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**CLOSING ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA, MR
MANDLA NDLOVU: TAKING THE LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE
OVERSIGHT PROGRAMME IN CHIEF ALBERT LUTHULI LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY, GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY,
MAYFLOWER, ON 26 MARCH 2026 AT 9H00**

Honourable Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Ms
Makhosazana Masilela,

Honourable Deputy Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature,
Mr Sam Masango,

Honourable Members of the Executive Council,

Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature,
The Executive Mayor of Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, Cllr Mbuso
Magubane,

Councillors,

Traditional Leaders,

Representatives of National, Provincial and Municipal Departments,
Distinguished Guests,

And most importantly, the people of Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality.

Good morning



1. It is with a deep sense of humility, responsibility, and gratitude that I stand before you today as we conclude the Taking Legislature to the People Oversight Programme here in the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality.
2. Over the past few days, we have seen democracy in action, not as an abstract idea, but as a lived experience, where government engages directly with the people, listens attentively, accounts honestly, and renews its commitment to service.
3. Allow me, at the outset, to sincerely thank the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, led by the Hon. Speaker, for how this programme has been carried out.
4. This initiative remains one of the most powerful expressions of our constitutional democracy.
5. By moving oversight from offices into communities, the Legislature ensures that government remains close to the people and that the Executive stays accountable, responsive, and focused on its duties.
6. Oversight isn't about fault-finding for criticism's sake. It's about enhancing performance. It ensures public servants remain dedicated to delivering quality services, that policies yield real results, and that community voices influence government priorities.

7. Oversight keeps the Executive alert. It reveals weaknesses where they exist, recognises successes where progress is made, and ultimately bolsters governance and service delivery.
8. As the Executive, we welcome this scrutiny because it sharpens our work and aligns us more closely with the real experiences of our people.
9. This Taking Legislature to the People programme has occurred amid a challenging socio-economic climate, both nationally and internationally.
10. Worldwide, economies still feel the impact of ongoing geopolitical tensions, conflicts, climate shocks, global inflation, energy market fluctuations, and changes in trade relations.
11. These global forces have a direct and sometimes severe impact on developing economies like ours.
12. They raise the cost of living, restrict fiscal space, hinder investment, and exert significant pressure on households, particularly the poor and working classes.
13. South Africa faces these challenges as well. However, despite these global and domestic pressures, our country continues to demonstrate resilience, and our province remains dedicated to building a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

14. In Mpumalanga, we are encouraged by signs of economic recovery and job growth.
15. This progress is supported by ongoing infrastructure investment, improved agriculture and agro-processing, sustained activity in mining and manufacturing, growth in tourism, and increased opportunities in renewable energy and the green economy.
16. These sectors have not only contributed to economic output but also played a significant role in reducing unemployment. Mpumalanga has positively impacted the national decline in unemployment through Expanded Public Works Programmes, labour-absorbing infrastructure projects, support for small, medium, and micro enterprises, youth employment initiatives, and a focused emphasis on localisation and backing for local suppliers.
17. While we are fully aware that unemployment remains unacceptably high in many areas, including here in Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality, the trend indicates that deliberate, targeted interventions can make a difference when implemented with discipline and commitment.
18. Hon. Speaker, the global geopolitical environment remains volatile and unpredictable.
19. If we fail to maintain the right balance between economic resilience, social protection, and good governance, geopolitical instability can obstruct growth, reduce job creation, increase poverty, and

undermine public trust in institutions. For this reason, governments must act with foresight, prudence, and unity of purpose.

20. Our strategic priorities as government, therefore, remain clear, consistent and unchanged.
21. We are committed to driving inclusive economic growth and job creation, reducing poverty, tackling the high cost of living, and building a capable, ethical and developmental state.
22. These priorities are interconnected. None of them can succeed in isolation, nor can any be achieved without cooperation across all spheres of government and active participation by communities.
23. The oversight programme has given us a chance to engage directly with facts on the ground here in Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality.
24. Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality is home to more than 247,000 people and is characterised by a predominantly young population, with over two-thirds of residents under 35.
25. This demographic reality presents both challenges and opportunities. It puts pressure on service delivery and social infrastructure, but it also offers significant potential for economic growth, innovation, and productivity if effectively utilised.
26. Despite economic constraints, the municipality has made significant progress in recent years.

27. There has been increased access to formal housing, water, sanitation, and electricity, alongside the strengthening of municipal governance structures through effective Council committees, the Municipal Public Accounts Committee, and Audit Committees.
28. Furthermore, audit outcomes have improved, and the ongoing implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects continues.
29. These achievements highlight the significance of thorough planning, intergovernmental collaboration, and steady oversight.
30. Hon Speaker, from 2021 to 2026, more than 115 municipal infrastructure projects were undertaken across the municipality.
31. These included significant investments in water and bulk infrastructure, road construction and refurbishment, household electrification, bridges and footbridges, stormwater systems, sports facilities, community infrastructure, and high-mast lighting installations.
32. These projects have improved access to services, increased safety and mobility, restored dignity within communities, and created employment opportunities, particularly for local labour, small businesses, and cooperatives.
33. These achievements were boosted by significant contributions from both provincial and national departments. In the water and sanitation

sector, the government invested in bulk water schemes, replaced ageing asbestos pipelines, upgraded wastewater treatment plants, and expanded storage capacity to enhance water security.

34. These long-term investments, Hon Speaker and Members, are crucial for ensuring reliable, sustainable access to water for communities and major economic sectors.
35. In human settlements, over 350 houses have been delivered, along with emergency housing interventions, asbestos roof replacements, and serviced sites.
36. Integrated human settlement projects continue to unlock land, promote spatial justice, and restore dignity to families by providing **() title deeds.**
37. In education, large investments have been made in building schools, upgrading facilities, improving sanitation, and enhancing learning environments, reaffirming our belief that education remains the most powerful tool for breaking cycles of poverty.
38. In health, Hon Speaker and Members, clinics and hospitals received infrastructure maintenance and renovations, new equipment, strengthened staffing, and expanded outreach services.
39. Access to quality healthcare remains a key part of our development agenda.

40. As far as roads and transport are concerned, the resealing, pothole patching, bridge repair and reconstruction that have been carried out have improved safety, connectivity, and economic access, especially for rural communities.
41. In economic development and agriculture, ongoing support for farmers, small businesses, tourism products, agro-processing initiatives, and youth-owned enterprises continues to unlock local economic potential and generate jobs.
42. *Bahlali base* Chief Albert Luthuli, the government recognises that good governance is non-negotiable.
43. Oversight during this programme has revealed improvements in governance systems, better compliance with legislation, and strengthened consequence management.
44. At the same time, challenges such as low revenue collection and financial sustainability remain serious and require shared responsibility between the government and communities.
45. Paying for services, protecting public infrastructure, and reporting corruption are vital elements of a functioning developmental state.
46. People of Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality, development cannot be achieved without communities.
47. Your involvement helps to safeguard infrastructure, improve accountability, strengthen democracy, and promote social cohesion.

48. Therefore, we encourage you to continue engaging actively with government structures, ward committees, councillors, and traditional leaders, not only to raise concerns but also to become active partners in development.
49. As we approach the 2026 Local Government Elections, I wish to make a heartfelt appeal.
50. Our democracy depends on participation. I encourage every eligible citizen to register to vote, to inspire young people to do the same, and to engage peacefully and responsibly in democratic processes.
51. Voting is not just a right; it is a duty and an essential instrument for shaping your community's future.
52. As we conclude this programme, let us unite in purpose, be honest about our challenges, take pride in the progress we have made, and remain committed to doing more and improving further. Together, we can build a capable, ethical, and developmental state that truly serves everyone.
53. God bless the people of Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality.
God bless Mpumalanga.

God bless South Africa.

I thank you.

