



**ADDRESS BY MINISTER MS DIPUO PETERS AT THE SANWIT  
SUMMIT AT BIRCHWOOD HOTEL, EKURHULENI**

**20-22 AUGUST 2015**

Minister of Women and Children, Mme Susan Shabangu;  
Deputy Minister of Transport, Mme Sindisiwe Chikunga;  
Members of the Executive Councils present;  
Transport entity Board members;  
Director General of the Department of Transport, Ntate Pule Selepe;  
CEOs of Transport entities and other government entities;  
Officials from the Department of Transport;  
Women Entrepreneurs of various transport modes;  
Members of the Media;  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Malibongwe!! Igama Lamakhosikazi!!

It is really a pleasure to officially open the 2015 South African Network for Women in Transport (SANWIT) Summit, here at Birchwood Hotel in Ekurhuleni.

The theme for the Summit is “The Transport Sector: Moving Women Empowerment and Transformation Forward”

Without spending any moment of thought, I would like to remind you of the instructive preamble of the Women’s Charter, which states that:

*"We, the women of South Africa, wives and mothers, working women and housewives, African, Indian, European and Coloured, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women, and that deprive us in any way of our inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities and opportunities that society offers to any one section of the population."*

The preamble of the Women's Charter aptly captures the vision which thousands of women organized through the Federation of South African Women declared that:

The political consciousness relating to gender equality, that women have a very significant role to play in society as equal citizens did not descend upon as a result of divine intervention.

Women fought the same battles as their male counterparts. Many victories women enjoy today in South Africa are a direct consequence of the women’s relentless struggles. It is unfortunate that today women are still trying to find their space in the ‘Man’s World’. Patriarchy is still a

norm and it is only us as women, if we stand together, that we can fight this virus.

Today, we must emulate the example of our fore-bearers and claim the space we so much deserve in the socio-political and economic sphere of our lives. Ours is to pick up the baton and proceed to fight. '**Ba re Mme o tshwara thipa ka fa bogaleng**'

Ladies,

This Summit takes place in the month when as South Africa, we mark the fifty-ninth (59) anniversary of the heroic women's march that took place at the Union Buildings in 1956 to demand freedom, justice and equality.

That march, which mobilized over 20 000 women became a milestone and one of the biggest demonstrations in the struggle against the apartheid regime in general, and the pass laws.

We continue today to celebrate the bravery of all South African women who sought to put an end to the triple oppression they suffered based on their race, class and gender.

We also remember women who laid down their lives so that this country could be free, like the heroic and selfless, Mama Victoria Mxenge.

This year 2015, we mark the 30th anniversary of her brutal assassination by apartheid agents. She will continue to inspire many

generations of women in the pursuit of a united, nonracial, nonsexist and prosperous South Africa.

Responding to the clarion call '***Wathint'abafazi, wanthint'imbokodo***', women assumed the position of being the backbone of our society and correctly defined their struggles in the context of the broader struggle for national liberation.

These visionary women knew that their emancipation would one day become the general measure of the emancipation of society as a whole.

We salute all other giants of our struggle such as Charlotte Maxeke, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Ida Ntwana, Amina Cachalia, Rahima Moosa, Florence Mophosho, Dorothy Nyembe, Ruth First, Ruth Mompati, Getrude Shope, Winnie-Madikizela Mandela, Adelaide Tambo, Albertina Sisulu, Ellen Khuzwayo, Sister Bernard Ncube, Mieta Seperepere, Sophie De Bruyn, Ray Alexander Simons, Dulcie September and many others whose sacrifices led to the liberation and democratisation of our country.

Malibongwe !!!

Ladies,

Like the 1956 Women, who used their common rejection of the repressive pass laws as a rallying point for the struggle of women for a free South Africa, we too must use our freedom to transform the transport sector.

It has been very interesting to note that since the launch of the SANWIT in 2008, we continue to face serious gender equity challenges within the transport sector.

In our deliberations during this three-day summit, we need to remind ourselves where we come from. The South African Network for Women in Transport (SANWIT) concept was born out of a need to break existing barriers for entry into the sector and demystify existing myths.

We have our own objectives that we developed as SANWIT, and amongst others resolved as follows;

That we have a responsibility to encourage women to enter and succeed in the transport industry through:

- Facilitating enterprise development;
- Networking and supporting women for success and growth;
- Negotiating on behalf of members for wealth generation;
- Lobbying and advocating for a policy environment that will support and enable the sustainability of women enterprises;
- We need to add to the body of knowledge and guiding best practices through research and development on women related issues by empowerment, training and skills transfer;
- Providing coaching and mentorship;

- Providing a central reference point of publications and experiences; and
- Raising awareness of the different components of transport within the aviation, maritime, road and rail transport and public transport sectors.

SANWIT must mobilise women across all modes of transport under one umbrella throughout the nine (9) provinces and speak with one voice.

Ladies,

Since the last engagement of women in transport, we need to ask ourselves if we have acted on our plan of action for the sustainability of the women's agenda.

We need to reflect on the objectives of SANWIT and evaluate what has been achieved and where we did not achieve, examine WHY HAVE WE FAILED. Look at what is still relevant and discard that which is retrogressive or not achievable.

To remind ourselves again, SANWIT committed itself to the following:

- Business information and advice;
- Local and international business opportunities;
- Financial and legal advice;
- Assist women in the transport sector and exposing them to developments within the sector;

- Access to opportunities within DoT and Agencies; i.e link to the Department of Transport website;
- Assessment and alignment of sub-sector programmes and projects that are relevant in aviation, maritime, road and rail transport;
- Develop Unique Selling Points and Package it Into a Value Adding Offering, to ensure that SANWIT is strategically positioned within the current business development environment;
- Identify and Secure Strategic Partnerships for Service Delivery;
- SANWIT should develop a profile of potential service delivery partners from the public and private sector and from civil society;
- Develop a Provincial Outreach Strategy;
- Develop an integrated rural outreach strategy that targets women groups and organizations in rural areas;
- Develop a Information Management Systems that Supports SANWIT Functions;
- SANWIT must use information and communication technology solutions to run its operations efficiently as well as to improve women entrepreneurs" access to business resources and information;
- Develop Communication Policy Guidelines, in order to effectively reach women entrepreneurs through national, regional and local networks;

- Initiate an Effective Membership Recruitment Drive that clearly defines member benefits, and rely on marketing research that has identified needs and gaps in enterprise development service provision; and
- Establish a Database of all Members and the skills they possess, the services they deliver and match that to opportunities within the transport sector.

Ladies,

It is befitting that the Department of Transport convene this Summit to further sharpen our resolve in galvanising the role of women within the transport sector.

Furthermore, this summit is called to recognise the achievements of women in the transport sector and to source more wisdom and solutions to ensure that we expedite women empowerment and transformation within the transport sector.

The overall statistics of women emancipation and empowerment in South Africa can be noted, particularly in the public sector. The following are a few examples of the strides we have made in this regard, which are worth mentioning;

Women ministers constitute forty three percent (43%) of cabinet and women deputy ministers make up forty five point nine percent (45.9%) of the total number of deputy ministers as of June 2014.



There is forty one percent (41%) women representation in the National Assembly and both the heads of the two houses of parliament are women, this includes the Chairperson of the Transport Portfolio Committee, Mme Dikeledi Magadzi.

There was only one white woman judge prior to 1994, whilst today women judges make up thirty six percent (36%) of the judiciary, and lastly, women make up almost forty percent (40%) of the senior management in the public service.

Whilst all these effort are commendable, a lot more work must still be done. The numbers of women in cabinet and parliament is improving, but it is not the case in the boardrooms of private companies.

The private sector remains very male dominated and also very white in composition. The struggle thus continues to transform corporate South Africa to make it more responsive to women and black people at the leadership and ownership level.

As the Department of Transport, we have made noticeable strides in ensuring that we make a dent in the transformation of the transport industry, particularly on the Gender, Disability, Youth and Children (GDYC) unit.

We have finalised and submitted the Gender Equality Strategic Framework implementation plan to the Department of Public Service and Administration.

We have finalized the Scholar Transport policy which is before Parliament.

We have developed the first draft of the Youth Development Strategic Framework.

We have developed the first draft terms of reference (TOR) for the Transformation Committee.

We have provided transport inputs on the First Periodic Country Report to the United Nations on the Convention on the Rights of People Living with Disabilities.

We have finalised the review and consultation on the Draft Disability Policy. We represented the Department in various Interdepartmental Forum meetings related to Gender, Disability, Youth and Children programmes, and hosted the DoT men's gender empowerment workshop.

We are about to complete a Transport Sector Gender Policy that will be instrumental in fast-tracking the transformation and gender parity agenda.

In the capital projects, SANRAL has ensured the recruitment of local women, youth and people living with disabilities. PRASA has allocated R3,5 billion over the MTEF period for the Women In Rail Programme, and these are but only two examples.

ACSA, ATNS, SACAA, and SAMSA have entered into national and international agreements to train and facilitate employment of sea farers, cadet pilots, aeronautical engineers, Air Traffic Controllers, Marine engineers to mention but a few.

RTMC has budgeted half a billion (R526 180 529) for training of Traffic related personnel and in this regard plans are well underway to establish Traffic Training Colleges.

Our State Owned Entities have internship programmes and bursary schemes that cater for the previously disadvantaged groups. For instance, SANRAL has allocated 150 scholarships to deserving learners in the road sub-sector this current financial year.

It is for the very first time that the African Continent, through South Africa is responsible for aviation security in the world. In this instance South Africa is represented by our very own woman, SACAA CEO, Ms. Poppy Khoza, who is also the only female CEO of our transport entity. We celebrate her achievement and say, **Malibongwe**.

As the department of Transport we have met and now intend to exceed the two percent employment target set for people living with disabilities.

Over the next five years we will develop and implement the Human Resource Development Strategy of the transport sector as a whole.

Regarding gender equity, at present, our statistics show a 38.3% women and 61.7% men representation at executive level, and 44.5% women

and 55,5% men at all levels. Our target is to achieve a deserving capacitated 50/50 parity.

The South African Women in Transport (SANWIT) and its sub-sector organs like the Women in Rail, Women in Maritime and Women in Road and the construction sector has been an active instrument and driver spearheading women economic development.

From the Women in Rail, 19 Women Owned Entities have benefitted from the R293 million projects under the Rail National Stations Improvement programme and we need to accelerate the projects implementation in this programme.

We do have a good story to tell.

- In 2013/14 we invested over R100 million on a groundbreaking Skills Development Programme; multiple training interventions were delivered targeting the youth and women, enabling them to take the potential thousands of job opportunities in the global maritime sector. Ninety Three (93) young unemployed engineering graduates were given the opportunity to convert from mechanical engineering to marine engineering.
- In 2013/14 the Air Traffic Navigation Services (ATNS) trained a total of 773 internal students at a pass rate of 93% within the Air Traffic Services and Engineering disciplines; of which 42% were female; Concurrently 815 External students from across African states were also trained at a pass rate of 100%.

- The Aviation Training Academy at ATNS was again awarded the IATA Regional Training Provider of the Year for the second successive year running.
- The ATNS through its deployment of leading technology, regulating 10% of the world's airspace has achieved world-class safety levels at the Air Traffic Management community.
- The European Union (EU) and United State of America (USA) has given the South African National Cargo Security Programme (NCSP) full recognition.

This recognition positions South Africa in the green list of only thirty (30) countries in the world and the only one in Africa that have various benefits including certain exemptions.

This boosts investor confidence and creates business development opportunities as South African carriers will accrue trade and economic benefits as they will be exempted from paying validator fees.

In this regard, all transport entities are directed that as part of their performance upraisal they must commit to the implementation of their set transformation targets, which includes women, people living with disabilities, youth and children emancipation in skills development and training, management and procurement.

We also took a deliberate decisive action that all public entities in the transport sector must have specific allocated budgets for the mentioned groups across the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In our Summit today, the following sectors will provide insight into current progress and programmes within the five Branches of the Department of Transport (namely Aviation, Maritime, Roads, Public Transport and Rail Transport). They will be supported by the Public Entities, as per the mode of transport aligned to them and our counterparts from the nine provincial departments and local government.

The glaring social and economic disparities of the past speak volumes about the tasks at hand towards undoing gender imbalances in the transport sector.

I am convinced that without women, we would still be debating the strategies of implementing our policies and programmes - mainly because it is women who tend to get the job done with urgency, ***Malibongwe***.

Through our Government policies we continue to fight against the discrimination of women, amongst others by ensuring their increased representation at all levels of employment.

These policies are beginning to bear fruit with our Department being a good example of this. The fact that myself, and the Deputy Minister, Mme Chikunga, we are both the first female Minister and Deputy Ministers' of the Department of Transport respectively is a milestone in transforming this sector. Thanks to the African National Congress government led by President Jacob Zuma.

Women emancipation is not about numbers, but numbers do matter to reflect on our qualitative strides.

Within the Transport sector a lot still needs to be done to change the gender composition of this industry.

One of the examples of barriers to entry into the transport industry could be the challenge that faces women in entering the taxi industry even post apartheid era.

Although the taxi industry boomed since the advent of democracy, very limited gains have been made in terms of women involvement. The nature of the industry which is characterized by violence has negatively impacted on the entry of women into the environment.

I am therefore delighted that so many of you are attending the Summit today. The reasons we established SANWIT as government was to secure a wider participation of women within the transport sector. We needed to also understand the demographic issues and transport needs of our diverse society – with women as part of finding the solutions.

The Department of Transport BEE Charter sees women as a motive force to recruit for the transport sector. The Charter highlights issues of Ownership and Control, Management, Employment Equity, Skills Development, Preferential Procurement, and Enterprise Development as one of our major priorities – to prompt women to participate actively in the transport sector.

We have the CBRTA which should come and tell us what opportunities exist within our borders.

I believe that these efforts will encourage more women to look for opportunities in our sector.

It remains my hope and belief that a number of women working, and doing business with us as the transport sector will rise, just as it will in the fields of science, engineering and technology.

Within the transport sector and the Department I am leading with Deputy Minister Chikunga, we have invested billions of rand where women can play a meaningful role. This includes amongst others:

- 5,8bn to be spent over the next three years by PRASA on general overhaul/refurbishment of old rolling stock;
- 12.5bn rand will be invested on non-toll road network. Alongside this, we are investing 9.9bn rand in the Provincial Infrastructure Grant for the implementation of our highly successful S’hamba Sonke Programme;



- 19bn rand will be invested over the next 3 years in the Integrated Public Transport Networks or BRTSs; and
- Transnet also investing over 300bn on rail and ports infrastructure improvements.

It is without a doubt that women have a role to play in these mega projects.

Your deliberations in this Summit must therefore result in concrete plans on the participation of women in these projects. But most importantly, your deliberations must include an elaborate plan to improve the representation of women at senior levels in all areas of the transport sector.

As I conclude,

The Freedom Charter envisaged a society in which all laws, which discriminate on the basis of race, gender and other prohibited grounds would be removed. It declared that all shall be equal before the law and that all shall enjoy equal human rights.

The importance of this task to conscientise our people, is absolutely important because it is these patriarchal relations of power and attitudes which breed violence as well as the scourge of rape against women.

All these challenges require our concerted and sustained efforts to transform this industry. I must also emphasize that the role of women is incomplete without the role of men. Lets us make sure that we bring our

male counterparts on board so that they too must appreciate the role that women play in our society.

This Summit must also come up with creative ways on how to reposition the SANWIT to become the leading voice on women issues relating to developments in the sector, which are equally capable of defending women against any form of gender discrimination and oppression.

You have a lot of work to do beyond the Summit. Decisions you take at this Summit, and the implementation thereof, will be crucial for the country at large.

That being said, the this Summit should form the basis towards possibly setting an agenda for the following:

- Establishing a core DOT Women Empowerment and Transformation strategy to coordinate and align efforts within the respective transport branches and entities, towards Moving Women Empowerment and Transformation forward;
- Setting clear targets in areas aligned with the DOT BBBEE Charter, in areas such as ownership, employment, training, development and procurement.
- Assessing the levels of women empowerment against the defined targets
- Assessing the challenges as identified by the respective entities and utilize the recommendations as stated into a single action plan with clear deliverables and responsibilities, and
- Re-establishing the role of SANWIT and addressing challenges as identified in order to create a uniformed effort amongst all entities.

A team of capable individuals has been put together to come up with resolutions and develop a matrix with clear targets and timelines.

In conclusion, I would like to make reference to the Book of Books, the BIBLE. In Genesis 1, God created a man and in Genesis 2, He constructed a woman out of a bone. A bone which represents and defines a structure of the body, and man defined woman as “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh”. A woman, a man with a womb, the one who receives the seed and gives back, the incubator and the amplifier. As women we must be careful of the seed we receive as we have no control over the harvest. Therefore protect and cherish what you carry, go forth and give birth to life, ideas and hope to the world.

I wish this Summit fruitful deliberations

Igama lamakhosikazi malibongwe!