Address by Cllr Nompumelelo Chamane

01 October 2015
16h00

- Programme Director,
- Our future leaders,
- Distinguished guests,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,
Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. What a wonderful evening to be surrounded by young blood, our future leaders who will take our beloved country forward.

This evening is one I regard highly important because I will address you on the vital role of education in building our solid societies. I feel honoured to join you in this gathering because it is high time we engage on this topical subject.

Programme Director, education remains the only key that can unlock all doors and set you on a path towards reaching for your dreams. It is an important tool used to empower, it is a tool that can be used to fight the imbalances of the past and most importantly, it is a tool that has the power to open opportunities for YOU, as the future of our country.

Education remains the only hope we have for a complete liberation of a young mind. First democratic president of our country, Dr Nelson Mandela once said: “Education is the most powerful tool one can use to change the world”.

Ladies and gentlemen, this quote by the late Tata Madiba always resonates in my mind when I think of the challenges that this country faces and the possible solutions thereof. I chose to emphasise these powerful words by our struggle icon because I wanted to highlight the importance and significance of education in the development of the country.
It is widely accepted that all children have the right to an education, because education gives people the skills they need to help themselves out of poverty and into prosperity.

Education contributes immensely to the economic growth of the country. Education supports the growth of civil society, democracy and political stability, allowing people to learn about their rights and acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to exercise them. We all agree that education is a vital tool but we are still faced with the challenge of young people falling through the cracks of social ills. This is of great concern to our government.

Programme Director, government’s concerns emanate from destructive activities that our young people are engaging in these days. These delinquencies are alcohol abuse, substance abuse, criminality and early engagement in sexual activities which often lead to teenage pregnancies and HIV infections.

These social ills result in young people dropping out of the education system. For girls, this is frequently explained by the high rate of teenage pregnancies. Socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment and peer pressure can contribute to social ills.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must agree that South Africa is a much better place than it was before 1994 and once again, building capacity in all sectors of our economy through education is the primary factor that has helped us to achieve this feat and to be where we are today.
Efforts have been made to improve our education systems but we cannot depend on government alone. This then calls for a collective effort from all sectors of society to work together in ensuring that we all do our bits to help develop our country by educating our young people. We need to ensure that no young person is unable to go to get a proper education.

In closing ladies and gentlemen, I would like to encourage young people to make education a priority. You can achieve anything your heart desires through your commitment to education. Education is an investment to a bright future.

Thank you.