

**VOTE OF THANKS BY COUNCILLOR S W MDABE, THE MAYOR OF ILEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY ON THE OCCASION OF THE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF INKOSI ALBERT LUTHULI, 4 NOVEMBER 2007, KWADUKUZA RECREATION GROUNDS**

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Programme Director, MEC for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs

Your Excellency, President Thabo Mbeki,

Dr Albertina Luthuli and the Family,

Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Pallo Jordan,

Premier of our Province, Dr Sbusiso Ndebele,

Ministers and MEC's Present,

Mayors and Councilors present,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Distinguished guests,

Comrades and friends:

This is indeed a historic occasion for the community of iLembe District, to be chosen by our government as a site to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the mysterious death of Inkosi Albert Luthuli.

On behalf of the people of iLembe District, I would like to thank the President of the Republic, Minister of Arts and Culture and our Premier for their tireless efforts in organizing this important occasion in the history of our liberation struggle-the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Inkosi Albert Luthuli, the President General of the ANC, 1952-1967 and a first African to win the Noble Peace Prize.

The man whose life we are celebrating, ***Oka-Madlanduna***, has been described by many people in different ways depending on their own understanding and outlook of the national liberation struggle.

But one thing common among those who have written and spoken about him is that they are in total agreement that Inkosi Albert Luthuli was a love of humanity, a visionary, a man of peace and a unifier and more importantly, a master architect of non-racialism, which has become a cornerstone of the new democratic South Africa in which Inkosi Albert Luthuli and his comrades envisaged in the Freedom Charter.

In his speech in Johannesburg in 1958, Inkosi Albert Luthuli challenged any assumption that South Africa, with its diversity of race, colour, creed and culture, could not develop into a democracy. He said: "I personally believe," he declared that here in South Africa, with all our diversities of colour and race, we will show the world a new pattern of democracy.

We can build a homogeneous South Africa on the basis not of colour but of human values".

We can proudly declare today, that the Constitution of the Republic and the South African Foreign Policy, correctly and fundamentally represent the vision and aspirations of our people as articulated by Inkosi Albert Luthuli in his seminal writings and the people's document-the Freedom Charter.

The new democratic government has consistently strived for an African solution to African problems as part of our deliberate effort to ensure that the vision of Inkosi Albert Luthuli is indeed executed.

Finally, we would like to thank all spheres of government, departments, state institutions including behind the scenes stars, who have ensured that we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Inkosi Albert Luthuli in a dignified and organized manner.

Our special thanks are due to the organizing team under the able leadership of Ms Nana Ngobese, Deputy Director General –Special Programmes-Premier's Office and Mr. Vusithemba Ndima, Chief Director: Heritage, Department of Arts and Culture.

I'm told Mr. President that Ms Nana Ngobese is not with us due to ill health, with your permission Mr. President; I would like to wish her a speedy recovery!

We would also like to thank everybody who has contributed in making sure that this project is a resounding success.

I thank you,