



**Keynote Address by the Honourable Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga, MP
Deputy Minister of Transport,
Prayer Day for Road Safety
Wednesday, 10 October 2018,
Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre, Ekurhuleni**

Programme Director,

Gauteng MEC for Community Safety, Comrade Sizakele Malobane-Nkosi

Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni, Councillor Masina

Councillors

Religious Leaders

Registrar of the RTIA - Mr Japh Chuwe,

Senior Management of the RTIA,

Leaders from all roads entities and strategic partners,

Members of all Faith Based Organizations and Road Safety NGOs,

AARTO Road Safety Ambassadors,



Ladies and Gentleman,

Every country and nation around the world strives to be better and this it does and achieves through its government.

Democratically elected governments always bear the responsibility to consult their constituencies and thus formulate and pass policies that improve the lives of the people. That is what government is for – government for the people, by the people and in the interest of the people.

From this backdrop, we note that the world is faced with challenges in three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental.

Globally more than 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty, face income inequality with huge economic and social costs.

I'm sure many of you will ask; what has this got to do with a Road Safety Prayer Day? The answer is simple; it has to do with everything we are gathered for here today.

Government policies drive development in a country and South Africa is no different from the rest of the world. The policies that our country develop and adopt have a huge impact on the future well-being of the country.

As a country our government has declared 2018 as the year to commemorate the centenary celebrations of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and the great daughter of the soil Mama Albertina Sisulu.

These are some of our great heroes who fought for the liberation of our country and the emancipation of women.

The strong foundation laid by both Madiba and Ma Sisulu empowers this generation to press on to make society a better place to live and that is a lasting legacy they left us.

The theme of this centenary 'Be the Legacy' means that each person should emulate the true values that Madiba left of selflessness, peace, forgiveness, justice and equality for all.

Ladies and gentleman, when we think about legacy, it's something that is left behind after a person has passed the baton to those following after them.

Legacy is about sharing what you have learned, not just what you have earned!

Legacy is about valuing values over valuables, because material wealth is a small fraction of your legacy.

Legacy is about the positive impact that one leaves behind for the benefit of humanity!

A more holistic definition of legacy is when you are genuinely grounded in offering yourself and making a meaningful, lasting contribution to humanity by serving a cause greater than your own.

It is a gift that will have life beyond you, outliving and outlasting your time on earth.

This ladies and gentlemen is what has brought us here today. This Prayer Day is a commitment and legacy we intend to leave for our children.

The Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA) we affectionately call 'The caring arm of government' has committed to saving the lives of our people on the roads through government policy. One of these policies is the National Development Plan!

Another one is the National Road Safety Strategy!

AARTO is one of the anchoring pillars of the National Road Safety Strategy! It is a firm resolve that every life on our roads matters and should be cared for.

Therefore, I appeal to all faith based organisations and road safety NGOs represented here today to play your part and support this very critical and important initiative. Let us continue the legacy of our former leaders in support of this initiative and save the lives of our people on the road.

As we offer prayers and supplications to God for safety on our roads, we must be mindful that the legacy we create has a deep sense of significance and has a ripple effect that positively impacts society.

Part of my duties as Deputy Minister of Transport is to look after the roads entities in the Department and among them is the RTIA, which has the enviable task to rally and galvanise faith based organisations and civic society to actively participate and improve the road safety situation in our country.

This is part of the broader vision and legacy that our government wants to leave behind for generations through the RTIA, which is significant given the Tata Madiba and Ma Sisulu centenary celebrations. We have to commit to build on this legacy so that we can realise the dream of a 'Better life for all'.

Ladies and gentleman road safety is high on the agendas of countries over the world and South Africa is no different with an average of 40 lives being lost on our roads per day.

It is therefore imperative to be part of a road safety campaign initiative that will bear fruits in the reduction of unnecessary and preventable deaths on our roads. This approach is in line with the belief that road safety is everyone's responsibility and it starts with you.

Over and above this, the Agency has also completed a successful initiative to collect over 1 million signatures through the 1 Million Signature Campaign for Road Safety which was aimed at collecting 1 000 000 signatures for a petition to request Cabinet to declare a National Prayer Day for Road Safety.

The process is currently under way to convince our Cabinet to Declare a National Prayer Day for Road Safety every 1st Sunday of October annually. This is the selfless service and legacy we want to leave our people thus influence road user behaviour for voluntary compliance with all road traffic laws by all our citizens.

Programme Director, if we are to make a difference to reduce the unacceptably high number of road crashes and deaths in our country we must all work together as a collective.

Let us 'Be The Legacy' of the future we want to see in our country through prayer, community involvement and taking responsibility for our actions on the road with the understanding that roads are a shared space that must be used responsibly to preserve life.

This legacy we are talking about cannot be realised without your full commitment and participation. As believers in the Almighty Jehovah, from different religious formations, we have a common thread that binds us, which is an affirmation that life is sacred and no one should lose their life on the road through the carelessness and selfish behaviour of another.

In fact, there should be Zero deaths and injuries on our roads as a legacy policy of government to positively influence society. One death on our roads is one death too many.

Let us create and leave behind a unity consciousness linked to our values of Ubuntu embodied through our institutions such as the RTIA.

In the words of a wise man called Lao Tzu who once said: **‘If you know when you have enough, you are wealthy. If you carry your intentions to completion, you are resolute. If you live a long and creative life, you will leave an eternal legacy.’**

Programme Director, this is what binds us today in our common intention to create a relationship with the future and live in it before it appears.

As Zig Zigler once said, **‘If there is hope in the future, there is power in the present.’** This is the challenge that has been left for us to realise the legacy of Madiba and Ma Sisulu, to convey these values in our daily lives and to keep the dream of a better South Africa and make the world a better place.

Already, the whole world is celebrating with us this centenary that has become a global phenomenon making our country a thought leader and contributor to a better world.

Today we stand proud of the efforts that the RTIA has undertaken in this engagement process of identifying the youth as key drivers of the 1 Million Signature Road Safety Campaign to declare a National Prayer Day for Road Safety.

This comes after a realization that the youth have a critical role to play in making our country a better place to live by providing them with

opportunities to make a meaningful contribution through the AARTO Road Safety Ambassador programme.

We therefore applaud the efforts of these young people who have taken it upon themselves to create a better future for others by encouraging other young people to persevere and to better their lives by keeping South Africa's roads safe through volunteering to the Road Safety Ambassador Programme.

Programme Director, what use is there in the best policies we can develop, if these policies are not put into action?

Together, we must preach the gospel of road safety, 24/7, 365 days per year. We must make sure that we make irresponsible behaviour on the roads, something socially unacceptable!

Brothers and sisters, as we gather here, we must never forget who we are!

We must remember that we are the children of God! Endowed with eternal power!

We must remember that when we unite, there is no force under heaven that is more powerful than us!

Remember what Jehovah said, in Genesis Chapter 11, verse 6, when the peoples of the earth decided to build the tower of Babel. "The LORD said,

“if as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them”.

Indeed, we are that force.

God has given us the power to achieve anything we want to – if only we become united in force!

United in prayer!

United in our commitment!

United in our action!

That we declare that enough is enough!

Let me remind you that we have already begun to practise this!

Remember how many road crashes used to be experienced almost every week on Moloto Road! Our people used to die like flies!

In 2016, we, together, as members of the interfaith movement – as God’s children, said enough is enough!

We prayed together and cleansed Moloto Road!

We burned incense – Impepho!

We prayed to God to forgive us!

We rebuked the devil and all evil spirits that were roaming that road!

Now consider this – when is the last time that you hear of a terrible fatal crash on Moloto Road!

Give God the praise for His mercy! Glorify the Lord God Almighty for being merciful and cleansing Moloto Road!

We agreed with the RTIA that we will commit to road safety! We ended up collecting more than 1.1 million signatures!

We have the power, brothers and sisters!

Let us leave this place committed to praying for road safety!

Preaching about road safety, every day of our lives!

Like we used to say in the 1980s under COSAS – Each one, teach one!

Let us teach our children and fellow citizens about road safety!

That way, we shall be able to save the lives of our brothers and sisters!

God has given us the power!

Madiba has recognised that power, when he said “it is in your hands”!

Indeed, it is in our hands!

Let us save ourselves and our loved ones!

May God bless us as we call on Him for His mercy on us!

The blood of innocent victims of road crashes cries to the LORD Jehovah for mercy!

Let us turn their cries into pleading for God’s mercy on our behalf!

Let their cries bear witness of the change we have as a country!

When we do this, then we will let God’s freedom to reign!

May Jehovah bless you!

May Jehovah bless Africa!

Nkosi sikelel íAfrika!