

**ADDRESS BY LIMPOPO PREMIER MR CASSEL MATHALE AS
READ BY THE MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS MR GEORGE
PHADAGI DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE LIMPOPO
CONTRACTOR CONTACT CENTRE, MEROPA CASINO,
CAPRICORN DISTRICT, POLOKWANE**

30 MARCH 2010

Thank you Programme director

Members of the Executive Council here present

Executive Mayors and Mayors

The CEO of the CIDB

Construction Industry Development Board

Members of the business community

Traditional leaders

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening!

Today we are meeting here to launch the CIDB Contractor Contact Centre in the province, an initiative that will not only benefit well established contractors, but fundamentally also help the emerging contractors. We must regard this development as a milestone in the construction industry, which is aimed at taking the construction business to a higher level. The fact that our people will no longer be

required to travel to Tshwane for the purpose of registering with the CIDB is an immense achievement worth celebrating.

We have long advocated and promoted the approach of taking services to the people and this represents exactly that idea, which has been part of our slogan since taking over the administration 16 years ago. The registration with the CIDB is a major requirement in the construction industry and as such, the availability of this service in the province will be beneficial to the builders and prospective builders.

Programme director

It is vital to note that construction is one of the largest employers in the province and continues to make great interventions in the efforts to push back the frontiers of poverty amongst our people. This sector is known for its capacity to attract and employ the workforce that is drawn from all walks of life.

Most people with a promising career in construction fail to pursue their path on the basis of the lack of funding, and technical support. And this consequence has subjected many skilled constructors to be exploited by other established entities in the sector.

It is important to indicate that some of the conditions or requirements demanded by CIDB are too heavy for emerging contractors to meet. This often led to such contractors disappearing or being taken-over by others. It cannot be overemphasized that our efforts must be informed by our desire and determination to redress the imbalances of the past. In the event, we put stiff requirements without at the same time putting intensive support systems for the disadvantaged and without taking into consideration the historical injustices of the past, then our emerging contractors will face a bleak future. The first entry requirement, which is the registration fee, must be accommodative of our people. In the event the registration fee is exorbitant and not friendly then our people will be continuously excluded from the lucrative construction business.

As leaders of this democratic dispensation, we must not set conditions which are directly furthering the manifestation of the old apartheid order systems.

It is not our suggestion that we must lower the standard in order to accommodate historically marginalized people. We are strongly inclined to quality service and cannot accept any proposal that wants to compromise quality.

In the same tone, we are submitting that quality service can still be rendered by the historically disadvantaged people, only if adequate support is being afforded to them. Most of the houses and buildings which have stood the taste of time and survived all violent weather

conditions have been built by men and women who by far are not meeting some of the requirements we are stipulating.

Yes, we must educate our people and ensure that they move in line with the evolution of technology, and the CIDB should be able to play a significant role in this regard. We must assemble clear and simple support mechanisms, which will improve the skills and knowledge of our people in the construction industry.

Programme director

We have also witnessed fronting in this industry and it has been to the disadvantage of the emerging contractors because wrong beneficiaries have been benefiting through crooked practices. We will be relying on the CIDB to partner with us to get rid of this method of failing our policies intended at benefiting the previously disadvantaged.

Programme director

We are not doing well on the issue of women participation in the construction business. The number of women who are making inroads into construction is at an inferior level in this industry that has been male dominated for a long time. This is despite a sizable number of women continuing to show interest in the industry. However we are hopeful that more potential women contractors will

emerge and this establishment we are converging here to launch will make that possible.

The number of disabled persons participating in construction is not something that we can be proud to mention, for it is absolutely unacceptable. We have not done enough in creating a conducive environment for people living with disabilities to venture and succeed in the construction industry.

The Limpopo Employment, Growth and Development Plan assertively articulates a new approach that will bring women and disabled people into the mainstream of the economy and it is on this note, that construction business should be one of the sectors used to drive forward this plan. As Limpopo, we are at work creating good opportunities for women and people living with disability to prosper in the construction work and actively take part generally in the economic revolution of the province.

Programme director

As a nation, we are duty bound to contribute individually and collectively to the building of a solid economy that is able to respond to societal challenges through the creation of decent job opportunities. We have a common responsibility to avail all essential services needed to free people from the scourges of underdevelopment. Although, we are registering good progress in this regard, we still need to invest more of our energies to educate people

about the role and the importance of CIDB services and other similar organizations.

Working together, we can do more!

I thank you!