

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, ME. MATHABO MOKAPO ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS PROVINCIAL CEREMONY ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2006, WELKOM

Programme Director

MEC for Education – Me. Ouma Tsopo

Teachers and Educators

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to express my sincere appreciation, for being invited to grace the occasion of the National Teaching Awards Provincial Ceremony. My appreciation stems from the fact that matters in the realm of education are closest to my heart, and I believe the nation at large takes keen interest in education matters.

I wish to take this opportunity to applaud our then Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal who pioneered this National Teaching Award Scheme. Credit should go to him and his team for having made the realization that our educators need motivation in the important work that they are doing for the nation.

As the Matjhabeng Municipality we are overwhelmed by the fact that the Provincial Department, again decided to make our Municipality the host of such an important occasion.

The role that educators continue to play in efforts to build a rainbow nation cannot be overemphasized. Without proper guidance from our teachers, our learners cannot be fully equipped with skills, motivation and virtues that our society needs.

To the educators who will be receiving awards in different categories, my message is that they should keep up the good work they are doing in various fields. In the words of Mao tse Tung, a leader of the Chinese Revolution in the late 50's, he said: "The essence of real leadership is a pedagogical one."

This important saying by the greatest Chinese revolutionary reveals that you should consider yourselves as leaders in broad society, and the manner in which you exercise that leadership is through teaching and conveying knowledge to future generations.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the role that other educators, who may not receive awards tonight, continue to play in shaping our future leaders.

As the teaching fraternity in the new dispensation you continue to face numerous challenges that relate to the broad project of transforming our country. I would therefore

urge you to remain committed, ethical and steadfast in ensuring that our children receive quality education despite whatever constraints.

On this note, I wish to welcome you all within the borders of Matjhabeng, and hope that this occasion will live an indelible imprint on our minds.

Thank you

**COUNCILLOR MATHABO MOKAPO
EXECUTIVE MAYOR**