

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND
TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, MR MICHAEL MABUYAKHULU, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL
LEADERS (NHTL) WEBSITE AT THE SUNCOAST HOTEL, DURBAN**

21 NOVEMBER 2008

**Programme Director;
The Deputy Minister of Communications, Mr. Roy Padayachie;
The Chairperson of the National House of Traditional Leaders, Khosi Fhumulani
Kutama;
The Chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders, Inkosi M.G
Buthelezi;
Esteemed Chairpersons of other Provincial Houses of Traditional Leaders;
Esteemed Chairpersons of Local Houses of Traditional Leaders;
Members of executive committees of Provincial Houses of Traditional Leaders;
Amakhosi Present;
The Director General of Communications Ms Lyndall Shope-Mafole;
Dignitaries present;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
All protocol observed.**

In the month of December, 2005, a groundbreaking development occurred in the evolution of the institution of traditional leadership in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. On this day, we ushered in a legislation whose major aim was to transform the institution of traditional leadership into one that is able to carry out its mandate; govern the functioning of this institution and, critically, ensure that it is in line with democratic principles governing our country.

A number of progressive developments have taken place ever since we enacted the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, Act No.5 of 2005. That we were the first province to adopt this important legislation has meant that we have become firsts among equals and a source of reference for our sister provinces. Critically, we were the firsts precisely because of the importance with which we regard this institution.

As a pioneering province on matters relating to traditional leadership and traditional affairs in general, it fills us with a sense of pride to be part of this auspicious occasion. We do, Programme Director, humbly feel that indeed the launch of this important milestone in the

institution of traditional leadership could have taken place nowhere else but here in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Programme Director, in the year 2006, we completed the first phase of our transformation process when we re-configured the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders following a democratic process that had taken place. It is now a matter of history that the reconfiguration of the Provincial House had been preceded by a number of processes including the establishment of Local Houses of Traditional Leaders and the transformation of tribal authorities into traditional councils.

Over the past twenty or so months, we have been engaged in ensuring that we set up structures and also tighten existing processes in order to ensure that this institution plays its rightful role within our society. We have procured office space for these local houses to operate; we have appointed managers and support staff to render necessary support to these local houses. In the process, we are also constructing Traditional Administrative Centres (TACs) to ensure that traditional councils are able to carry out their mandate within conducive conditions. These TACs are fully furnished with the latest ICT equipment, electricity supply and furniture equipment. From the financial year 2006/07 to date we have constructed 23 TACs.

Therefore, Programme Director, today's launch of the NHTL website fits snugly with our ongoing efforts as a province to ensure that this institution moves away from the periphery of governance and becomes a critical pillar of our leadership structures to speed up development and prosperity.

The world is a global village and the ability to grasp the new world technologies including Information Communication Technologies (ICT) determines whether one succeeds or fails. Those who still harbour perceptions that the institution of traditional leadership is backward and unsophisticated are caught up in a time warp. If this institution is to play its rightful role in our society, then it must be empowered to deal with the challenges of our times.

In this, the information age, websites are the face of organisations. Your website speaks for you when you cannot. We do not doubt that this website being launched today will act as an immediate point of contact between the House and the people. We also hope that it will be a repository of information and that, particularly our scholars, will use it as a reference point when researching information about this institution.

We would want to urge those in charge of this website to ensure that it is kept up to date and that, at the earliest convenience, we are able to establish links between this site and other sites. A new chapter is being opened for the institution of traditional leadership. The province of KwaZulu-Natal is honoured to be part of this history-making occasion.

I thank you.