



Office of the Premier

North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



WELCOME REMARKS BY NORTH WEST PREMIER, PROF TEBOGO JOB MOKGORO, AT THE INAUGURAL TEDx MAHIKENG 2019 HELD AT THE NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY, MAHIKENG CAMPUS ON FRIDAY, 29 MARCH 2019

Programme Director

The organisers of this forum,

The Vice Chancellor of the North West University, Prof Dan Kgwadi,

Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng,

Distinguished guests and speakers,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Mine is a very simple task; that of welcoming all these esteemed ladies and gentlemen from various walks of life, to this TEDx 2019 Mahikeng to discuss and share with us their experiences and knowledge in creating new pathways for communities within which we exist and live.

However allow me to make a few remarks on the state of our province, our communities and to an extent, our country.

As Premier of the North West, I am permanently inundated with concerns, grievances and complaints from different communities – from Moretele to Itsoseng, from Makwasie to Ganyesa, from Mogwase to Vryburg – but there is a common thread amongst all issues; it all boils down to poor service delivery,

poor provision of clean drinking water, crime and criminality as well as the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

I am raising this to highlight the kind of society that is a mirror reflection of South Africa today where according to Statistic South Africa, 62,4 percent of Black South Africans live in absolute poverty, 41,3 percent of Coloured people live below the poverty line while 5,9 percent and 1 percent of Indian/Asian people and white people, respectively, live in poverty.

It therefore begs the question as to what are we doing collectively as society to work hand in hand with government and the private sector to play a collective role in alleviating the high poverty levels currently plaguing our country.

I am raising this question to this gathering of brains and festival of ideas so that when we engage further in finding uncharted paths to the future, let us do so cognisant of the demands and expectations government is facing from the electorate; albeit in these tough economic times.

We are hard at work engaging various communities as a Provincial Government to resolve problems besieging them; we have thus been embarking on on-going road shows to hold izimbizo with these communities in a quest to collectively find lasting solutions to their challenges.

We are not sitting on our laurels and folding our arms; we are on the ground getting our hands dirty but let all of us take a conscious decision to be willing participants in our quest to strengthen democracy, grow the economic, reduce inequality and unemployment and eradicate poverty in growing South Africa together.

I am told that we are going to hear from farmers, innovation experts, authors, venture capitalists, broadcast personalities, heritage specialists to name but a

few; however, we share a common platform and vision on how to use our occupation and speciality fields to contribute to the positive growth our country – I am therefore privileged and honoured to be welcoming such a diverse gathering of the finest brains we have as a people and country.

Programme Director, let me pause here and wish you all the best in your engagements today.

I thank you.

ENDS.