

## **Statement at the Nkobongo community Centre**

20 August 1999

Master of Ceremonies, Town Clerk, Mr. Andrew Ferguson  
Councillor Bonny Maraj, Mayor of Dolphin Coast Council  
Councillor Norah Nzuzo  
Chairman of the Nkobongo Community Development, Mr. Solomon Mthembu  
Deputy Judge President Shabalala of Kwazulu Natal Mr. Dawie Bosman of ABSA Bank  
Mr. Barry Walton, General Manager of SAUR Services International  
Councillors of the Dolphin Coast Municipality  
People of Nkobongo  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am here to meet the people of Nkobongo, Shakaskraal, Etete, Umhlali village, Shakashead as well as other areas and to see what progress we have made in the transformation of all these places, what we have done collectively to improve infrastructure and to better the lives of our people.

I have been informed that in the informal settlements of Nkobongo and Shaka's Head, where living conditions were particularly bad, 1025 houses have been built to replace shacks and a further 400 are to be constructed within the next 18 months.

I have been informed that in 1995 there was only 1 water standpipe in Shaka's Head, 2 here in Nkobongo and 8 in Etete and that there were no access roads serving these three townships and no sanitary services.

But within the space of four years, through the new municipality, all towns have been provided with suitable water supply systems and proper sanitation services. I have been told that the roads have been improved in these areas.

I am also aware that there is a programme of building community facilities so that the people here can meet and exchange ideas and express their creativity so as to strengthen the life of the community and as part of local cultural development.

These ongoing programmes in your community must be seen as part of the national effort towards the development of our country through partnerships between government and the people, between government and the people, between government and the private sector, for the benefit of all our people, especially the poor and the marginalised.

While much has been done and we are on the right road in creating a better life for all, there is a great deal that we must all still do together.

The challenge now for all councillors in local government is how to accelerate our work in improving infrastructure and service delivery and thus creating an enabling environment for the improvement of our people's lives.

The challenge to the people, the citizens of this part of our country, is how to strengthen the partnership between government and the people by actively participating in all aspects of community life.

Only with full and active participation by the community, can we have an involved community and an empowered community, one that is not afraid to voice their concerns and articulate their needs, a community that has a say in the formulation and implementation of goals.

Only through community representation and even co-ownership of projects, can we have a future in which all our people become conscious of their skills and fully self-confident of their actions and their abilities to work towards a better life.

Only through community involvement in all matters concerning them can we truly improve the quality of life.

Then, in this way, we shall see creative power of the community at work, creating a better society for us all. We shall see change at a local level impacting on the province and the entire country, bringing into being the caring nation we speak so much about.

Only with partnerships between the people and their government, only with interactions of mutual benefit between people and the private sector, can we as communities and as a people prosper.

When we speak about making the next century an African century, let us remember that change for the better first occurs at local level. Here in Nkobongo in the Borough of the Dolphin Coast, your efforts can impact on a national reality and at international levels and transform the face of local governance even on a continental level

I thank you