



agriculture & rural development

Department:
agriculture
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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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SPEAKING NOTES BY KZN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT MEC, MR THEMBA MTHEMBU AT THE HANDOVER OF R44 MILLION IN COMPENSATION TO GOLOKODO COMMUNITY, FOLWENI

SATURDAY, 17 JULY 2016

VENUE: PUBLIC TRAINING ACADEMY, GLENWOOD, DURBAN

Programme Director, Mr Mnyamezeli Dlamini

eThekwini Speaker, Councillor Logie Naidoo

Councillors Present

Amakhosi

Chief Director of the KZN Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights,
Advocate Bheki Mbili

Chairperson of the Golokodo Community, Mr Z.H. Makhanya

Beneficiaries and their Families

All Officials Present

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

The ANC-led Government keeps its promises. Today we see the fulfilment of that promise with the Golokodo community of Folweni receiving financial compensation of R44 million for the loss of their land.

When the new Democratic Government came into power in 1994, it made a commitment to put right the wrongs suffered by our people. We are here to witness and celebrate that redress.

This is the second phase of that process. In the first phase which was completed in 2008, 820 households received a settlement of over R35 million. Today 397 households that lost valuable farming land that they used to plant crops, their herds of livestock, grazing land and their houses are being compensated.

It is indeed a happy occasion for all of us today to see our people living a better life. We are free and no longer oppressed. We live in a democratic, non-racial South Africa that belongs to all of us who live in it. We are voting citizens who can decide on our own destiny by exercising our right to vote and we will have that opportunity in 19 days time when the local government elections take place.

Ladies and Gentlemen, **in order to appreciate the significance of today's event** and capture its importance, we need to reflect on the past and what happened to the people of Folweni. It is a story of pain, suffering and lost opportunities; of a time when Black lives did not matter. Future generations need to know this history.

The Golokodo community lived in the Folweni area where the land was tribally owned by Inkosi Makhanya. They had large farms where they grew crops and grazed their herds of cattle. They were agriculturalists earning their living from the land which gave them a certain amount of economic independence.

All of this changed when the Durban Council began carving up a racially divided or apartheid city. The people of Malukazi were forcefully removed to Folweni to make way for the expansion of Umlazi. To accommodate them, the Golokodo community in turn were deprived of their land and their livelihood as farmers.

Two stable communities found their lives disrupted and torn apart. When the Malukazi community arrived in Folweni, some were told that this was a temporary move and they would be going back. They were deceived as this did not happen. Others found out that not all of them would be getting houses. Some members of the community were given sites with a tap and bucket toilets. Members of the Golokodo community had their houses demolished and given tents and aluminium huts to live in until they were able to build their new homes for themselves.

Families received no compensation for their losses which included their properties, livestock, cultivation and grazing land. They lost their economic independence and had to start depending more and more on wage labour in the industries of Durban. This is what the apartheid government wanted, reservoirs of cheap labour to build up white capital.

The former MEC for housing, the late Mr Dumisani Makhaye, who launched the Folweni Housing Project in 2001, once gave a powerful description of the situation. He said, people suddenly found themselves homeless and destitute. He went on to say that it is only in times of war that people become landless in their own country and that it was therefore no coincidence that political violence **during the 1980's was at its fiercest in Folweni.**

Ladies and Gentlemen the compensation given to the families today is a small consolation for the drastic environmental, social, political and economic upheaval that people had to endure. I came across a study by Felicity Ntombikayise Dlamini who looked at the effect of Resettlement on the Livelihoods of the Folweni Traditional Community. This was submitted for her Masters Degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

In her study, she interviewed members of the community and there are some powerful testimonies of how life used to be in Folweni. Perhaps some of you here may have been interviewed during this research.

As MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, this study has given me a glimpse into the fact that we once had thriving black farming communities and how much we have lost. It has provided me with inspirational words to share with young people as I encourage them to become future farmers.

Here are some of the testimonies, some of you may recognise your own stories here.

One resident said he had hectares and hectares of land that he utilized for farming and grew mainly sugar cane. He said: **"The resettlement left me impoverished. The plots we were allocated after resettlement were only sufficient to build a small house and accommodate a small family."**

Others said: "Most of our land was steep but we worked hard to change it into workable plots by digging long tunnels which held water for a long time so that during summer when it is hot, water is gradually absorbed by the soil to irrigate plants in summer and winter. This also helped to prevent soil erosion and this method was believed to be safe for our type of soil and crops."

"We used cow dung and droppings from other domestic animals as manure to fertilise and preserve the soil. We also alternated crops to prevent soil erosion and this knowledge was passed down to us by our forefathers."

"We used our own seeds, dried and saved seeds in preparation for the following season to avoid buying seeds that were costly."

I enjoyed what this resident had to say, and I quote, "We were always in touch with our environment to the extent that even snakes did not frighten us. I remember that we used to be awakened every morning by two birds that were called uMbalane and uMehlwana and used to sing so sweetly and loudly that we would all wake up. We turned to call that particular noise our wake up call. At the beginning of summer rains in particular, the uMbalane would herald the time for ploughing and sawing. We equated its chirping (music) to urging the sluggards to pick up their hoes and start ploughing their fields."

Ladies and Gentlemen these are wonderful stories indeed. They remind us of what we have lost and what we now have the opportunity to regain in a democratic and free South Africa.

To the 397 households comprising 2382 beneficiaries, I thank you for your patience while your claim was being checked and verified. It is wonderful to see that 253 female headed households will be benefitting from this compensation as well as 38 people with disabilities. After the inhumanity of the past, we are determined to be a caring government, where the dignity of every citizen counts. Much has been achieved in this regard, but much more needs to be done especially in the battle against poverty and hunger. Today is good, tomorrow can be even better!

Enjoy these celebrations and enjoy your freedom!

I thank you!