

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS OF THE MEC FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
HONORABLE MXOLISI SOKATSHA AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE
OF THE LATE MINISTER COLLIND CHABANE AT THE MITTAH
SEPEREPERE CONVENTION CENTRE IN KIMBERLEY AT 14H00
ON 19 MARCH 2015**

PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

GOOD AFTERNOON TO YOU ALL!!!!

It was with great shock and sorrow that we in the early hours of Sunday, 15 March were awakened to the passing away of the Minister of Public Service and Administration and his two protectors; Sergeant Lesiba Sekele and Sergeant Lawrence Lentsoane.

On behalf of the President; His Excellency; Jacob Zuma, Premier, Honourable Sylvia Lucas, Executive and the Public Service at large; this is indeed one of the most difficult moments for most of us.

None amongst us could indeed have predicted that he, so young and gifted, promising and full of love and energy could be cut so abruptly and tragically.

His, was a life that was given to the fullest of struggle for peace, freedom and justice in our country without sparing neither strength nor effort.

A life worthy of being one of the rightful heirs of the rich history and traditions of our fore bearers who took on the might of successive colonial regimes in defence of our dignity.

It is hard in moments like these to speak about any man- to capture in words not just the facts and the dates that make a life, but the essential truth of a person- their private joys and sorrows; the quiet moments and unique qualities that illuminate someone's soul. How much harder for a life so well lived.

Nikolai Ostrovsky could have been speaking about Minister Chabane when he said "Man's possession if life. It is given to him but once, and he must live so as to feel no torturing regrets to wasted years, never know the burning shame of a mean and petty past; so live that, dying, he might say; all my life, all my strength were given to the finest cause in all the world-the fight for the Liberation of Mankind.

Our Departed Collins Chabane could indeed not have felt any torturing regret for responding to the National call, like any other youth of his time, for the liberation of all our people and defence of the dignity of his people irrespective of race, colour, gender or creed. He could not have ever known the burning shame of a mean and petty past, for he dedicated his entire life to the liberation struggle.

He led from the front, respecting each and every person's contribution especially those who are experts in their field. Nobody he came across felt small in his presence because he was a man who loved people and respected the dignity of all.

Minister Chabane was also very firm on matter relating to performance excellence and allowed for all to flourish in their respective portfolios. He understood and respected that failure is an opportunity for further growth and yet demanded excellence in the portfolios' performance.

From a tender age become actively involved in the fight for the liberation of our people. He, at the age of 17, joined the Military Wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

In fighting for the ideals of equality, justice and freedom; Minister Chabane displayed dedication and has served in numerous leadership roles within MK, the ANC and the Limpopo Provincial Government and National Government.

Indeed today as we mourn his tragic passing away, we can without fear of contraction say that all his life, all his strength were given to the finest cause in all the world-the fight for the Liberation of Mankind.

Again, we remember with pride the determination of the collective of which Comrade Chabane was part of, in its resoluteness to clearly articulate on policy issues.

He understood well that we are all privileged to serve the people of our country in all responsibilities assigned to us both in and out of the executive. That there is nothing belittling in any task assigned to us by

the people of our country. Ours is to execute these responsibilities with honour and dignity with a view of creating a better life for all our people.

He was a trusted cadre and leader of the ruling party, the African National Congress which he served for long time in different responsibilities. He was disciplined, hardworking and truly intelligent.

When he was the Minister for Public Works, Comrade Chabane is credited with the establishment of the Road Agency, the first institution of its kind in South Africa.

Religion played an important part in his life as it inspired discipline and humanity.

His love for all things musical was cultivated while on Robben Island. While in jail, he learned music theory and how to play the harmonica. He shared his love of music with audiences around the country with his marimba band Movement and recorded two CD's

He will be remembered as a passionate musician who through this ability and passion inspired the participation of young people in arts and culture.

Yet all these tasks required a delicate balancing act between national responsibilities and family duties. I am certain that Comrade Collins could only succeed in this balancing act primarily because of the unflinching support he received from his beloved wife Mavis and two Children.

As we dip our revolutionary banners, we give thanks to them for surrendering their finest son to the finest cause in all the world, the liberation of the People of South Africa and indeed to mankind as a whole.

During this, The Year of the Freedom Charter and Unity in Action, and during this Month of Human Rights which saw the brutal killing and torturing of our people in the mid-1980's; President Jacob Zuma, Premier Sylvia Lucan and the people of our country reach out in prayer and thought to you all during these difficult moments of your lives. We share in your pain, sorrow and grief that this death has brought to bear on you, in particular the broader Chabane family in general.

Lastly colleagues; Government cannot win the road war on its own; every road user has a responsibility to make our roads safe. As we have experience and still are; road accidents come at a huge social and economic cost.

I THANK YOU

Akuhlanga!!! Lungehlanga!!!