

Remarks by the Mayor of the GTM, Councillor GP Molapisane on the occasion of the IDP Rep Forum 05 October 2023 at Maake Tribal Office

Madam Speaker, Councillor Sanie Tiba
The Whip of Council, Councillor Given Malatji
Members of the Executive Committee
Chairpersons of Section 79 Committees
PR and Ward Councillors
Leader of the official opposition
Traditional Leaders
Members of the various ward committees
The Municipal Manager, Mr. Donald Mhangwana
Directors and managers, and all employees of the Greater Tzaneen Municipality
Members of the media
Fellow residents
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

As the Greater Tzaneen Municipality, we prioritize community engagement and consultation as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The IDP Rep Forum serves as an exceptional platform for us to come together, share our experiences and expertise, and take collective decisions that benefit our citizens in meaningful ways.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the members of this forum who volunteer their time and efforts selflessly, without expecting any monetary compensation. Your unwavering dedication to serving the people is truly admirable, and we owe you a great debt of appreciation.

Currently, the IDP process is in the analysis phase, and it is vital that we recognize the different stages involved. By doing so, we can actively contribute to the discussions and topics in this forum and ultimately uplift our communities. Let us continue to collaborate, learn from each other, and make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve.

Programme Director

It is of utmost importance that we, as esteemed members of this forum, distinguish and differentiate between the various stages involved in our discussions. By doing so, we can effectively contribute to the topics and discussions at hand, and ensure that our collective efforts are channeled towards the right direction. It is worth noting that the analysis phase may entail a slightly different discussion from that of the project phase, and therefore, it is essential to be aware of these distinctions.

As members of various stakeholders represented in this forum, we have a collective responsibility to ensure that the IDP Rep forum does not transform into a mere complaints forum. Instead, we should strive to present constructive criticism that is accompanied by potential solutions. By adopting such an approach, we can make tangible progress in our engagement as government stakeholders in the community.

Moreover, I would like to emphasize the importance of establishing robust relationships between the municipality representatives, particularly with traditional leadership. It is not enough to merely coexist; collaboration is paramount. To achieve this, counselors and committees should be well-informed of the plans of traditional leadership, and vice versa. This approach will enable us to work together seamlessly and achieve the desired outcomes. It is noteworthy that our government paid homage to and acknowledged the traditional leadership in the area even before we embarked on the IDP reform, and we

should continue to foster this relationship to ensure that we achieve our goals collectively.

The importance of a positive and productive relationship between the councillors of a municipality and traditional leadership cannot be overstated when it comes to ensuring the smooth delivery of services to senior communities. Regrettably, in recent years, several infrastructure projects have been disrupted due to disagreements within the community. These divisions often result in significant delays and cost the municipality a considerable amount of money. In addition, there are those who take advantage of the most vulnerable members of society, exacerbating the problems and further disrupting ongoing projects.

Consultation with the community and reaching a consensus are essential elements of any successful project. All too often, projects are implemented without considering the community's priorities, leading to infrastructure that is unused and projects that do not provide any real benefit. As an AI-powered assistant, I strongly believe that the primary focus should always be on serving the needs of the community. This approach ensures that all projects are beneficial and that the community receives the services and support they require to thrive.

Programme Director

We are keenly aware of the critical role that ward committees play in fostering effective communication between the government and our people. These committees possess invaluable expertise and insights into the unique challenges and complexities that impact their respective neighborhoods on a daily basis. They serve as a vital bridge in bridging the gap that often exists between government officials and our citizens. As a municipality, we express our sincere gratitude for the unwavering commitment and

tireless efforts of these committee members in their ongoing efforts to improve our communities, especially in the face of adversity. We remain firmly committed to providing them with the necessary tools, knowledge, and resources to continue making a positive impact.

As government, we are fully cognizant of the challenges confronting our communities today. One of the most pressing challenges is water provision, which we have been grappling with for an extended period. Additionally, we are facing challenges in electricity, roads, crime, and unemployment. These are just a few challenges that we confront not only as a municipality but as a country in general. It is imperative that we address these issues and provide our people with clean drinking water, a constant supply of electricity, safer communities, and smooth roads to travel on. Children need to thrive academically and socially in an environment conducive to their growth, and we need to have appropriate healthcare infrastructure in all our communities.

Education is also a vital component of our society, and while our government has made significant strides in making education accessible to every young person in our country, we must ensure that educators are dedicated and committed to providing quality education. Our schools must provide quality education so that children in rural areas do not have to go to townships for better education, and children in our township schools do not have to go to private schools because they are unhappy with the quality of education in their area.

Programme Director

As we move forward, we must recognize that the government alone cannot deliver at every level and in every corner of our municipality. The community must also play a role in its development and improvement. Parents are a part of their school's governing

bodies and are responsible for their schools' performance and the performance of their educators. Clinic committees are responsible for the clinics' operations, and community policing forums are responsible for the crime fighting and prevention in their area of jurisdiction. Some communities have taken matters into their own hands by forming street patrols to address crime or volunteering to clean up their communities, teach children in high school for free, or promote sports development and arts and culture.

In conclusion, we extend our gratitude to the traditional leadership for hosting this forum, and we intend to rotate these forums in different clusters and communities to ensure that we reach all areas of our municipality. We must work in unison to build a better society for all.

I thank you