



Message from the Executive Mayor of the Sedibeng District Municipality

The year 2010 presents us with yet another 21st March. This year's 21st March is far different from all other Human Rights Days that we have commemorated and celebrated in many years. What is significant with this year's 21st March is that we will be commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, special anniversary indeed, the period which will never descend our Region again in the life of many of us. A day which came to be popularly known as the Sharpeville Shootings.

This is the period that was followed by massive repression, mass detentions and the banning of organizations fighting for freedom and democracy like the ANC and PAC. This signaled the beginning of a difficult and painful period in the history of our country – an era in which repression, racism, conflict and division reached their peak.

The people of our country in general and the people of Sedibeng in particular have always wanted the Sharpeville Massacre to be commemorated differently in 2010, to mark the 50th Anniversary of that fateful day which brought a complete change to the political landscape of our country. In memory and honour of the heroes and heroines of that fateful day, the 21st March 1960, the area of Sedibeng was declared to be the Cradle of Human Rights by the first president of the democratic South Africa, the Honourable Mr. Nelson Mandela. This was in recognition of the role that the people of Sedibeng played in the struggle for Human Rights.

In ensuring a memorable commemoration and the celebration of the Human Rights it brought to our people, the Sedibeng District Municipality developed a twelve months long programme of various celebratory activities called the AFRICAN FESTIVAL.

As I have mentioned above, the 'African Festival' concept brings together three major events that are unlikely to be repeated in our lifetimes and brings us the following:

- The 50th Anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre.
- The awarding of the current State President with the Freedom of Sedibeng and appointing the First Lady as the Patron for the Sedibeng Reconstruction & Development Agency.
- The 2010 FIFA World Cup Tournament to be hosted by South Africa in June 2010.

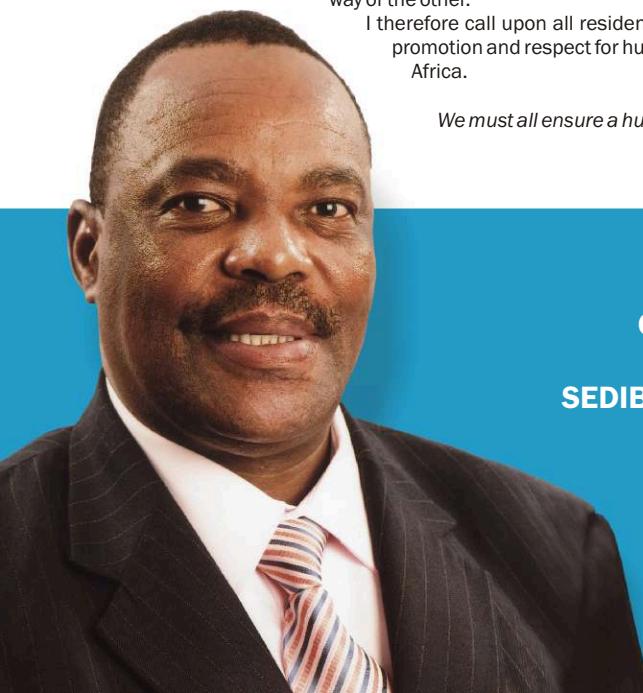
We have decided together with our Local Municipalities, Provincial Government and National Government that this Special 50th Anniversary shall this time around be celebrated and commemorated in a different style.

As we much into 2010 World cup may we declare our commitment and shared zero tolerance to crime in our region. In this regard we are continuously improving and upgrading our CCTV street surveillance system in Sharpeville; that the Sharpeville Precinct Developments benefit the people of Sharpeville.

As per promises made on massive precincts developments in and around Sharpeville, I am pleased to report that work is underway in various parts of Sharpeville to uplift the socio-economic development of the people of Sharpeville and the people of Sedibeng who remain beneficiaries of these projects in one way or the other.

I therefore call upon all residents of Sedibeng to continue to play a role in the promotion and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in South Africa.

We must all ensure a human rights centered society.



**Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng,
EXECUTIVE MAYOR,
SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**