

Welcoming Message From Mr SW Lubisi, The Speaker Of The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, South Africa: Speaker`s Prayer Breakfast 2010

23rd of February 2010 Govan Mbeki Foyer, Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature

Programme Director,
Deputy Speaker,
Members of the Executive Council present,
Members of the Provincial Legislature,
Members of the inter- faith organisations,
Business guests,
Other Guest from various organs of state,
Secretary to the Legislature and Members of the Legislature Management Team,
Director General and Senior Managers from the Public Service,
Ladies and Gentlemen
Good morning.

I am most honoured to have this opportunity to extend warm greetings to this Spiritual Assembly of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature on this important day, the 23rd of February 2010, which marks the fourth Anniversary of our Annual Prayer Breakfast.

That we are today celebrating the fourth year in succession of this event testifies clearly to the steadfastness and to the pivotal role prayer have played and doubtlessly will continue to play in advancing the cause of unity and prosperity in our beloved province of Mpumalanga and that has always been a guiding force in our family`s life, so we feel very much at home and look forward to keeping this tradition alive during our time here.

Since its launching, the Annual Speaker`s breakfast has persistently promoted the spiritual, moral and material development of our province as well as that of our leaders. In this regard, our notable participation in the prayer sessions has also contributed immensely in ushering in an age of hope in our province.

Today, as I see all of you here from every corner of the province, it strikes me that this is one of the rare occasions that still brings all of us together in a moment of peace and goodwill. All of this is as a result of our faith in one way or the other.

We have experienced faith wielded as a tool to either to unite or divide us from one another. There is no doubt that the very nature of faith means that some of our beliefs will never be the same. But no matter what we choose to believe, let us remember that there is no religion whose central tenet is hate. There is no God who condones taking the life of an innocent human being. This much we know and that is why we are gathered here today to give credence to our faith that with the Almighty One on our side, nothing will stand on our way.

We know too that whatever our differences, there is one doctrine or law that binds all great religions together. Jesus told us to "love thy neighbour as thyself."

The Torah commands, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow."

In Islam, there is a hadith that reads "None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

And the same is true for Buddhists and Hindus; for followers of Confucius and for humanists. It is, of course, the Golden Rule - the call to love one another; to understand one another; to treat with dignity and respect those with whom we share a brief moment on this Earth.

This is one of the most challenging aspects of our life as it asks each of us to take some measures of responsibility for the well-being of people we may not know or worship with or agree with on every issue. It requires of us to reconcile with bitter enemies or resolve ancient hatred.

In this way, the particular faith that motivates each of us can promote a greater good for all of us. Instead of driving us apart, our varied beliefs can bring us together to feed the hungry and comfort the afflicted; to make peace where there is strife and rebuild what has broken; to lift up those who have fallen on hard times. This is not only our call as people of faith, but our duty as citizens of the province of Mpumalanga.

I believe in a good way of life and it is possible because our faith teaches us that all is possible, but also to believe because of what we have seen and what we have lived.

In different ways and different forms, it is the spirit and sense of purpose that drew all of us to the prayer breakfast four years ago. We come to break bread and give thanks and seek guidance, but also to rededicate ourselves to the mission of love and service that lies at the heart of all humanity as we work together to do more for a Better Quality of Life and a speedy improvement of service delivery to our People in the Province.

St. Augustine once said, "Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you." So let us pray together on this February morning, but let us also work together in all the days and months ahead. For it is only through common struggle, commitment and common effort that we accomplish our highest purpose.

We are a religious people and nation. Our moral compass is directed by our affirmation of the existence of our spiritual world.

Welcome and be blessed.