

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT, MRS. HAPPY JOYCE
MASHAMBA, IN THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL
LEGISLATURE, ON NELSON MANDELA DAY.**

17th July 2014

Honourable Speaker;

Honourable Deputy Speaker;

Members of this esteemed House;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

All protocol observed.

Never before has one man's spirit of perseverance, forgiveness and selflessness inspired the world in such a profound way, such as our late icon and former President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

We are one day from celebrating Mandela day, but this time it will be celebrated, knowing that this world icon and great son of the soil is no more. May his soul rest in peace; long live the fighting spirit of Nelson Mandela, long live.

Honourable Speaker

Having spent 27 years in prison meant that the world around him changed in so many ways. Despite information smuggled to him and fellow cadres on Robben Island, he must have been surprised at the many changes he encountered, when he walked out of the Victor Verster prison as a free man.

He had to come to terms with a society that had morally deteriorated worldwide and a country that was divided and suffering from many socio-economic problems that came with a system of governance based on injustice. In fact, all over the world people had become uncaring and indifferent towards each other, leading to misunderstandings, wars, worsening crime, violence against children and drug abuse. Family and community values were becoming less important and technological advances were replacing human interaction and communication.

Tata Madiba, in his time as President and beyond, was working tirelessly to try and turn this situation around. However, it was and is still not possible for one person, to clean up the mess that we as human beings had made over the years.

There are many kindred souls who have the same ambitions as Nelson Mandela – that of finding solutions to our global problems; of ultimately creating a peaceful and progressive world order and of seeing the smiling faces of children worldwide.

We are, therefore, confident that observance of this day by people all over the world and the 67 minutes of community service will go a long way in healing the world.

Honourable Speaker

Closer to home: as South Africans, we are grappling daily with issues of poverty, crime, conflict, poor race relations, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, violence against women and children and more.

President Jacob Zuma has encouraged us, on Nelson Mandela Day 2014, to clean up for Madiba. However, we believe that cleaning up should not be restricted to taking up rakes and mops to clean up our physical environment.

We believe that this clarion call means that we have a responsibility to clean up and rid our communities of societal ills such as substance abuse, crime, child abuse, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies and the neglect of our elderly people. Every day should be Nelson Mandela Day. We should not wait for one specific day to do something out of the ordinary or outside of our job descriptions, for those who need and deserve it most. This spirit of cooperation will also go a long way in creating social cohesion and making people aware of each other's needs and differences.

Honourable Speaker

Whereas government has the responsibility to make every day a Nelson Mandela Day in the services that we render, the hope is that our partners in the private sector and the people of Limpopo will continue to join hands together and make a collective effort of creating better lives for our people. Tomorrow's activities all over the Province will be testimony of how we can work together and how 67 minutes of selfless service to the community can become a habit.

Let us set aside our differences and selfish nature and go to work on 18th July 2014, Nelson Mandela Day and every day after that!

In conclusion, Honourable Speaker, a pledge to Madiba and his generation:

Rest assured, Tata Madiba -
Our weaknesses notwithstanding,
Our wayward ways too,
And the many temptations on the way,
We shall walk as you used to do,
Until the land of milk and honey is reached,
And there is, indeed, a better life for all!

We shall hold firmly in our hands,
The weapon of unity that you bequeathed us,
Which in the past we wielded with dramatic results,
Indeed, Chief Luthuli calls from the grave:

“Hold it! Hold it fast!

It is not yours,
It belongs to the people,
It belongs to posterity!”

That is the call from Mini, Bram Fisher, Dadoo,
That is the call from Florence, Ruth First, Dorothy,

That is the call from Sisulu, Shope, O.R Tambo,
And now it is also the call from Madiba himself!

On this day, 18th July 2014,
We accordingly pledge ourselves,
To listen to the call of our ancestors,
And never to let them down!

Amandla! Maatha! Maanda! Matimba! Kragte!
And Power to the People!

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.