

REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, MR PAT NGOMANE, MPL, ON THE OCCASION OF THE TOURISM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DURING THE MINISTERIAL OUTREACH TO MPUMALANGA HELD AT CASA DO SOL HOTEL, HAZYVIEW, CITY OF MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Tuesday, 06 August 2019

Programme Director, Ms Morongoa Ramphele;
Tourism Minister, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane;
Director General of Tourism, Mr Victor Tharage;
Acting Head of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Nathaniel Sebitso;
CEO of the MTPA, Mr Johannes Nobhunga;
Critical players in the Tourism industry;
Members of the media;
Distinguished guests;
Ladies and gentlemen;

Good Morning!

1. American industrialist and the founder of the Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford, once said, and I quote: ***"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success"*** – unquote.
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2. I deem this quotation as being appropriate to explain the reason we have gathered here, this morning. This is because we are collectively **concerned about the state of tourism** in our beautiful Province of Mpumalanga.
3. Us, meeting with you – the private sector – is an indication that we acknowledge the critical role you play in growing the industry. We strongly believe that we cannot do it alone. Our role, as government, is to **ensure that there is a conducive environment for tourism to thrive**. Likewise, your role as the private sector, **is to drive the sector towards growth**.
4. **Tourism is our ‘precious metal’** as government, and we will strive to assist you to exploit it for the benefit of our people. As the Provincial Government, we have identified this sector as a priority area, with the **potential to create the much-needed jobs, and a catalyst towards economic growth**.
5. We will continue to do everything possible, to harness this industry. We heard your pleas, hence the Minister is here to unlock the issues you have raised.
6. We remain concerned about the **high level of crime directed towards tourists**, from within our communities. This indeed sends a wrong message that visitors are not welcomed in our Province.

7. As government, we commit to continue to work with the Provincial Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, to root-out this unbecoming behaviour within these strategic tourism routes.
8. We further acknowledge that the **condition of the roads leading to our tourism attractions is not pleasing**. We trust that the Minister will come up with a possible solutions in this regard.
9. What is also giving us sleepless nights, is the **slow pace of transformation** of the tourism sector in the Province. The **industry continues to be mostly run by white people**, and something drastic needs to be done to change the situation.
10. We urge you to partner with us, as we traverse the road towards transforming the tourism sector. Accordingly, we will establish the **Provincial Tourism Stakeholder Forum**, which will serve as an engagement platform between government and the industry.
11. Let us commit to work together, for the success and growth of the tourism industry. Pointing fingers at each other will not help – let's rather **propose how we can collectively tackle the challenges besieging the industry**. This is our elephant together, and we can only tackle it successfully, if we hold hands.
12. The Minister will elaborate further, when she addresses you shortly.

Ladies and gentlemen;

13. I now have the pleasure of introducing the **Minister of Tourism, Mme Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane**, to address you.

14. The platform is your Madam Minister.