

REMARKS BY THE PREMIER OF THE PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL SENZO MCHUNU DURING THE 2014 SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS CHORAL EISTEDDFOD HELD AT THE ICC

Programme Director

Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga

MEC for Education, Ms Peggy Nkonyeni

The SASCE National Co ordinating Committee

Educators

Leadership from Organized Labour

Honoured Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Day

It is a special honour and privilege for me to be part of this this national music showpiece, the 2014 South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod.

We congratulate the National Minister of Basic Education and the national coordinating committee for celebrating the 20th of our democracy through Choral Music.

More importantly, we appreciate the fact that the organizing committee chose KZN for this important event.

As KwaZulu-Natal we pride ourselves as the only province that presents to the world throughout the year, Africa's unparalleled tapestry of cultures, rich history and heritage and indeed magnificent topography that features evergreen valleys, eternally laughing waterfalls and attractive beaches – all ready to welcome both business and ordinary tourists.

We continue to lobby for entertainment events such as music awards, international conferences, sporting tournaments to be hosted in our outstanding facilities and resorts as well as utilize our twinning arrangements with other countries to promote our destination in all corners of the world.

Programme Director, we deeply appreciate the fact that KZN is always identified by the national government as the destination for conferences and major events.

We flatter ourselves to believe that this is because KZN and the eThekweni Municipality in particular, have in the past proved to be worthy and competent hosts of a number of national, continental and international events of diverse interests.

The South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod affords South Africans the opportunity to witness the cream of the country's talent in choral music.

This is a genre which has grown in leaps and bounds in terms of popularity and inspiration in recent times. Several of the learners who have participated in the schools Choral competitions have gone on to achieve highly in their chosen field, even at international level.

We hope this year's winners will serve as an inspiration to a future pool of choral music enthusiasts who wish to make a mark in this music arena.

As government we want the winners to inspire millions of people across the country and in neighboring countries.

Choral music knows no age boundaries and serves as glue that binds families together. Families can talk about it, sing it and enjoy it anytime of the day.

It is encouraging to see young people enjoying this wonderful music. Clearly, choral music is becoming a force to be reckoned with and is set to become a permanent feature in the lives of many young people in this country.

Many young people are at the brink of reaching for their stars and dreams. No doubt, choral music has the potential to inspire and encourage them to stick in there even if it seems impossible.

Youth is an age when young people brim over with creativity, blossom with idealism, dream big dreams and labor to make their dreams come true. It is an age when most feel they can reach for their stars. Therefore, we have a duty as government to mentor them. We must ensure that we create an environment that will enable them to achieve their dreams.

This country faces challenges of drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and the spread of HIV and Aids. As government we are calling upon all musicians to join government as we embark on a campaign to promote behavioral change among young people.

Musicians, by virtue of the following they command from the community, must be at the forefront of health education. This is one of the effective tools we can use to defeat our common enemies, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse and the HIV and Aids pandemic.

On behalf of the people of KwaZulu-Natal, I want to congratulate everybody involved in the planning of the 2014 SASCE

I wish you all the best in the future and may you continue to inspire us with your messages of hope.

At this stage I want to introduce the Minister of Basic Education Ms Angie Motshekga.

She was previously a Lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand and at the Soweto College of Education.

More importantly, she is President of the ANC Women's League.

She holds a Master's Degree and a bachelor of Educational Science from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits); a Bachelor of Arts in Education from the University of the North and a Higher Diploma in Education.