

**Address by the Mayor of the Greater Tzaneen Municipality,
Councillor Gerson Molapisane during the FIRST Lego League
Challenge Limpopo Regional Competition Tivumbeni Multi-
Purpose Center in Nkowankowa on 30 November 2024:**

Programme Director
Representatives for GTCF,
Representatives from the department of education, mopani west
Representatives from Tshwane University of Technology
The CEO of Letaba TVET
Our learners, participants and competitors
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished guests, educators, sponsors, parents, and most importantly, our young innovators, it is a great honor to stand before you today at the 4th First Lego League Challenge Limpopo Regional Competition, held here at the Tivumbeni Multi-Purpose Center in Nkowankowa. Today marks a celebration of creativity, collaboration, and the boundless potential of our youth.

As we gather here today, we are reminded of the transformative power of technology and innovation. The world is changing rapidly, and the future belongs to those who can adapt, think critically, and create solutions to the challenges we face. This competition is more than a showcase of robotic creations; it is a platform for our children

to dream, to design, and to develop the skills that will shape their futures.

It is crucial that we bring technology and innovation into our rural schools. For far too long, rural communities have been seen as places of limited opportunity. But I say to you today, those limitations exist only if we allow them to. By introducing robotics, coding, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education, we are opening doors to a world of possibilities for our children.

Programme Director

We must remember that the richest individuals in the world today did not achieve their success by simply following tradition; they became trailblazers in technology and innovation. Icons like Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg built their empires by thinking differently and embracing the potential of technology. Our children deserve the same opportunities to learn, to innovate, and to succeed. They must be taught not only history and politics but also the skills that will enable them to become creators of new histories and leaders in their own right.

Programme Director

Today, as we witness these young participants showcase their ingenuity, we are reminded of the incredible talent and potential that exists within our communities. These boys and girls are proof that with the right guidance, resources, and encouragement, greatness can emerge from any corner of the world. Let us commit ourselves to investing in their education and providing them with the tools they need to thrive in the 21st century.

To the educators and parents present here today: let us continue to champion STEM education and advocate for the inclusion of technology in our schools. To our partners and sponsors: let us strengthen our collaborations to ensure that every child, regardless of their background, has access to the opportunities they deserve. And to the young participants: you are the stars of today and the pioneers of tomorrow. Embrace the spirit of innovation, and never stop dreaming.

Programme Director

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our partners who have made this event possible: the Greater Tzaneen Community Foundation (GTCF), the Limpopo Department of Education, Tshwane University of Technology, and Letaba Networks. Your commitment to nurturing young minds and fostering innovation in our communities is both inspiring and invaluable.

In closing, let us celebrate the brilliance of our youth and the promise of a brighter future. Together, we can transform our communities and inspire a generation of innovators who will not only dream of change but create it. Thank you, and I wish all the participants the best of luck in today's competition. Let the innovation begin!