

Madam Speaker

The Whip of Sedibeng District Council

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Members of the opposition parties

Honourable councillors

Municipal Manager and his team

Distinguished guests

Sanibonani, Dumelang, Molweni

I extend to you a sincere greeting on this 90th ordinary sitting of Sedibeng District Council.

Programme Director:

I am certain that, everyone will surely agree with me when I say that at critical moments in the historical epochs of our country the youth have invariably risen up to redefine our history and place it on a radically changed and new pedestal.

Having said that, It is correct that our country should every year commemorate and pay tribute to the young patriots that committed a feat way above their shoulders, as well as millions of others that followed on their footsteps in the years that were to follow. Because of their magnificent bravery, they laid a solid foundation for the youth of the eighties to raise the level of the struggle even higher and shed all fear for the regime and its forces of repression.

Fellow Councillors, the commemoration of the Youth Month this year marks the 40th anniversary of the 16 June Soweto uprising.

Time and again, the demands of the struggle place upon the youth unprecedented responsibilities and call on them to commit heroic feats which help to propel the struggle forward and resolve the most urgent and acute problems of the people.

During this entire period of the struggle, both before and after 1976, the youth acted with the knowledge and conviction that their struggle was part of a people's war against racial tyranny and their interests as young people were integral and similar to those of the people as a whole.

They knew that only victory over apartheid would resolve even their most fundamental yearning for a better and quality education and empowerment. The youth became the dynamic force of the struggle and its sharp end. Their patriotism reached new levels when they were engaged in the process, together with their people, to resolve the most intractable problems created by the existence of the system of racial capitalism.

Madam Speaker, the month of June 1976 was a turning point that changed the history and direction of South Africa in the fight against apartheid injustice. From the 1976 uprising until the liberation of our country in 1994,

no longer would the apartheid regime weigh the youth of this country lightly.

Ladies and gentlemen, the courage of the young lions of 1976 was not wasted. We have not as a country, and as a government, forgotten the selfless and noble bravery of our young heroes such as Hector Peterson and Hastings Ndlovu. We have kept their gallant deeds in our hearts and minds.

Ladies and gentlemen, the great African thinker Frantz Fanon said that “*each generation* must discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it”. Fanon was instilled with revolutionary ideas and understood that the struggle is not static but evolves over time.

The problems and challenges that face our country today require our youth - the foundation of liberated South Africa - to be innovators and creators, and to be

as fervent advocates of change and social justice as the youth of 1976.

Regrettably, too few young people are entering the workforce, starting their own businesses, or graduating with formal qualifications which empower them to make their way in the world.

The hard numbers available in official statistics do indeed sketch a complex and challenging picture.

We cannot underscore enough the point that South Africa today faces enormous challenges that require comprehensive and targeted responses if we must reverse inequality, poverty and underdevelopment. This is even more difficult under the current conditions of globalisation which reinforce the current global power relations and patterns of inequality and underdevelopment.

As I conclude Programme Director allow me to say, as we grapple with issues of the transformation and the development of society we must actively make space for that vital youth consciousness, the only component in the engine capable of moving South Africa even much more faster forward.

Notwithstanding the challenges, we have made substantial progress in delivering on our mandated functions as the district. We, however, acknowledge that the pace of providing to our communities still needs further acceleration.

Madam Speaker, it is important to highlight the fact that, this Council is nearing the end of its term of office following its inauguration in June 2011.

We are thankful to the citizens of the Sedibeng District for giving us a clear mandate to perform our duties.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the political leadership of the Sedibeng District Municipality, Acting Municipal Manager, Executive Directors and all our staff for their respective roles in assisting with our achievements and challenges as reflected in our Annual Report and Mid-Year Performance Review.

I know that there is a lot of uncertainty about the changes that the leadership of the region have made, however, I urge everyone to keep up the hard work as we are about to enter the new term of office.

Honourable Speaker, 2016 has been a very challenging year for all involved with the Council, but I would once again like to reassure everyone that the Sedibeng District will continue to strive to be more efficient and continue the work that was done in the current term of office as we move our community forward and overcome whatever challenges that confronts.

To all the political parties, I want to wish you success for the upcoming Election. Some of us may be going through a bit of a rough ride at the moment because of the list processes and so on, but keep your chin up and hang in there.

To my beloved party, the African National Congress in particular: Comrades lets disregard and ignore the bias rhetoric that these so called "freedom of speech" tabloids feed, believe me we have plenty of support in the community which will drastically show up and support our course.

I THANK YOU