

**ADDRESS OF THE ACTING MINISTER OF TRANSPORT,  
ADV. NGOAKO RAMATLHODI, MP, ON THE OCCASION OF A  
WREATH - LAYING CEREMONY TO REMEMBER TRAFFIC AND  
METRO OFFICERS WHO DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY**

**26 NOVEMBER 2015**

**PRETORIA**

MEC Sizakele Nkosi-Malobane

MEC Butana Komphela

MEC Mapula Mokaba-Phukwana

MEC Vusi Shongwe

RTMC Board chairman Mr Zola Majavu

RTMC CEO Advocate Makhosini Msibi

President of the Institute of Traffic and Municipal Police Officers Mr Charles Reynolds

Leadership of the Traffic and Metro Law enforcement Community;

Members of the Traffic and Metro Community;

Family Members;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of government, I want to express our sincere gratitude to the Road Traffic Management Corporation, the Institute of Traffic and Municipal Officers of South Africa, the Institute of Licensing Officers for all that you have done to make this important observance day possible.

It is a great privilege to stand with this distinguished group of public servants, proud family members, valued friends, and brave members and supporters of the traffic and metro law enforcement community. And it is an honor to be able to thank you for your bravery; and to pay tribute to those who are missing from us this morning – the heroes who have given their lives in order that their fellow citizens might be safer, their neighbourhoods more secure, and their communities and country not only stronger, but more just.

These heroes were young adults who aspired from an early age to stand on the front line of our fight for safer roads and secure communities. And each of them represented the very finest this country had to offer – and the best qualified among us to serve, and to protect without any fear, favour or prejudice.

This event takes place at a time when this great country, South Africa, is experiencing an increase in attacks on our law enforcement officers across the board. And we have gathered this morning, not merely to lift up the memories of our fallen comrades, to read the names inscribed on these walls, and to support one another in strength as well as in grief – **BUT** to send out a strong message that we are done with pleading, we now demand an immediate end to the senseless killing of our law enforcement officers. We are here to say hands off our officers. We say law enforcement officers are also human too, their lives matter and they deserve respect and to be treated with dignity.

**Ladies and Gentlemen:** As difficult as it may be, we affirm that we will not be deterred, our work will go on and we will reclaim the roads from rogues and ensure that everybody, without exception, obeys the rules of the road.

As we launch the festive season plan today, I implore you to pay tribute to our fallen colleagues by tightening law enforcement on the roads without any compromise.

The mid-term report, which was presented to the United Nations' 2<sup>nd</sup> Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety in Brazil last week shows that safety on South African roads has slightly improved since 2010. The report shows that we have been able to reduce road fatalities by One point 88 percent annually in the previous five years compared to the Zero point 52 percent for 2005 to 2009.

Fatalities currently stand at 12 thousand Seven Hundred compared to 13 thousand Nine Hundred in 2010 which represents a significant reduction in fatalities per 100 thousand human population.

The traffic law enforcement fraternity has contributed immensely in ensuring that the country registers this progress. However more still needs to be done for us to reach the Fifty Percent target by 2020. Let us therefore use today's remembrance day to rededicate ourselves and to make a commitment that, for the sake of our brothers and sisters who died in the line of duty, we shall redouble our efforts to make South African roads safe and to reduce lawlessness among all road users. We must draw inspiration from former President Nelson Mandela who taught us that:

***“Our daily deeds as ordinary South Africans must produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity's belief in justice, strengthen its confidence in the nobility of the human soul, and sustain all our hopes for a glorious life for all.”***

This year, we pay special tribute to 19 remarkable individuals, whose stories are a testament to the bravery, patriotism, and courage of South African traffic and metro officers at every level – and whose names are now permanently carved into this memorial, as a reminder of their supreme sacrifice. We remember 313 courageous men and women who were taken from us in prior years.

These officers died doing what they were trained – and sworn – to do: enforcing the rules of the road and protecting innocent road users from harm and preventing lawlessness in their communities. Yet their deaths – in the line of duty, and in service of the country they loved – tell only one chapter of their stories.

Our nation recognizes them as brave law enforcement officers. But so many of you also knew them as doting parents and loving spouses. As loyal, compassionate, and in some cases stubborn and outspoken friends. As fans of Orlando Pirates, Kaizer Chiefs and Mamelodi Sundowns, Bloemfontein Celtics and Usuthu. As people who loved gospel music, kwaito, hip hop and jazz.

Together, we mourn them as individuals of unmistakable integrity, unshakable character, and infinite kindness. They gave much and asked little. And today, in this place of honour and remembrance, they are surrounded by many who knew them, loved them, and travelled from across the country to mark their losses.

**Ladies and Gentlemen:** Their memories will not fade. We have gathered in our nation's capital today to keep our promise to these brave men and women. To reaffirm that there will never come a time when South Africa forgets their sacrifices.

Our country will always remember what they did – and what they gave – to enforce our laws and keep our roads safe and our communities secure. And every South African who will visit this memorial – who will stand in this hallowed place and run their hands over the carved names – will feel the enormity of every loss, every absence, every life lost in the service of others.

South Africa can never repay the debts we owe to our fallen officers and their families. That's why we must continue to do everything we can – with all that we have – to reduce carnage of our roads and build a culture where everybody freely and voluntarily obeys the rules the road.

We have made a commitment to introduce a single insurance cover for officers who have died in the line of duty. This cover will ease the burden off the shoulders of orphans and widows and assist in ensuring that family life is not disrupted by the sudden and unexpected death of the breadwinner in the family.

**Programme Director:** We are further committed to improving the training offered to our traffic law enforcement officers. In the New Year, we will be introducing a new qualification for traffic officers which will be equivalent to a national diploma or National Qualification Framework level 6. We want our officers to be skilled in all competences of traffic law enforcement and we will be re-organizing our training colleges to offer specialized training to equip our officers with all the skills required from an officer in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To harmonize our traffic law enforcement fraternity, we have decided to introduce a single and identical uniform for the sector in all provinces. Traffic and law enforcement vehicles will also bear a single identical brand in all provinces.

I would like to conclude and say that each of us is called to serve, to protect, and to help forge a society worthy of the passion, the dedication, and the sacrifices made by each of our fallen heroes. To create not merely a monument to their stories, but a living memorial. And to build a country dedicated to preserving and perpetuating their memories by reaching for the better and brighter future that all of our citizens deserve.

This is our commitment. This is our resolve. And we dare not fail.

May God bless the memories of those we have lost. Nkosi Sikelela iAfrika, Morena boloka sechaba sa heso, God Bless Africa.

I thank you