

## **Closing Remarks by the Executive Mayor at a Sports Strategic Plan at Willem Pretorius**

Chief Whip

Councillors present here

Organised Sports Councils

Ladies and gentlemen

I am honoured to be here today to witness the strategic planning session for Sports that has taken place for the past two days. Planning ahead is central to the execution of the government programmes.

This session represents our district's high regard for the entire sports community. It also indicates our total commitment to the promotion and development of sport and recreation amongst all our people. OR Tambo games is a big provincial event which this year is taking place in our district. We therefore should be seen taking this event seriously. This session must have discussed the district's readiness towards hosting OR Tambo games as it is confirmed that we will be the hosts. We must also have a strategy of canvassing business community to contribute towards making this event a success. Our planning should have a broader vision of how and where do we want to take sports of our district to.

I know the debates that are taking place here are drawn from the commitments that are derived from our knowledge that sport and recreation serve to build our nation and are an essential part of our effort to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, especially those who were deprived in the past.

All of us have been witness to the contribution of sport to this nation-building, as South Africans from all races rejoiced or grieved together and gave full support to our sports stars.

I am confident that, as we overcome the legacy of our discriminatory past, the day will come when in every major sports tournament, our teams will, like the supporters, be composed of South Africans of all colours and creeds irrespective of disability.

I am also confident that on these two days we have come out with a concrete program of action which will guide the implementation of this programme.

The challenge facing us as government including sports administrators, practitioners and sponsors is how to encourage and revive our indigenous traditional sports. I hope this has been a suitable platform to encourage and promote indigenous sports.

I am certain this process would help us to draw greater numbers of our youth into sport, without any need for large investments in infrastructure, prepare these young people to participate in all sporting codes to help reduce crime.

Disability is not destiny, but a challenge that leads to new gifts. People with a disability are today no longer to be pitied, but are self-confident individuals who make their way through life, with one leg or perhaps none, or on four wheels, and who often develop special capabilities through that process. It is for that reason we involve people with disability in all aspects of life hence this strategic planning session should take cognisance of their participation in sports.

The acceptance of disability sport is increasing significantly and more and more experts are proving that the experience from movement and sport for people with disability not only intensifies the positive body-soul relationship, but also contributes to self-realization and self-fulfillment.

**Our District Municipality has sponsored Deaf Sports Day which will take place in Lejweleputswa on the 05<sup>th</sup> May 2007. We have decided on that because we see the importance of participation of the People with Disability in sports.**

We call on organised structures for sport to consider the participation of people with disability in all sports programs not only participation in the OR Tambo games but also in the post OR Tambo games.

We also promise to confirm the inclusion of sports related matters in our IDPs as municipalities.

I wish to thank all structures and individuals participated in this planning session and hope that a number of issues around sports development have been deliberated and well thought to unearth the hidden skill in our youth.

I thank you.

