

KEY NOTE REMARKS BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE, HON. MS. MAKHOTSO MAGGIE SOTYU (MP) AT THE MINISTERIAL NETWORKING

THE PORTFOLIO OF POLICE, THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – THE ROAD AHEAD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PRESENT CLIMATE, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

25 FEBRUARY 2016

Programme Director,
My Colleague, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms. T. Xasa
Speaker of the Thekwini Legislature, Cllr L. Naidoo,
ANC PBF Convener, Cde. Daryl Swanepoel,
Our cross-air participants in China, from the China Canton Fair,
Our Business Sector represented here,
Delegates,
Distinguished Guests

Programme Director, this year 2016, South Africa will be commemorating two critical events that are of national interest: 60 years of Women's March against racist pass laws; and 40 years of Youth Uprising against the racist regime of Apartheid.

It is thus, always an honour and privilege Programme Director, to participate in the events of this nature, because they always provide Government in general, and South African Police Service (SAPS) in particular, with the impetus and vigour to explore more innovative ways to partner, coordinate and integrate our efforts against crime, as we move South Africa forward.

So, today I will speak about the SAPS' role within our society, as we commemorate these important milestones as a nation.

As Police Leadership, we do not at any stage, take such platforms of networking, for granted, because one of the fundamental pillars of our crime prevention and crime fighting approaches, is premised along strengthening partnerships with all our critical stakeholders and sectors.

In fact, it is through such partnerships and engagement that our beloved nation transformed itself from being an international outcast for having a racist regime; to an important global player for democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism, and peace and stability.

Yes, without fear or favour, the ANC, as the ruling party in a democratic state, have made South Africa and its inhabitants' lives, better.

Yes, we can do more than better, and, we must strive for the best to address the acute socio-economic disparities that continue to beleaguer our country. This is a critical challenge that we need to tackle head on, in a very honest manner.

It is not difficult for us to say that, over the 21 years that the ANC-led Government has been leading this nation, life lessons have been learnt from our own efforts to make this country a better society.

Therefore, unintentional mistakes, misunderstandings, miss-steps and tragedies have occurred in the process.

From these missteps, we have in-turn gained perspective to learn, to initiate, to innovate, and to invigorate our solidarity with each other to fight criminality and to fend for economic development. That is why we are here as the Police Leadership.

Informed by lessons of the Marikana tragedy, the Ministry of Police is now busy establishing Committees of Experts to transform the South African Police Service into a professional, service delivery oriented Department.

This transformation of the SAPS will inevitably focus on the type of a police officer that the National Development Plan blueprint wishes to see. However, this transformation will never be possible without the involvement of all credible stakeholders and networks. And, this cannot be more emphasized!

Our presence here as the SAPS Leadership is an admission that, fighting and preventing crime necessitate national and international solidarity. For crime has grown sophisticated, and we need to have sophisticated human resources and tools to deal with this.

We believe that forums such as these, obligates all of us, diverse as we are, to unite and to belong to an anti-crime family that has commitment and common ideas and ideals against one common enemy: the criminal, whether professional or petty.

South Africa have sophisticated programmes that lure sophisticated criminal syndicates to thrive in and to detriment on our economic development efforts to grow our economy, to create employment, and to sustain and secure our developmental gains as a country.

And, indeed, growth and development cannot bear the results if we have police officers that are not skilled in these sophisticated programmes.

For instance, we have Border Management programmes, which must be underpinned by strong credible bilateral relations to fight cross-border crime.

We need each other to fight the hugely complex drug, human trafficking and other illicit trade routes that have now become shorter, diverse and easily traversed. We

must then all step up our cooperation bi-laterally and at international level for the sake of social progress.

South Africa is also one of the countries with the largest private security industry in the world. This is another environment that breeds highly sophisticated criminal activities.

Not all companies and private security guards register with Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) as required by law.

The ability of criminal networks to infiltrate the industry poses security threat to the sovereignty of South Africa.

To have a sound private security business in South Africa, let us then all support the United Nations initiative to look at possible international instruments to lessen the global security threat posed by unlawful private security companies operating in South Africa and elsewhere.

Firearms are another breeder to unscrupulous firearm dealers that are not complying with the law. Any lack of proper controls of firearms may as well lead to a proliferation of unlicensed firearms throughout the country and globally.

Land in general, and mining in particular, are another bone of contention within the economic sector. Mining sector has increasingly become infested with sophisticated organized criminals, through illegal mining.

You are thus requested to support Government's initiative, the Mine Crime Combating Forum, which is under the auspices of the Framework Agreement for a Sustainable Mining Industry entered into by Organized Labour, Organized Business and Government.

Programme Director, as a country, we further request to strengthen our bi-laterals for exchanging best practices in the field of Forensic Science.

A Forensic Scientist is a scarce skill, thus SAPS must come with a strategy to retain our expertise, but we also need to improve the experience levels of our analysts, to allow them to be comparable with their peers within the forensic internationally.

Strengthening these bi-laterals further, we are pleased to announce that, I will be leading a team of high ranking police officers delegation to China and Russia, amongst others, for benchmarking and best-practices on matters of close protection security service.

We want to learn from our BRICS countries on how we can improve the working conditions of our SAPS members with regard to their wellness as a whole, so as to enable our police officers to service their country with pride, and to protect the investment that you business people bring in our country.

Investment without security is equal to chasing investors out of our beautiful country, South Africa.

In conclusion, Programme Director, we want to emphasize that our Transformation endeavor of the SAPS will be an ongoing process.

It will continue including the deepening of relationships and partnerships with progressive stakeholders in the society, labour, business and international community, because crime is our common enemy irrespective of our diverse backgrounds and conditions.

Particularly, we want to urge our business fraternity to play a prominent role in crime prevention and combating.

We invite the Business sector to partner with us as we embark on a project that will deliver mobile police stations in crime hotspots, across the country.

We request you to mobilize and coordinate your resources towards this project. Criminals retard the socio-economic development of South Africa and the world, and it is in the interest of both Government and Business to reduce crime of all types.

We are very aware that it will take a long time to realize the strategic objective of a crime free South Africa and World. But, I have a firm belief that, this forum forms part of the critical foundation to such ideal. Let us then begin to build on, together.

Therefore, thank you very much once again for this invitation.

May I also take this opportunity to say: May God bless my African National Congress (ANC) as we are preparing for the most difficult Local Government Elections to be held within the next 5 months.

I thank you all very much.