let us work together with you young intellectuals, civil organisations and civil society in finding solutions that will eliminate poverty.

I am proud to say that when I was reading your organizational profile, I realized that one of the purposes of your existence is to assist young people to combat crime and corruption, which is something that needs everyone's attention and close to my heart. If we get together, we are going to reduce the high levels of crime.

I must take this opportunity to urge you to work together with the police, Community Police Forums (CPF's) and other security agencies in order to fight crime. Failing to work together with these structures mean that we will not be successful in our efforts to combat crime. Let us love our country and protect it against criminals. We should make sure that criminals do not join the CPF because they will undermine its goals, hence I mentioned on Tuesday during the departmental Safety and Security summit that a security check should be conducted to all CPF members.

The CPF is a fundamental structure that is helpful to communities and dedicated people including youth should consider joining the forum as it is an important structure in the partnership against crime fighting.

While we want our communities to stay mobilised against crime, we need to educate them about the dangers of mob justice and the importance of road. South Africa is not a banana republic; no one should take the law into his or her own hands, hence this should be preached daily in our awareness campaigns and during the departmental Izimbizo programmes.

The issue of gangsters such the so called Wrong Turns and Club 7's, which were causing social problems in the area of Tjakastad, Nhlazatje and Elukwatini is still being attended to by police. This is a matter that involved a lot of people but at the end of the day, it should be resolved by the relevant stakeholders. Gangsters are not acceptable in our communities. They have no place in Tjakastad, Elukwatini, Nhlazatje, Badplaas, and Kroomdrai and in any other communities.

I therefore encourage the youth to report criminal activities happening in their areas to the police. We cannot live with criminals who terrorise our people.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are not going to keep quiet while young people who could have a bright future use nyaope on a daily basis to entertain themselves. Nyaope and alcohol abuse destroy the dreams of future leaders. Government has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving what we have for the next generation. Let our young people stay away from substance abuse.

It is good to prevent crime before it happens because our correctional service facilities are now full of young people. We cannot accommodate more inmates, so we need to educate them to stay away from crime.

Alcohol abuse among young people has devastating consequences for crime prevention initiatives. More and more young people perpetuate crime around these liquor establishments. They also become victims while they are on their way home coming from these taverns.

The abuse of alcohol, ladies and gentlemen as most of you are aware, is one of clear indications of a society whose values are generally on the decline. We cannot continue to have young people consuming alcohol at the rate at which they are doing.

Last week, four young learners from Nkomazi, who were coming from a matric dance function died tragically. Instead of going home after the function, they opted to go and organise their own function. They later became involved in a fatal crash that claimed the lives of four of those nine learners who were occupants on one vehicle.

We believe that youth organisations present here will find innovative ways of coming up with methods of creating job opportunities. These organisations are vital structures that must support our hard working government in job creation. As Government, we will continue to implement various programs that will assist in job creation and youth empowerment through the Youth Desk section in the Office of our Honourable Premier, Mr DD Mabuza.

Young people should also contribute by utilizing available opportunities both in the public and private sector, and where possible partner with institutions on youth development matters. These organisations must prove themselves through real development, especially in rural areas so that more people are exposed to opportunities that will change their lives. Young people must be business minded, employ themselves and also provide job opportunities to others.

The contemporary state of South Africa and general governance should be discussed in relation to the vision of the National Development Plan (NDP). In the specific context of South Africa, the youth need to engage robustly on matters that affect them.

The South African Youth Development Forum, Progressive Youth Leaders Foundation, South African Youth Council, and other youth structures have the responsibility to bring transformation in their life time.

I hold the view that there is a need for intellectual debate that will form a platform and a point of connection for young people in different sectors especially students. This platform is very critical because it can bring light to the youth that institutions such as schools, universities, libraries and other state assets should be preserved for future generations.

Let us move forward and continue to work together in a bid to develop young people in the country.

I thank you