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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR CLLR MOMELEZI MBEDLA ON THE OCCASION OF THE ARBOR WEEK LAUNCH HELD ON THE 01<sup>ST</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2017 AT NORTH END STADIUM**

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**PROGRAMME DIRECTOR**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHERIES HONOURABLE ZOKWANA**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER HONOURABLE GENERAL BHEKI CELE**

**MEC MLIBO QOBOSHIYANE**

**THE ALFRED NZO DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY EXECUTIVE MAYOR**

**SPEAKERS PRESENT HERE TODAY**

**MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**THE ALFRED NZO DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY DELEGATION**

**AMALUNGU EBHUNGA EWONKE**

**POLITICAL PARTIES HERE PRESENT**

**IINKOKHELI ZOMTHONYAMA**

**SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

**MR PIERRE-YVES SACHET, CEO, TOTAL SOUTH AFRICA and all other dignitaries amongst us today**

**LEADERS OF THE RELIGIOUS FRATERNITY, BUSINESS & CIVIL SOCIETY**

**STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS**

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL SPHERES OF GOVERNMENT**

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

## **AB AHLALI BASE MATATIELE**

### **OONONDABA BETHU (PRINT & ELECTRONIC)**

Kuluvuyo kum ukunamkela kulo msitho wokuphehlelela leveki yokubaluleka kwendalo yethu ingakumbi kwicala lamahlathi.

Ndinamkela ndichulumancile kuba singumasipala our vision talks to the gist of what this day is all about. Ladies and gentlemen, we are a municipality "where nature, agriculture and tourism are investments of choice".

### **Programme Director**

In his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma indicated that as the nation, we are this year celebrating the centenary of the birth of one of our legends from the District, the late former President of the ANC, Oliver Reginald Tambo.

Those who spent time with OR describe him as a 'solution oriented leader'. At a time when climate change is becoming a staggering reality, I'm sure you agree with me that we could surely do with OR's great mind. Yabona ke, I'm not a climatologist or an environmentalist Programme Director, but I believe that by greening of our communities, we reduce the effects of global warming.

This Arbor week launch is one of the programmes that the Alfred Nzo District has set aside, to commemorate the centenary of one of OR, the struggle veteran- who fought for the liberation of our country and people. Through initiatives like these, we need to deliberately leave a legacy which will mark the honour of this great statesman.

### **Honourable Minister**

Matatiele Local Municipality is one of the municipalities in the province with areas that are biophysically suitable for commercial forestry. In this land of ours, we boost with more than 500 community forestry plantations.

As such Mphathiswa, we have identified agriculture and manufacturing as the most contributing sectors to the economy of our municipality.

In line with this realisation, during our recent IDP outreach programmes, we received a proposal from the people of Matatiele to open a tertiary institution with a special focus on agriculture. I therefore submit leadership to you that we work together to realise this proposal.

Our Local Economic Development strategy reveals that agriculture, agro-processing, forestry, tourism, commerce, manufacturing mining and quarrying are amongst the most important sectors of Matatiele's economy. However, numerous challenges facing these sectors have limited the chances of creating effective employment opportunities out of them. This therefore means that somehow, we still need to find lasting solutions to utilise agriculture in order to keep up with the economic needs of our communities.

### **Honourable MEC**

The amount of land at our disposal presents an opportunity to undertake more diversified agricultural activities that are likely to bring about more economic growth and development in our area. Apha eMatatiele, we have potential for economic activities like Crop Farming; Livestock farming (cattle, goats & sheep); Poultry farming; Honey production and Forestry. These are the areas we need the intervention of the department on, so that we fight the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. We know for a fact that we have so much potential as the municipality, and with your support failure will not be an option

### **Programme Director**

I'm also proud to mention that in response to the official recognition of Matatiele forestry sector growth, a number of applications for the use of some forestry plantations in Matatiele for commercial purposes were approved by the Department of Rural Development & Agrarian Reform.

As such, a flagship project called the Mabenyeng Community Afforestation Project in Ward 16 is underway. It involves licensed

planted area, approximately 400 hectares with an additional area of 1750 hectares.

## **Baphathiswa**

Siyakholwa ukuba kuninzi esingakwenza kwicala lezendalo nolimo, kodwa apha eMatatiele sihlaselwe kakhulu ngumba weWattle plant, which is a threat to our resources. In most cases it is located in the municipality's sources of water and there is likelihood that it will cause a reduction of the amount of water flow. If this happens, some of the development-oriented activities, such as agricultural and manufacturing might be negatively affected.

It is also believed that they will have a huge negative impact on the tourism potential of the municipality since some tourist attractions including fishing rivers are likely to be negatively affected. Like many other forestry plantations, Matatiele natural forests and forestry plantations face a number of threats, including: fire, disease, drought, strong winds, snow, trespassing by livestock, and vandalism.

Xa ndiza kuhlala phantsi zinkokheli, siyacela ukuba sincediswe lisebe elijongene nalemba ukuze ubomi babantu baseMatatiele buphucuke. Sinesikolo sezolimo iMoorosi Agricultural High School eWard 18 eFiva, esilithemba lethu kulomba size ngawo apha namhlanje. Sicela ukuba sincedisane phaya ukuqinisekisa ubukho bezixhobo ezifanelekileyo zokufunda, ukuze siqale ukusebenza ngokukhawuleza, sifezekise iphupha lethu.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to once again welcome you to Sweet Matat.

I thank you