



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PREMIER TEBOGO MOKGORO AT THE MAIZE CUP
GALA DINNER HELD IN KLERKSDORP ON FRIDAY, 13 JULY 2018**

Programme Director

MEC for Education and Sport Development, Rre Sello Lehari

MECs from other departments present

Members of the Provincial Legislature present,

The Executive Mayor of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, Cllr Barei
Mosiane-Segotso,

The Executive Mayor of the City of Matlosana, Cllr Maitu Kgaile.

Councillors from the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality and the City of
Matlosana,

Representatives and players of the teams participating in the Maize Cup,

All public servants present,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

Sport, and football in particular, has the unique ability to heal, unite and
change society for the better; we therefore have the responsibility to harness
the power and appeal of the game to act as a catalyst for positive social
change.



The universal popularity and appeal of football makes it a common denominator for everyone; irrespective of gender, age, race and social standing.

Ladies and gentlemen, according to FIFA, the game of football is played more than 240 million people in 1,4 million teams and 300 000 clubs worldwide; this in effect means that this sport reaches an audience of a size and diversity that is unrivalled by any other single sporting code you can think of.

Even in the most dangerous and hazardous parts of the world such as warzones, you will find a group of children trying to find means and way of kicking a round object – that’s how football transcends boundaries the world over.

That is why Brazilian legend, Pele, aptly referred to the football as “the game of billions”.

We have witnessed the increase in the trust deficit between the citizens of our province and the provincial government – this reached a tipping point when violent protests erupted across the province just over province, leading to loss of life in some areas while in others, destruction of public and private property as well as disastrous looting of a wide range of business establishments.



There is a need for this government to get close to communities, to listen to what the needs of the people and how best to work with these communities in improving service delivery while using various platforms of engagement with the people.

One of those platforms is through building social cohesion through sport.

We are committed to be one with our communities as a provincial government so as to ensure that the ugly scenes witnessed in various towns, townships and villages of this province are never seen again, never.

The Bokone Bophirima Maize Cup is one vehicle that we can use as government to reach out to the citizens of our beautiful province as a means to reduce and eventually remove the trust deficit currently evident between the people and government.

This is primarily because this pre-season tournament has managed to attract professional soccer teams with massive following in this country and this makes it easier for us as government to communicate with the people using this platform; simply because of the pulling power of teams such as Kaizer Chiefs, Chippa United, Free State Stars and our local pride, Buya Msuthu Football Club, who are the reigning champions of the ABC Motsepe League for the North West.

Ladies and gentlemen, in two days from now, the world will see the curtain go down on the 2018 FIFA Soccer World Cup tournament in Russia – a spectacle of a brotherhood of nations from all four corners of the world that had every



football loving individual gripped with a month long fever – while our South African teams are preparing to go into the pre-season programme.

The pre-season affords us, as a provincial government, an opportunity to build and cement relationships with these well-known sporting brands; whose supporters are the same communities who expect delivery of quality services from us.

We are also contributing to ensuring that by the time the domestic football season gets underway, the teams will have reached their desired fitness level and form by having participating in tournaments like these ones while also ensuring that quality football is brought to our people's doorsteps by this caring government.

These partnerships should be used to harness and cement social cohesion amongst our people as well as increase the trust relationship between the people and government at all times.

In our efforts as government to make South Africa a much safer place to live in, we need to encourage young people to take up sport, resist the temptation of drugs, alcohol abuse and gangsterism.

The fight against crime in our neighbourhoods can and will be achieved partly by bringing their sporting idols to their backyard to showcase their skill and young people should aspire to emulate these football stars.



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In addition, this initiative has seen a number of activities ahead of the tournament itself taking place in various parts of the province aimed at football development in the North West.

We have been promised by the organisers that this pre-season tournament is going to be a like no other before and will be a platform for lower tier league team such as Buya Msuthu to test their mettle against established football giants but also to attract scouts from the Premier League teams.

I sincerely hope and believe that this 4th edition of the Bokone Bophirima Maize Cup will be bigger and better than the past editions and may the best team win.

I thank you.

