

Welcoming Remarks by the chairperson of the  
PGC: Ms N. P. Nkonyeni on the occasion of the  
KZN Provincial Governing Council meeting with the  
Country Review Mission.

19 July 06

The Team Leader: Prof Adebayo Adedeji  
Members of the Team: Eminent Persons  
Hon Premier of our Province: Dr Sbusiso Ndebele  
Hon Speaker of the House: Mr Willis Mchunu  
Head of Government Business: Dr Zweli Mkhize  
Members of the Provincial Executive Council  
Hon Members of the Legislature  
Director General  
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Honourable Premier, today's gathering mark a turning point for our province. Never had one thought that in a mere 12 years into our new democracy we would be looking deep into ourselves and assessing if we are still on the right path or moving at all.

We pride ourselves for the progress already made in our efforts to bring peace into this province that not a decade ago saw unparalleled levels of internecine violence that maimed and displaced thousands of our citizens. Yes we once had our own Rwanda, but all that now is the thing of the past.

As we do our own self-introspection, we are able to notice a remarkable change in attitude on how our population now regard the security forces—there is now a good working relationship and trust has been restored.

As we continue making strides and normalising our society, we are also mindful of the epoch making measures being taken. We take pride in being the only province in the continent to have come up with the **Citizen's Charter**. Honourable Prof Adedeji, the Charter sets out mechanisms and recourse that the

citizens have, should they feel that the services promised are not to required standards.

We also have to concede that our province, in the continent is the most affected in as far as the HIV and AIDS epidemic is concern. We are doing our best to put brakes in the spread of this malady

In accordance with the **Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Care, Management and Treatment Plan** this is what we are doing, we have:

- Rolled out of VCT to all health institutions as well as 50 non-medical sites
- Rolled out of PMTCT to all institutions with maternal services
- Strengthening HIV-infection prevention initiatives by increasing awareness and condom distribution
- Providing nutritional supplement to all HIV positive people under our care
- Treating sexually transmitted diseases in all our institutions—free to those who cannot pay.

- Providing drugs to all victims of sexual violence
- Operating 3 functioning Truck-Stop wellness centres, tomorrow we are opening another one in Kokstad .
- Rollout the provision of ARV treatment to all accredited institutions, 55 hospitals and 5 Community Health centres.
- In collaboration with the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine, training and working together with Traditional Healers to curb the spread of HIV. It's a fact; people do make use of African Traditional Medicine.

Our President has also pointed at areas that require united effort in as far as poverty levels are concerned. This are now regarded as Presidential nodal points. Esteemed Members, we have come up with an initiative called **Operation Mbo**. Basically this is the provincial massification programme based on geographic integration and coordination, with joint planning and implementation of projects.

The objective here is to contribute comprehensively towards poverty eradication, human development and improved quality of life.

We cannot hide the fact that this province has a number of problems and shortcomings. Chief among our concerns is the high rate of illiteracy. To curb this malady, our Department of Education is already implementing a massive scale programme of basic adult education. This, under the Masifundisane Adult Literacy Campaign, which aims at eradicating illiteracy in the province by 2008. We think the Cuban model of 'each teach one' will make a difference for us as well.

The government departments are also united in efforts to elevate the status of women in this province. This is clearly shown by a number of women who have been entrusted with a responsibility of being Heads of Departments, and its working. The same can be said insofar as the appointment of members of the executive is

concerned. Women MEC's are heading 3 critical departments. Even at local government sphere we can report progress yet knowing that we still have to improve.

For the sake of synergy in as far as governance is concern, our Hon Premier has established a Coordinating Forum that brings in together Mayors from all municipalities. This is where developmental issues are tackled.

Honourable Prof Adedeji, I am highlighting all these aspects so that we can derive more from your wisdom as you make recommendations where you think we are floundering.