

# **SPEECH DELIVERED BY HER WORSHIP, THE MAYOR OF LEPELLE-NKUMPI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY COUNCILLOR MODILE IVY PHAAHLA ON THE OCCASION OF PONTSHO CHARITY GOLF DAY AT POLOKWANE GOLF COURSE**

**17 AUGUST 2012**

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Evening

Let me start by quoting former President Thabo Mbeki who wrote...

“Among the yardsticks by which to measure a society’s respect for human rights, to evaluate the level of its maturity and its generosity of spirit, it’s by looking at the status that it accords to those members of society who are most vulnerable, disabled people, the senior citizens and its children”.

People with disabilities are more often than not left on the periphery of society due to discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes, as well as inhospitable and inaccessible environments.

The level of ignorance we have come across in our work with government officials across all three spheres of government, required urgent political intervention.

This was also amplified in the lack of qualitative as well as quantitative data and information contained in government submissions for the first Country Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is against this background that our Council put aside an amount of R5,6m to build a centre for persons with disabilities, commonly known as Pontsho Disability Centre.

On 01 March 2012, we met with Deputy Minister of Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Honourable Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu after she saw an advertisement of a tender in the Sunday Times about a

service to erect a building for people with disabilities in Khureng Village, Zebediela.

The Deputy Minister deemed it necessary to come and share information with us regarding the centre. She wanted to know the broader disability programmes that will be running at the centre as well as our vision so that the Department of Women, Children and People Disabilities can provide support, play the role of consolidation and coordination of disability considerations in this project and share with other centres as best practice.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Khureng centre for people with disabilities also serves as a residential facility using only three small rooms. The rooms are not built according to norms and standards based on the principles of Universal Access. There are 11 volunteers running the centre but all are not trained or capacitated to offer a curriculum for children with disabilities.

As we would all agree, education remains a crucial weapon to liberate people from oppression. For that effect a task team composed of Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality, Office of the Premier Disability Coordinator, Department of Social Development ( National and Provincial), Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Women, Children and People with Disability and Representative from Pontsho Disability Centre was formed to take the process forward. Miss Limpopo is also part of the Task Team, Thanks Katryn.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very pleased to announce that we have already appointed the service provider to erect the centre and as we speak now, the contractor is on site. “LEROLE LE A TUPA”. The motto of our government is “Working together we can do more”. This motto is true than ever before as we thank Aphane Consulting Engineer, in particular the Manager, Mr Steve Aphane for continuing organising this event since 2010. We are saying Morekhu, Thanks very much. Your commitment for helping displaced children in our community, weather the crises in their lives is appreciated by those who help them and, most importantly, by those who benefit from our services.

We thank you all sponsors of this occasion, all players and everybody present here. Please continue to support those who are in need.

In conclusion ladies and gentlemen, "Let's turn from spectators into participants. Let's recall the inspiring words of U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt who said:

"Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumph even though checkered by failure, than to remain with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat. We have too much to do to sit on the sidelines. We need you to step out of the gray twilight into the bright sunshine so that we can all see the dawn of a new day."

**I THANK YOU!!!**

**KE A LEBOGA!!!**