

WELCOMING ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY, HONOURABLE CLLR. MIKE MASINA AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE BANQUET HALL AT BANQUET HALL MIDDELBURG ON THE 06/12/2012

THANK YOU PROGRAMME DIRECTOR: MR VUYO MBULI

**HON. CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: MR MJ MAHLANGU
THE HON. MEC'S FROM MP, GOVERNMENT
ALL THE MAYORS, SPEAKERS, CHIEF WHIPS & COUNCILLORS
DISTINGUISH GUESTS
COMRADES & FRIENDS
LADIES & GENTLEMEN**

I am very delighted to be afforded this opportunity to welcome you in this August Event the official opening of our Beautiful Historic Banquet Hall.

Our proud citizen the Honourable Chairperson of NCOP our Youth Displayed great talent in stage plays and song in front of this Giant building – one of its kind in Mpumalanga Province.

Programme Director before I could even welcome our distinguished guest, I though it proper to briefly take you through the very long journey travelled to realize this state of the art Banquet Hall.

Approximately during 1993, the previous Town Hall of Middelburg had to be sold by Council due to the following reasons:

1. The hall was too small and could not accommodate the growing community of the area;
2. There was insufficient parking at the area and to organize a function there caused an inconvenience.

At that point in time, to upgrade the facility to accommodate the needs then would have amounted to approximately R7,5m excluding the costs for providing the necessary parking.

The then town hall was sold to Gerhard Strydom who coincidentally bought the land to develop the mall where the mall was recently built.

After the hall was sold, the decision was taken to build the now hall close to the municipal offices and at that stage the costs would have been ±R9million.

Before the development could be commenced with, the former Mayor, Cllr, BH Mokoena, decided to shelve the project at the time.

When the development of the new hall picked up again during the reign of Cllr IMT Mahlangu, it was realized that the area behind the Civic Centre municipal Offices had become popular for a number of regular events, e.g., Greatest Train Race, Middelburg Festival, Loskop Marathon, etc.

It was based on the above reasoning that decision was taken to build the facility adjacent to the offices of the Nkangala District Municipality.

There was therefore always a dire need to utilize the hall, which interfered with the early completion of the project for our community, the need was fairly reasonable.

The entire construction of this facility was through our own accumulated surplus and no loan was obtained for this development.

It is anticipated that this hall (the Banquet Hall) will bring the world to our municipal area and Mpumalanga, by hosting great events.

Programme Director this is not a pipe dream but an achievable goal, just before its final completion (the Banquet Hall) has already hosted high profiled events which includes; the 60th year Anniversary of the Sozama Secondary School, a school that has produced many local greats, for the Paul Mthimunye Bursary Gala dinner whereby we were address by the Honourable Minister of Finance; Mr Provan Gordhan, The Leadership Kingdom Summit & Business Seminar by Myles Munroe hosted by Mr Joe Sign CEO of Middelburg Power Supply that happened twice in the row, Free Your Mind by Mr Linda Sibiya from Ukhozi FM with Ps Sthembiso Zondo hosted by Ukhamba Chemicals, Mpumalanga Mining Lekgotla, which has seen the Honourable Minister of Mineral Resources; Ms Susan Shabangu and Minister of Water Affairs; Ms Edna Molewa, the Premier of the our Province Mpumalanga, Mr DD Mabuza and all his MECs downing the event and the ANC RGC's and PGC in preparation for the long awaited National Conference in Mangaung Mpumalanga has endorsed President Msholozzi for the 02nd term in office that happened here in this very venue.

As the ANC is celebrating its 100 years of selfless struggle the Centenary celebration, we are proud as Steve Tshwete Municipality to have hosted a successful Presidential Memorial Lecture of the 3rd President; Zacharias Mahabane with more that 3000 people in who come to listen to President JG Zuma as he delivered the lecture.

CONCLUSION

Fellow residents of Steve Tshwete, Nkangala Region, Mpumalanga Province, the whole of South Africa, I present to you Middelburg Community Banquet Hall it is yours, it should not be a white elephant but it should be a place where the country meet.

On behalf of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, it is indeed an honour to welcome you to this official opening of this one of the most advanced conference facilities in the country the very first in the Province Mpumalanga and I am delighted to wish you a safe and happy holidays throughout the festive season.