

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, ME MATHABO MOKAPO ON THE OCCASION OF THE GALA DINNER HOSTED FOR THE XAI XAI DELEGATION.

It is a privilege to me to be afforded the opportunity to address you on this occasion of the gala dinner hosted in honour of the esteemed mayor of Xai Xai city and her delegation.

We meet tonight, to bid farewell to the delegation from the municipality of Xai Xai in the People's Republic of Mozambique.

For record, let me indicate that interaction between Matjhabeng Local Municipality and Xai Xai began in earnest during the previous term of our council, culminating into a visit by a delegation from Matjhabeng to Xai Xai in 2003.

Subsequent to this visit, His Excellency the Ambassador of Mozambique to South Africa paid a courtesy call to us in October 2006.

It was during this courtesy call that the idea of the visit by the Xai Xai municipality was mooted.

Our guests from Mozambique in Xai Xai arrived on the 20th February 2007 and are due to leave tomorrow morning.

Tonight, we gather here to bid them farewell and also hope that through this visit their expectations were able to be met.

The purpose of the visit, which reciprocated the visit in 2003, was to share ideas about our systems, poverty alleviation programmes and governance in general.

As the Matjhabeng Local Municipality and its citizens we highly appreciate the visit by the Mozambican delegation. We firmly believe the visit has achieved fruition in that, our colleagues were able to learn many important lessons from us.

On the basis of this visit, as the Matjhabeng Local Municipality we shall be exploring possibilities of maintaining vigorous contact with our guests, with the ultimate possibility of entering into a twinning agreement with our sister peoples from Xai Xai.

In a nutshell, this week's interaction will not be the last of its kind, but in future we shall ensure that we enter into programmatic interaction.

A word of gratitude goes to the Mozambican Consul in Durban, which facilitated communication and logistics between ourselves and the Xai Xai Municipality to make this visit the wonderful success that it was.

Our country, South Africa shares historical bonds that were born out of struggle with the sister people of Mozambique. Also, our locality served as an employment destination for most of the citizens that were originally from Mozambique.

It is for this reason that we should as the Matjhabeng Local Municipality want to ensure that fraternal relations at our level are maintained and sustained.

On this note, on behalf of the Matjhabeng Local Municipality and its community, I wish to welcome everyone present here today within our borders, and hope that tonight's event will be a wonderful success.

Thank you.

EXECUTIVE MAYOR MATHABO MOKAPO