

The Premier of the Free State Province

Members of the Executive Council

Madam Speaker

Councillors

Municipal Manager; Directors and all Officials

Members of the business community

Ladies and gentlemen

All protocol observed

We have witnessed four very great intertwined occasions during the day today and I know that you can share with me when I say what a well deserved celebration.

Allow me to remark that this day will go down in the history of this municipality as one day that

- Celebrated footprints of comrades and friends whose signature will never be forgotten in the history of these four small towns.
- Heralds a new beginning and a new way of doing things.

Madam Speaker the purpose of this Gala Dinner marks all the achievements that we enjoy today in this municipality and let me hasten to state that as we sat with fellow Councillors as well as the Management Team we were unane in saying **“It has not been about us; we also owe it to those that we are in partnership with in terms of improving the quality of life of our people”**

The greatest nation in the world today have not emerged where there has been **NO TEAMWORK** rather they have successfully set their differences aside in their quest of achieving the best for the welfare of its citizens.

When I was honoured to take political leadership of this municipality Madam Speaker; we agreed to adopt a slogan that goes **“DO IT NOW DO IT RIGHT”**; we were mindful of governments motto of **“TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE”**. We agreed about that slogan having been informed of the challenges that faced us and our organization.

Eight months into the leadership I am proud to stand here in front of everyone of you and state without fear that; although it was not easy but it has been worth it.

Madam Speaker leading any institution into the desired direction renders one to be unpopular and also creates a love hate relationship. I have always stated in our joint meetings Madam Speaker that there are mandates of our organization that we need to realize and we must make an effort to push towards realizing them no matter the confrontations.

We gather here this evening not to sing praises to our Provincial Leadership and Cabinet of the Free State Legislature.

Allow me Madam Speaker to define what we agreed on when we said we wanted to say a big thank you these fine leaders of our time:

- A thank you Madam Speaker is not a sign of cowardice or buying a face.
- A thank you in this life time need not be post-humous.
- A thank you is not a sign of weak leadership.

Madam Speaker allow me to mention few exciting news about Cde Ace Magashule's commitment in serving our people, since I knew him he touched the lives of Cornelia people as follows :

- In 1999 he visited Cornelia to recruit and established the branch and on his way home his maroon BMW overturned, fortunately he survived.
- In 2002 as MEC of Agriculture he launch a World Food Day in Cornelia and 200 household by providing them with Hatchery Chickens, Wheelbarrows, Garden Equipments and meat parcels.
- As MEC of Sports, he launched a ' Soccer in the Zone' in Cornelia for the under 17 youth and Mr Serame Letswaka was appointed as a community coach, Sports Co-ordinators were also appointed for both schools and community soccer teams. During his reshuffling he donated a MPSS to Cornelia Community to the tune of R1m.
- Before the 2009 National and Provincial Elections, he launched the ANC electioneering Campaign in Cornelia on the 04 of February 2009, where he went door-to-door distributing 500 ANC T-Shirts with volunteers.
- On the the 06th of August 2009, after being elected the Premier of the Free State, he launched a Provincial Programme named 'Operation Hlasela' in Cornelia and the following projects were launched :
 1. Township Revitalisation Programme by paving roads
 2. Renovation of Municipal Offices and Community Halls
 3. 350 Trees were planted for Climate Change and Trees Ambassadors' were Appointed.
 4. MPSS was erected to the tune of R1m
 5. 28 Nguni Cattles were given to 6 beneficiaries (53)
 6. Greenhouse Tunnels to the tune of R400 000
 7. Hatchery Project for 8 beneficiaries and 480 chickens were given.
 8. Extension of Phekolong Clinic in Cornelia
 9. Sponsorship to both Bakery and Catering Women's Group Projects to the tune of R80 000
- In 2010, On the 16 of July he visited Cornelia again as a follow up to the launched projects.
- In 2011, He again visited Cornelia to prepare Provincial Launch of the Greening Campaign, as the brainchild of Mme Mamimiki Qabathe to 50 houses, in partnership with Don Laka, 2x Backyard Garden coordinators were employed.
- 60 Computer and 25 Business Administration Learnerships were launched.
- Again 25 Learnership on Civil Engineering and 50 on Construction were given
- On the 29 May 2013, he again visited Cornelia to prepare the launch of ANC Elections Campaign by appointing the Street Co-ordinators for all streets in Cornelia as Pilot Project for Street Committees Establishment. He also donated 10 Soccer Kit to 10 Soccer Clubs of Cornelia

Madam Speaker, it is for this reason we wanted to thank these leaders whilst they are alive; whilst we are able to look them in their faces and say to them **“you made us who were are and for that there is no other word that we can say to yourselves except to thank you; thank you for putting up with our fragile egos; with our doubts; thank you for the constant guidance and most of all thank you for the years that you have prioritized the lives of our people”**

Today is that but a day in the calendar when it feels so correct to give you small tokens of our appreciation as a gesture of acknowledging the effort that you put in, in developing our communities. When you go back to your respective destinations do not look at the size of the present you received rather take it as a challenges that beckons to you to keep on doing the best for the betterment of the lives of the people of this country. In conclusion, Matthew 10:16 ‘ Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be as wise as serpent and harmless as doves’ When Moses led the children of Israel from the slavery of Egypt to the Freedom of the Promised Land, he discovered that slaves do not always welcome their deliverers. They would rather bear those ills they have. They prefer the flashpoint of Egypt to the ordeals of emancipation. But this is not the way out. Dr Marting Lurther JNR was correct to say. “My comrades we cannot win the respect of the oppressors of the South and elsewhere if we are willing to trade the future of our children for our personal safety and comfort.”

Together we can do more.

I thank you!!!