

**ADDRESS BY THE MAYOR OF LEPHALALE MUNICIPALITY,
HONOURABLE Cllr MOLOKO MAEKO MAEKO DURING THE OCCASION
OF CLOSING WOMEN'S MOTH OFFICIALLY, AT MOGOL CLUB ON 31
AUGUST 2016.**

- Programme Director
- Honourable Councillors led by Madam Speaker, Cllr Molokomme.
- Education Managers led by District Senior Manager, Mme Madela.
- Bomme from different sectors of government departments.
- Bomme who look after the orphans and vulnerable children at the Home-based care centres.
- Bomme from different walks of life.
- Media houses.
- Distinguished guests.

Good morning.

This event takes place during a very important month in the political calendar of the revolution of South Africa, August. August is the month in which women of South Africa demonstrated the power of the women to the world. South African women , organised under the banner of Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) marched to Union Buildings to protest against the law that made it compulsory for women to carry pass books. Male South Africans have been carrying pass books, but hell broke loose when it was extended to women.

It started on the 4th of January 1953, when one of the founder-members of Fedsaw, who was also a member of African National Congress Women's League, Dora Tamane addressed women at Langa township, outside Cape Town. She said :

“I appeal to South African women to come forward and fight. We have seen unemployment, lack of accommodation and families been broken. And now it is pass laws. We will take it no more. We must fight and overcome these challenges.”

In deed the 1956 women generation stood up and fight.

Are women who assembled in this hall prepared to rise and fight the challenges that our country is facing today?

We are no longer facing challenge of pass laws, but definitely we have other serious challenges.

Comrade Dora Tamane identified challenges of their generation as

- Unemployment
- Lack of accommodation
- Broken families due to migrant labour laws that kept men at hostels where women were not allowed.
- Pass laws.

But one of the revolutionaries, Frantz Fanon, the author of the book titled : Black Skin, White Mask, was correct when he said: (I quote)

“Each generation must discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it.”

The generation of 1956 Women discovered their mission and fulfilled it. It is now up to women generation of today to discover their mission; either fulfil it or betray it.

The challenges that we all face are :

- Unemployment. We have a mission to achieve economic freedom in our lifetime. Do we have cooperatives to fulfil economic freedom in our lifetime? Do we assist rural women to establish cooperatives.
- Moral degeneration. What do we do with the rising culture of Sugar Dadies, Prostitutes and Blessers?
- Drugs, alcohol and substance abuse. Do we have formal structures and programmes to address this ever rising challenge?
- Education drop-outs . Do we have programmes to address this ever increasing challenge?
- Gender-base violence. Research has revealed one (1) in every four (4) South African women is a victim of physical abuse, and every six (6) hours a woman is abused by her intimate partner. What do we do about it?

The 1956 women generation demonstrated determination of women. Their action shook the country to an extent that even Prime Minister JG Strijdom was afraid to face them and receive the petition.

The women waited for a long time until one of the leaders, Lilian Ngoyi rose and praised the women and indicated that they are so strong that they made Prime Minister to run away. The women then started chanting “Wathint’ Abafazi, Wa thint’Imbokod!” – You struck the woman; You struck the rock.

Am I talking to women who are rocks in this hall? Am I addressing umbokodo?

Media has been reporting about male teachers who abuse female learners sexually. One educator in KZN even went to an extent of taking a video of himself having sex with an under-age pregnant learner. Does our education managers have programmes to address the ever-rising teenage pregnancy, sexual abuse and the HIV/AIDS challenge? This week MEC of Education spent sleepless nights addressing code of conduct and other sexist challenges at Pretoria Girls High school. We support young girls of Pretoria high school. Do we have such bold ladies and women locally?

These are some of the challenges that women of today should discuss and address without fear or favour. If you can be able to address these challenges, then we will be able to chant : Malibongwe, Igama Lamakhozikasi ! Pelepele Ka Basadi!

I THANK YOU

Cllr MOLOKO MAEKO

MAYOR