

**INAUGURATION SPEECH DELIVERED BY CLR. THABO MANYONI OF MANGAUNG
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

30 September 2011

Programme Director, Tim Thabethe
Honourable Speaker, Clr. C. Rampai
Honourable Judge President Musi
Honourable Premier of the FS Mr. Elias Magashule
His Excellence High Commissioner Happy Mahlangu
MECs and Members of the Provincial Legislature
Former Mayor of Mangaung Cde. Playfair Morule
Salga leadership
SACN leadership
Honourable Deputy Mayor, Clr. M. Siyonzana
Executive Mayors and Mayors
Council Whip, Clr. Z.E. Magcotywa
Brigadier General Moadira
Members of Mayoral Committees
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Leaders of all Political Parties
Fellow Councillors

City Manager

Chairperson and CEO's of public entities

Managers and Officials of the Council

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Fellow Citizens of Mangaung

I stand before you tonight humbled by the sacrifices you all made to be here, a demonstration of our collective commitment to democratic rule based on the will of the people best expressed by John Calhoun thus "The very essence of a free government consists in considering offices as public trusts, bestowed for the good of the country and not for the benefit of an individual or party" Mine is indeed a commitment to serve the City and its citizens.

Allow me on this historic occasion to acknowledge the leader after whom this precinct is named - Abram "Bram" Fischer.

A comrade in arms and a lawyer, who, according to the Former State President Nelson Mandela: **"...challenged his own people because he felt that what they were doing was morally wrong. As an Afrikaner, his conscience forced him to be ostracized by his own people and showed a level of courage and sacrifice that was immeasurable"**.

In what is commonly known as a 'letter from underground', he demonstrated his insight and foresight of a new democratic society, when he said: **"With all South Africa free, at long last our country will fulfill its great potential – economic, political, cultural and educational – internally and in Africa and world affairs"**.

He remains a hero of superlative conduct and national service, whose selfless and supreme sacrifices for the very freedom we enjoy today is beyond doubt. It is my conviction that this son

of the soil did not only win the approval of his peers or this present generation, but the world at large.

Albeit he had great compassion for his country and people, his perspectives against the monstrous injustices of apartheid was not based on racial views. He fought the system of white domination and not white people per se. A rebel among his own but for a good and just cause.

Therefore, the '*spirit of Batho Pele*' which resembles the character of Bram Fischer must prevail in our offices, and be excellently and professionally demonstrated in our public service.

This evening I speak in the presence of the seed of this most prominent family in Managung, Ruth Rice and Ilse Fischer, both daughters and Peter Fischer, a grandson of Bram Fischer. A special invitation has been extended to them in memory of their father, the father of the nation, who advanced a cause of national democratic revolution, something worth dying for.

The ideals of revolution that Cde Bram Fischer espoused were further intensified by the undying spirit of many other local cadres that defied colonialism, exploitation, racial oppression and segregation. Here, then, we are speaking of the likes of Tsietsi Makotoko, Hunga Kaibe, Caleb Motshabi, Comrade Medupe, Dr Matlhape, Sparks Molatole and Me. Mohlakoana, Digwe Ntsane, Mxabanisi Vembi, Siphon Shabangu, Thabo Khuselo, Tseko 'Bazuka' Mabaso, Motlatsi 'Rider' Motsetse, Kamanda Thapedi, Kenneth Moadira, Cambridge Moloisane, Itumeleng Moholo, Joyce Boom, Papi Makotoko, Msheng Zinki Bahume, Steve Bogasho, the list is endless.

Perhaps in the minds of the skeptics and the doubting 'thomases' we are nothing but weak and feeble infants who cannot be trusted to serve in public offices. Yet, they forget that we do not solely rely on our wisdom, our strength is derived from the tried and tested centennial experience of the quarry from which we are dug. Its other prominent alumni include Pixley ka

Isaka Seme, J.L. Dube, J.T. Gumede, A.B Xuma, Chief Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Nelson Mandela, Chris Hani, Solomon Mahlangu and many others.

In the words of one of the scholars of this movement - the African National Congress (ANC) – the oldest liberation movement in Africa, the former President Thabo Mbeki: **“...the vision, principles and values of the ANC teach the cadres of this movement life-long lessons that inform us that wherever we are and whatever we do we should ensure that our actions contribute to the attainment of a free and just society, the upliftment of our people, and the development of a South Africa that belongs to all who live in it.”**

We, therefore, neither have excuse nor justification to fail the reconstruction and development agenda. We shall not succumb to fear of whatever sort, but we are even more determined to further the reconstruction and development effort we have been pursuing since the advent of a new democratic dispensation, since 1994.

Also, our tree of liberation would wither immediately if we forget the history of Mangaung wholly – not only Bloemfontein but Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu as well. For now, we will make a concise reference to the other two regional areas of the newly established metropole. The essence of these allusions bears a great significance on how this august house ought to allocate values to our people. For the scars of colonial conquest and land dispossession are explicitly evident on the face of these two areas.

In this approach, history will be kind to us for acknowledging it.

Madam Speaker, in our midst today, we have stalwarts who survived police brutality and injustices during defiance campaign on anti-incorporation of Botshabelo under the Bakwena ba Mopeli paramountcy. Surprisingly, these are the clergymen - Reverend Samuel Laulau Mokoena (Dutch Reformed Church) and Father Khutswane Raphael Muti (Roman Catholic Church). Their

presence here tonight is reminiscent of the fact the church has played a meaning role in advancing the revolution.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the names of these servants of God and other victims of anti-incorporation campaign such as Richard Mkhondwane, Catherine Malgas and many others, shall be engraved into the annals of the History of Botshabelo. Despite their most hectic ecclesiastical calling to the ministry, they have found time to make such remarkable input in the liberation struggle.

To the people of Botshabelo, we also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the families of our fallen heroes in the likes of Jazzman Mokhothu (died in Exile, Uganda), Kaizer Sebothelo, Nathaniel Teboho Melithafa, Tate Pule Rantheti, Maniki Motlohi, Cde Sports Boiki Motlohi, Tshidiso Petje, Tshepo Bournaventure Nkhohli, Catango Makume (remains still in Uganda), Cde Swing, Boffie Mahloko, Boosen Nonyane, Simson "Specific" Sefuthi, Lerato (Prof) Monaune, Prince Monaune, Cde Maduna, Senoe Senoe, Molefi Tau, Mafusi Mphetheng, Koloti "Foreman", Roger "Rabbi" Lepoqo, Papiki Moilola, Richard Mkhondwane, Cde Leine, Cde Banyan, Banyane "Killer", Banyane Banyane, Matshaba Moletsane, Paraffin Bakamela, Cde Sebata, Republic Setouto, Siphon Saliwe, Butcher Moerane, Skosana Ndlencaza, Dr Mancashi, Israel Makatane, Cde Raboroko, Cde Mzala, Cde Mosotho, Sechaba Mahobe, Cde Morolong, Cde Shale, Jack Mosiane, Masilo Soebhele, to mention but a few.

We salute them for the sacrifices they have made during the most trying times of the state of emergency, as they were bold enough to avail church premises for political meetings, working hand-in-glove with the community as part of community advice committee – mainly comprised of students and pastors. They hid comrades in secret places, dedicated themselves to the needs of their people, mobilizing the community to provide shelters as well as running a feeding scheme to assist such destitute families.

Arise Botshabelo, arise!

This evening, His Majesty Chief Albert Moroka and the entire Barolong ancestry would be turning in their graves and refusing to be comforted if we forget the people of Thaba Nchu. In this regard we pay tribute to the late Dr. J.S Moroka, Ntate Joel Goronyane, Rhee Mokoteli and many others, who denounced divisions based tribalism and fought for political freedom.

We will be working closely with our people. In accordance with certain legislative imperatives, we are obliged to establish our own systems of participatory governance complementary to the existing system of representative democracy. Most significantly, this process includes ward committees and other broader stakeholder forums for meaningful input in preparing the integrated development plan as well as municipal budget. In order for us to achieve visionary leadership, we need to work together with the local community such that local government is everybody's business here in Mangaung.

By now, all of you are aware that we have finally attained metropolitan status we need to put more depth on planning. This further presents us with a strong impetus to improving our governance, accountability and institutional capacity.

First 100 Days in Office

Inevitably, upon our arrival here we conducted a situational analysis, we acknowledged our immediate responsibility of stabilizing our metro and restore local community trust. Equally, we took cognizance of the development potentials and constraints of our municipality, our vision transcends beyond the delivery of just household services but included economic, social and political development of the area.

Merger process

We gave primacy to the outstanding issues pertaining to the disestablishment and merger of the two administrations of the former local and district municipalities – Mangaung and Motheo respectively, towards finalization of the metropolisation process started in the last term. In accordance with the mandate conferred to us, we aspired to fix and manage the status quo as well as planning ahead in order to meet the basic compliance requirements of a Category A Municipality. To date, these administrations have been incorporated accordingly into the plans of a new metro. We have also appointed acting heads of certain divisions and advertised strategic posts accordingly.

Labour Disputes

As you may be aware, towards the 2011 local government elections and shortly thereafter, the municipality experienced turbulent labour disputes, thereby interrupting effective service delivery as well as institutional stability. When these vexed labour disputes seemed insurmountable at that time, we simply resolved them by adopting solution-orientated approach to negotiations. Consensually, together with the interest parties such as IMATU and SAMWU we are on course to finding lasting solutions informed by mutual trust and respect.

Mayoral Road-show

During our internal road-shows, conducted in all regional offices and at headquarters, we did not only create an ideal rapport for effective and efficient service delivery, but we have noted with great concern a degree of despondency, frustration, confusion, anger, negligence, bitterness and so forth, stemming from what we can simply characterize as institutional capacity constraints. This exercise has helped to properly diagnose the problem and begin formulating appropriate intervention strategies.

Financial instability

By now, even the casual sojourners to the metro know the full nature of our financial challenges regarding inaccurate billing, poor monitoring and maintenance of metres, inaccurate data, consumer database, poor monitoring of indigent households, poor maintenance of infrastructure, etc,. However, we identified a number of key issues threatening the future financial viability of our municipality, especially the capacity of the revenue section.

In response to the above challenges we have appointed a team of financial experts whose core mandate is to ensure a successful implementation of the Revenue Enhancement Strategy towards improving revenue collection to fund the priorities of the Metro and put proper systems and procedures to ensure sound financial management and accounting. And, regarding audit queries as exposed by the oversight institutions, we are determined to resolve them by 2013, and meet the target of 2014 “Operation Clean Audit”.

For now, we wish to give the people Mungaung an assurance that their funds are in good hands.

Clean and green environment

We wish to acknowledge that the metro’s physical environment is littered with refuse as well as the overall neglect of infrastructure. In addressing this environmental challenge, we considered a holistic approach on cleaning and greening of our environment. Amongst others, the cleaning campaign that effectively came to an end at the beginning of the current financial year is presently under review. Given the other challenges associated with climate change, affecting the world wholly, we are unequivocally bound to adapt our economic growth initiatives to the requirements of sustainable development. In this regard we strive to provide a holistic approach on the cleaning and greening of our environment. In this regard we will soon convene the relevant stakeholders to finalize this process.

We remain committed to creating “...an attractive, clean, green and healthy environment ... that will serve as the basis for sustainable economic development and enhance the quality of life for present and future generations” here in Mangaung.

In some instances greening and feeding will be merged. That is, planting fruit bearing trees to provide food while equally greening our environment. Fuelling our stomachs in a sustainable manner.

A New Metro

Now, in the next thousand days – an estimate of days left in this current term, we endeavour to restore institutional stability in the areas of finance and human resource management, in pursuit of prudent and proper financial management, wherein, we are effectively and efficiently able to control our level of revenue and expenditure, as well as proper allocation of resources amongst all departments and various capital programmes in a sustainable and equitable manner.

In the spirit of cooperative governance, we will emerge victorious in rolling back the frontiers of poverty and inequality in Mangaung. Thus, we will strive to our rightful status as a benchmark municipality in the Free State Province and be counted amongst the best municipalities in South Africa.

We envision becoming a progressive municipality that is ‘... **globally safe and attractive to live, work and invest in**’. Thus, reaffirming the tone set by our predecessors.

Surely, the responsibilities for development are inevitably the cogency of the mandate of local government. And, whenever I think about government or governance in a new dispensation, a picture of the congress of the people that adopted the Freedom Charter preoccupies my mind.

Accordingly, my conscious convicts me to cite the people's document on the clause that says: 'There Shall Be Houses, Security and Comfort', which further states that:

'All people shall have the right to live where they chose, to be decently housed and to raise the families in comfort and security;

Unused housing space shall be made available to the people;

Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting playing field, crèches and social centres;

Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all;

Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.'

The foregoing extract, is a reminder of what we promised our people to do long before we attain political freedom, and now that we are the governors, we now have no excuse but live up to those expectations.

In line with the vision of our metro as a "globally safe and attractive municipality to work, invest and live in". The following elements are part of this vision:

- A democratic municipality, rooted in the Constitution, working with all sectors of the society to improve the quality of life of the people of Mangaung;
- A municipality whose community is united in diversity, recognizing our common interests and greater equality of women;
- A municipality that provides high quality of service delivery;
- Create an ideal environment for our people to be able to work and have access to jobs and ensure that workers rights are protected and the workforce skilled;
- Build a municipality that ensures that business afforded an environment to invest and profit while promoting the common interests of the community, including descent work;

- An efficient municipality that protects local citizens, provides quality services and infrastructure as well as providing leadership for local development;
- Ensure that individual and communities embrace mutual respect and human solidarity
- A municipality that works closely with other spheres of government, business and civil society to built a better metro, province and country.

Fellow citizens,

The increasing social inequality and poverty remain predominant factors plaguing multitudes of our people, of which, the most profoundly stricken sphere of government is us – the local. Other challenges inherent in our municipality relate to education, jobs, health, corruption, poor institutional capacity and so on, as outlined in the 2010 report of the National Planning Commission.

Economic Development

The scars of apartheid spatial patterns are quite evident in Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu and in all townships of Mangaung. Stemming from the current enormous movements of our people across vast areas, which is both time consuming and costly, our planning ought to strike a balance between human settlement and public transport. And, redressing the spatial segregation reinforced by the previous regime is of paramount importance.

It is very unfortunate that some current developments are still marginalizing the poorest members of our society. This includes outrageous long distances commuted along the N8 and municipal wards around Bloemfotein e.g. Phase 6, 7, 8 and so on. The pattern we strive for, must firstly de-racialize the built environment such that our people who earning lower income and/or hardly have fares to afford go to work and search for employment, are well taken care of.

As from now, new industrial development and human settlement will predominantly be taking place towards the east of Bloemfontein, especially along the vicinities of N8 Development zone.

Working together with wide range of stake holders – other spheres of government, academic institutions, medical associations, business and civil society, we need to find some ways to exploit our full strength in developing our economy. We will put much emphasis on:

- Attracting both local and international investors
- Building partnerships for improving skills and capacity building
- Broadening partnership in economic development
- Promote competitiveness in the local market.

Built Environment

The CBDs of Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu of this metro ought to be vibrant and integrated centres for our people, providing basic services, safe enough to be visited 24hours, with active investment by both private and public sectors. The basic facilities that are often accessible in Bloemfontein CBD must be replicated accordingly in the CBDs both Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu.

In accordance with the precepts of the Freedom Charter and the Constitution, our future built environment must at least provide for:

- Development of suitably located and affordable housing (shelter) and decent human settlements;
- Transforming our CBD, including the CBDs of Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu (moving towards efficiency, inclusion and sustainability) so that facilities and services present in Bloemfontein are at least replicated in two;

- Building equitable, cohesive, sustainable and caring communities with improved access to work and social amenities, including sports and recreational facilities (community development and optimal access/inclusion). Our engagements with the Free State Development Corporation (FDC) and the provincial government will be important in this regard; and
- De-racialising the built environment through the accelerated release of land and the development of the seven land parcels of Cecilia, Brandkop, Pellisier, Vista Park and Hillside View, to bring integration and create economic opportunities.

As earlier alluded, our reviewed spatial development framework, will not only provide normative guidelines on future land projections, but will also direct new developments eastward so as to integrate both Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu in the realization of the N8 Corridor Development.

In this regard we treat land issue with the highest degree of sensitivity – especially its availability and access, usage and management. Given the fact that land is a national asset that has occupied the centre stage of all the phases of our national democratic revolution, we will consider long term of leasing of land for development purposes.

We are quite conscious of a number of factors that inhibits speedy allocation of land for local economic development, for example, illegal occupations and land under the control of tribal authorities. However, we are in the process of finalizing title deeds discrepancies with tribal authorities (Land affairs).

Also, precedence will be given to finalization of township registers, and we will identify land and allocate sites where professionals (such as nurses, police, teachers, etc) can access land to build houses. However, our by-laws will provide clear normative guidelines on this matter, such that residents are required to build houses within 12 months, failure to comply would result in the erf being taken away by the Municipality.

Public Transport

We will also take advantage of infrastructure and economic legacy of the 2010 Soccer World Cup, wherein the government developed Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network (IRPTNs) to ensure safe, efficient and affordable public transport, towards reshaping of public transport in South Africa and ultimately introducing priority rail corridors and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in cities. In this regard, the plan to begin with the construction of the IRPTN was halted and is now committed to reviving our efforts on IRPTN so that our people and elsewhere coming to our metropole have accessible, reliable and safe public transport.

Rural Development

Regarding rural development, we are conscious of the pervasiveness of poverty and poor delivery of basic services in rural areas of this metro, that continue to constrain development efforts. In this context, we are renewing our commitment to rural development of our municipality and would soon adopt an extensive integrated and sustainable rural development strategy, to capitalize on potential synergies among the various government programmes in order to promote and support more rapid and equitable rural development.

Call for Action

Lastly, I would like to reaffirm categorically that the executive arm of this metro is entrusted under the leadership of the members of the mayoral committee as announced after my coming to office.

Tonight it is also my great pleasure to announce that the new municipal manager, Mme Sibongile Mazibuko and other newly appointed senior managers will resume their duties as soon as possible.

We call upon all the officials and the residents of Mangaung to support this team in building our new metro.

Branding of Mangaung Metro

We have taken a conscious decision of rebranding Mangaung in an attempt to reposition ourselves against a background of transition from local to a metropolitan municipality as well as for the articulation of our new metro vision. Our goal is to create a world class city brand without creating fragmentation from the brands of both Free State and South Africa.

However, our look is not necessarily new and its meaning remain intact in terms of the three pillars logo. In essence the notion 'City on the Move' does denote a vibrant local economy, but the city strength lies more in its people, arts and culture as well as its political heritage.

Added to the centrality of our geographic location and with the N1, N6 and N8 national roads traversing here, Mangaung represents the heart of the country's judicial, cultural, sport and political affairs. Tertiary Institutions and medical institutions including business and government, are all playing pivotal role in adding interest and vibe to our metro.

Therefore, by virtue of these qualities, of being a city in the epicenter of the country, with energetic and passionate local community, with such a rich political history, providing untapped opportunities to inspire growth and finally becoming the pulse of South Africa.

I now unveil our new pay offline “**AT THE HEART OF IT ALL**”, which actually captures the sentiment of our city with regard to connectivity as a concept and allows for an emotive positioning space.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion, I accept the responsibility and challenges bestowed to this Office and municipal service in particular. I am deeply humbled by the trust the ANC and the people of Mangaung have showed in me. Together with the newly elected incumbents, our able staff and the electorate in particular, endeavor to ensure that Mangaung becomes ‘a **globally safe and attractive city to live, work and invest in**’.

Working together we shall attain good quality local governance.

I thank you.
