

**“A SEASON FOR HOPE FOR THE YOUTH OF GAUTENG”:
SPEECH BY GAUTENG PREMIER DAVID MAKHURA AT THE
LAUNCH OF TSHEPO ONE MILLION. NASREC. SOWETO.**

15 JUNE 2017

Director of the Programme, MEC Panyaza Lesufi;

Members of the Executive Council;

Executive Mayors present;

Captains of Industry and Commerce;

CEOs of State-owned Enterprises;

Representatives of Civil Society;

Representatives of Youth Organisations;

The Youth of Gauteng;

Fellow Citizens:

A Happy Youth Month to you all!

We gather here on the eve of the National Youth Day, a day on which we remember the sacrifices and suffering of tens of thousands of students and youth who were detained tortured and killed in June 1976 and during the course of the struggle for freedom in our land.

Tomorrow, our nation shall once again commemorate our youth martyrs and undertake all the necessary activities in honour their memory.

Today we are coming together to focus our collective intellect, energies and resources on the specific problems that face the current generation of youth, especially the stubborn nature of youth unemployment.

Youth unemployment has become a structural problem of the entire global economy that very few countries have escaped. It requires a comprehensive societal and systemic response.

In Gauteng, there are 2.7 million young people aged 15-34 who are neither studying nor working. Half of them have not completed Grade 12 and are unemployable, unless they receive some kind of training. Close to 60% of them are in long term unemployment. They have never worked and have lost hope.

More than 66% of the young people who work are those with better education and they mostly work in the services sector. Only 8% of the youth run their own businesses.

Another 3 million young people are in basic education, TVET colleges and universities. We are putting lots of resources to improve the quality of outcomes and align education to developmental and industrial needs.

So what keeps me awake is the 2.7 million who are out of school and out of work. I cannot sleep. Our provincial cabinet is anxious. Our communities are restless.

These unemployed and unemployable youth are fertile ground for drugs, crime and other social ills plaguing our society today. Many are aimlessly roaming the streets of our townships. They are teetering on the brink of hopelessness. They have fallen out of the system. They need a second chance in life. Otherwise, they will be lost to crime and recruited to harmful causes that could lead to instability.

To paraphrase JF Kennedy, we are gathered here no longer to ask what our country can for us but what we can do for our country! What we can do to give hope to the youth in order to restore their faith in the future of our democracy!

We have come here as conscientious citizens of our Republic who are deeply troubled by the deepening levels of youth unemployment and the resultant social pathologies afflicting millions of young people in our province. We cannot stand by and just complain whilst tens of thousands of young lives are getting destroyed in the wasteland of drugs and crime.

Today is an exciting day that heralds the beginning of an unprecedented transformative partnership that will usher in a **Season of Hope for the Youth of Gauteng.**

Welcome to the launch of Tshepo 1 Million, a social compact premised on HOPE. HOPE about and faith in our youth as an agent for positive change. Hope about the future of our democracy. HOPE about our collective ability to change the status quo for the better. HOPE about partnership between government and business in addressing the problems of our economy. HOPE about civil society and the media's positive role place in a vibrant democracy.

Tshepo 1Million is not just one of those initiatives that are signed and nothing happened. A lot has already happened over the past two years. 350 000 young people's lives have been touched and changed forever.

But we need to do more because the problem is getting bigger every day.

Youth unemployment is a ticking time bomb. We need a transformative partnership that focuses on giving young people skills and positive attitudes while at the same time opening up real opportunities for them to live meaningful lives as valued citizens.

We need to join hands in order to lend a helping hand to the youth of our province. We are taking one giant step together as social partners to unlock opportunities for the youth because nothing is indeed more urgent than giving hope to the youth, for they are the future of our country.

Tshepo 1 Million is not a welfare initiative that seeks to patronise the youth. The youth don't want hand-outs. They want hands-up. It is an initiative that taps on the energy, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of the youth. It is about opening pathways for the youth to access employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. It is about giving the youth a helping hand and a second chance in life so that they can take charge of their own destiny. To nurture talent and skill requires a great deal of discipline, sacrifice and commitment from the youth themselves.

But we can't do things for the youth. Young people have to do things for themselves. For them to be able to do so, young people need to be equipped with a skill that can earn them income. Empowering the youth is about equipping them with the skills and opening opportunities for them to generate their own income and wealth. We must break down all the barriers of entry into the labour market and business for the youth. The youth must be ready to seize the opportunities and turn such opportunities into success for their generation.

Today we will sign a partnership with the first 25 companies that are going to be the pioneers and ambassadors of Tshepo 1 million. They will lead their peers in opening opportunities for the youth through training, job placements and enterprise development for youth.

On behalf of the government that I have the honour to lead I would like to thank each and every one of the firms that have responded positively to the call for action, in the fight against poverty, unemployment and inequality in our society.

When we came into office we said in order to address the ills and the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality we must transform, modernise and reindustrialise the Gauteng City region.

A season of hope for Gauteng youth, this is our theme for this year and indeed because the youth is the future. Working we will ensure that we give hope so that young can believe in themselves like the youth of 1976 they their destiny into their hands.

As a result of the launch of Tshepo 500 000 thousand, during the 2017 SOPA, we reported that more than 350 000 young people benefitted from the four pillars of this programme:

- Facilitating the placement of young people into permanent jobs: more than 90 000 permanent jobs in private and public sector institutions have been facilitated.
- Training and skills development: more than 145 000 young people have been trained in skills that are in high demand in the labour market.

- Entrepreneurship development and business development support for the youth: more than 15 000 young people are now accredited entrepreneurs and are receiving support from our procurement processes and supplier development programmes of our partner organisations in the private sector and state-owned enterprises.
- Transitional employment: more than 110 000 young people have participated in public employment schemes and other short-term employment opportunities.

Based on the work we did over the past two years, we have taken a decision that in order to deal with the chronic global problem of youth unemployment successfully, we must embark on unconventional approaches and build sector-specific partnerships.

This includes strengthening partnerships with the private sector and hence our partnership with Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator.

We are today here to announce and confirm that what we said in our 2017 SOPA address is being practicalised. In addition to the announcement we made during the SOPA we proud to announce that we now have almost 26 partners that have come on board and will be signing with them today to ensure that we reach our 1Million target by 2019.

For an example we said over the next two years, we will be implementing the following youth empowerment partnerships:

- Our partnership with Microsoft will provide 1 million young people with training opportunities in digital skills.

- Our partnership with the Massive Open Online Varsity (MOOV) will enable 80 000 young people to access free, high quality on line university education.
- Our partnership with the Business Process Outsourcing Sector will facilitate the creation of 20 000 digital jobs for young people over the next three years.
- Our partnership with Buddibox and the National Youth Development Agency will provide 10 000 ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities in the cooperative wholesale and retail sector.
- Our partnership with Coca Cola will provide employment and new entrepreneurship opportunities for young people about 30 000 new retail outlets mainly in the townships.
- Through our partnership with COFESA we will place 10,000 young interns coming out of various skills programmes into jobs with smaller firms in advanced manufacturing, education and services throughout the province.
- Through the National Youth Service, we will increase the number of opportunities for young people in the EPWP and community works programme to 300 000.
- Our partnership with SAP will train unemployed graduates in ICT skills that are in high demand and support 10 000 school learners in Science, Technology, Economics and Mathematics.
- Through the partnership with, Hollard, Gijima, Broll, Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Cisco, Arcelor-Mittal, Barloworld, Buddibox, SpazaApp and the membership of the Steel industry body, SEIFSA and the MAGIC initiative and the Estate Agent Affairs Board, we will empower 5000 new and existing firms to gain contracts with the private sector. The only condition will that these be genuine

township firms and that any new hires or interns must be youth from the Tshepo 1Million clearing house.

- We will be finalising discussions with the logistics, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), retail, real estate, food and beverages, defence and aerospace and automotive – on opening training, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for the youth.
- The Media establishment has also come to the fore in an unprecedented manner - Power fm, Jacaranda fm, Yfm, Media24, The Independent newspapers, Prime Media.

We are convinced that through this partnership we will upscale youth intervention and give hope to the Youth because the Youth is the Future.

We call upon those who are either in discussion with our office to speed up the partnership and those that are in doubt to please come on board, because the youth unemployment and other related challenges their face on a regular basis is real and needs real and practical solutions.

I would like to conclude by calling on the young people of our province to rise to the occasion. Nothing about the youth without the youth. Stoical discipline and sacrifice is needed from our youth. No short-cut. No easy money. No easy walk to financial independence.

The youth can no longer ask what government and business are doing for them. They are called upon to answer what they are doing to seize opportunities created for them. They must answer what they are doing to create HOPE and inspiration for other young people.

Thank you!