



**MESSAGE OF SUPPORT BY MR FISH MAHLALELA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF  
TOURISM AT THE KING SILAMBA COMMEMORATION IN WALMANSTHAL, 02  
MARCH 2024**

Programme Director

Ingwenyama, King Makhosonke II of AmaNdebele, Bayede!

AmaKhosi neziNduna in our midst

Premiers

MEC's

Esteemed Dignitaries

Distinguished guests

Bantu bekhethu

Lotjhani, sanibonani, goeie dag, good day to all of you

Programme Director, this commemoration reminds us all of the heroic role played by our traditional leaders during the wars of colonial resistance as well as in our liberation struggle.

I must whilst at this, salute Ingwenyama King Makhosonke for being so meticulous in using this heritage site as a platform to share and promote diverse cultures whilst also creating opportunities for economic activities and empowerment.

The approach of our government is that the institution of traditional leadership should occupy an important place in African life and in the body politic of South Africa. We all know that traditional leadership embodies the preservation of culture, traditions, customs and values of the African people while also representing the early forms of societal organization and governance.

We are also mindful that the journey to where we are today has not been easy, as we celebrate 30 years of democracy and freedom, our young democracy has been harshly tested and soon all of us we shall be required to go the ballot boxes and vote for those whom we think can carry much better our aspirations as South Africans

We meet here today to assert our humanity, unity and reconciliation to summon all hands-on deck in our endeavour to build a better future for our nation.

It's undeniable that our cultures influence who we are, our perspective about life and the world at large as well as our values. Even our sense of humanity and how we relate to other people are influenced by our culture.

Culture becomes a reflection of a community or nation. This makes culture a vital and important determining factor of how the community reacts, responds, and grows. Culture plays a major role in the lives of everyone in the society.

Our global icon, former President Nelson Mandela once said “It is not our diversity which divides us, not ethnicity or religion or culture that divides us. Since we attained our freedom there can only be one division among us, between those who cherish democracy and those who do not”.

The UNWTO report on *Tourism and Culture Synergies* highlights the symbiotic relationship between tourism and culture and the interdependency of the two sectors. The report, undertaken through a survey of UNWTO member states and expert opinion, affirms that cultural tourism plays a major role in global tourism today.

By promoting cultural tourism and investing in cultural heritage, countries can generate economic growth and create jobs. Furthermore, cultural products such as art and music can be used to attract tourists or investors, helping to boost the economy.

They offer a unique insight into the culture of a particular region, providing visitors with a massive experience that is both educational and entertaining. This can help stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and generate revenue for local businesses.

Cultural heritage can also be used to preserve a sense of identity and pride within communities, giving them something to protect, nurture and cherish.

The relationship between culture and tourism has become a major source of tourism growth in recent decades with cultural tourism one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism markets. The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) suggest that 40% of tourism can be attributed to cultural tourism.

Tourism, cultural and creative sectors are often symbiotic, tourism relies on cultural heritage, while cultural and creative sectors are supported by revenues from tourists. This is particularly evident in cultural heritage sectors, such as museums and art galleries.

By strengthening, promoting cultural and creative sectors in smaller urban and rural areas can support local development and regeneration through cultural and creative tourism as well as reducing congestion in traditional tourism centres.

Cultural tourism can help educate international visitors, but it can also be targeted towards domestic visitors to discover more about their roots.

Within the 100km from radius from here, there are Airports, Embassies, Special Economic Zones, Cultural centres, Game reserves and local foods that will ensure that tourists spend more and stay longer.

However, to achieve these – these amenities and activities will need to be developed in a way that is sensitive to the needs of both the locals as well as our visitors.

We also need to unpack how these can be nurtured to unlock the full potential of a destination. Do local residents, Embassies and other stakeholders know that these attractions and amenities exist? If so, do they cater for their needs. Our job is to look at the needs of a visitor, which will then propel social tourism through the visitor economy.

The UNWTO, has argued that, tourism has the potential to contribute to greater gender equality and the empowerment of women in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, since the majority of people employed in tourism worldwide are women both in formal and informal jobs.

Tourism, the UNWTO, further argues, offers women opportunities for income generation and entrepreneurship – however, for these benefits to accrue, women will have to be empowered with skills as well as market information so that they can take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the visitor economy.

Women and tourism businesses in general, need to know what opportunities are presented by koMjekejeke Cultural Village and Interpretation Centre, the Dinokeng Game Reserve, the Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone, the High-Tech SEZ in Bronkhorstspuit, Wonderboom Airport as well as all the Embassies found in our capital city.

Some of these products might look isolated; for example, the SEZs, the Airports, the cultural villages and the game reserves, but are actually related as this is an eco-system that generate experiences consumed by the visitors.

Therefore, those with the necessary skills and information are able to cater for the need of the visitors better. If women in the Hammanskraal area know the needs of their visitors, they will be able to produce the artware (cultural tourism), the food (gastronomy tourism), that the market wants.

In conclusion let us commemorate our legendary King Silamba who upheld the Ndebele culture and heritage under difficult and trying times during colonialism, by ensuring that we all defend the gains of our democracy through going to voting stations on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024.