

ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE MAYOR CLLR DJ MMETLE AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF THE AVIATION DISASTER AT TZANEEN COUNTRY LODGE ON 19 AUGUST 2011

Programme Director, Acting Director of Corporate Services Thulani Twala

Honourable Councillors present

Representative of the bereaved Families

Pastor Ndala

The CEO and Members of GTEDA present

Members of Tzaneen Chamber of Commerce

Members of Tzaneen Flying Club

Friends and Fellow Citizens

All Protocols Observed

I send my morning greetings looking up in heaven where my hope comes from. I look up in the mountains in search for strength to rise up to a new day. I stand here on behalf of the people of Greater Tzaneen Municipality and the Government of South Africa, sending our deepest condolences and Sympathy to the families, friends and loved ones of the bereaved.

Programme Director, Ladies & Gentlemen, let me quote the words of Leona Miller, an Irish writer when she said, and I quote:

“Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal. But to live in the hearts we leave behind is truly not to die. While we are mourning the loss of our loved ones, others are rejoicing to meet them behind the veil for indeed heaven is a place nearby and there’s no need to say goodbye” close quote.

As we pay our last respect to the men, women and children who perished in our shores

on their way home from one of our annual events, the Tzaneen Airshow in Tarentaalrand, we will remain indebted and grateful to the victims who lost their lives after they entertained our people. Their contribution to tourism in our area will forever be embedded in our hearts and their lives will be celebrated for years to come.

The victims of the Albatross planes did not know beforehand that all this was going to happen. They were doing what they were doing with passion. It was joy which turned out into disaster. It was love that put the end to their lives. Their souls may be smiling wherever they are; my believe is that they liked what they were doing.

Our task is to celebrate what they lived for and ensure that their legacy still lives on. We cannot put a stop to what they lived for. Instead let's continue doing it for the love and passion they showed. After all, it is what they lived and died for.

Indeed those we love don't go away; They walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near, still loved, still missed and very dear. To the bereaved families and the people of Greater Tzaneen in general, I wish you hope in the midst of sorrow, comfort in the midst of pain. Although no words can really help to ease the loss you bear, just know that you are very close in our every thought and prayer. We pray God will comfort you, and send Angels from above, giving sweet peace within your heart, surrounding you with eternal love. We are sorry for your deep loss, there's so little we can find to say, you are in our thoughts and prayers, as we grieve with you today.

Programme Director, Ladies and Gentlemen, I also wish to take this opportunity to thank all men and women who open their hearts for receiving and helping the bereaved families when they here, and to those you helped the search teams in their quest to recover the remainings of the deceased. May God bless your hearts, you remain a beacon of hope and strength to our people.

Let me close by a quote from Rossiter Worthington Raymond when she said:

“Life is eternal, and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon; and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight. You don't get over it, you just get through it. You don't get by it, because you can't get around it. It doesn't 'get better, it just gets different. Everyday grief puts on a new face.... Do not stand at my grave and weep; I am not there. I do not sleep. I am a thousand winds that blow; I am a diamond's glint on snow. I am the sunlight on ripened grain; I am the gentle autumn's rain. When you awaken in the morning's hush, I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds circled in flight. I am the soft star that shines at night. Do not stand at my grave and cry, I am not there. I did not die.”

I thank you.