



**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

**SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Ministry

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**OPENING REMARKS BY MEC DR NTUTHUKO MAHLABA AT THE  
BENCHMARKING SESSION: OPERATING MODEL BETWEEN KWAZULU-NATAL  
DEPART OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE AND THE GAUTENG SPORT, ARTS,  
CULTURE AND RECREATION**

**ETHEKWINI**

**COASTLANDS HOTEL MUSGRAVE  
16 APRIL 2024**

*MEC for Gauteng DSACR; Ms Morakane Mosupyoe  
Your Department's Senior Management present here  
KZN DSAC Head of Department; Dr Thobile Sifunda  
Your Department's Senior Management present here*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this benchmarking session between the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Sport, Arts and Culture and our esteemed counterparts from Gauteng.

Today marks an important step in our efforts to enhance our respective operations and drive excellence in the delivery of services to our communities.

The purpose of this benchmarking exercise is to measure the products, services, and processes of both our organizations. By doing so, we aim to establish clear targets, identify priorities, and implement improvements that will lead to a competitive advantage and cost reductions. The data and information collected and analysed as part of this self-assessment will serve as a foundation for our benchmarking exercise.

Gauteng is widely recognised as an economic powerhouse, driving innovation and development in various sectors. On the other hand, KwaZulu-Natal is renowned as a cultural powerhouse, rich in heritage and tradition. It is imperative that we share ideas and best practices, especially in the realm of monetisation, to fully capitalise on our strengths and maximise our potential.

*MEC Mosupyoe;*

KwaZulu-Natal seeks to leverage Gauteng's attractiveness and economic prowess to further enhance our cultural offerings and promote our unique heritage. By collaborating closely, we can create synergies that benefit both provinces and contribute to the overall development of our nation.



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Furthermore, it is important to note the significant number of KwaZulu-Natal residents living in Gauteng, particularly from the Zululand and Umzinyathi districts. This presents an opportunity for us to collaborate on cultural ceremonies and *imikhosi*, ensuring that our cultural traditions are preserved and celebrated even in distant lands.

Last year, the two Departments collaborated when Gauteng hosted *umkhosi womhlanga* (Reed Dance) and *Ingoma yaseMachunwini* in October and November respectively. This was a good start and it aligns well with what we aim to achieve. There is an isiZulu saying that goes: "**INJOBHO ITHUNGELWA EBANDLA.**" MEC Mosupyo, I don't know how you would express this in your language, but it loosely means that when you have a problem, you ask other people to help you solve it.

*Ladies and Gentlemen;*

So today and over the next couple of days, we shall be collaborating in the areas of finance, district operations, cultural affairs, sports and recreation, and infrastructure. I am happy that you will also learn about our flagship programme, SUKASAMBE, a ward-based intervention programme through which we are unearthing, identifying, developing, and promoting raw talent from the grassroots level in both sport and arts.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the core mandate of the two departments, guided by national priorities and policies, is to uplift the nation's mood in all its facets. Social cohesion is our guiding light and is at the heart of these two departments. I am saying this because the two provinces are the country's most populous and economically-advanced, sharing culture and heritage more than any other province in the land.

A lot of ground needs to be covered in ensuring the social stability of KZN and Gauteng. A glaring example was the outbreak of the July 2021 unrest, which proved that we have a lot of work to do and a vast ground to cover in our social agenda for both KZN and Gauteng.

*Fellow colleagues;*

Our departments are not solely about sport, arts, and culture; we are in a constant quest to improve our people's lives and play a significant role in making our people players in the economy. The **African National Congress**, the party we serve, and the party that has given us the political mandate to guide these departments, expects nothing but the delivery on the promise of a better life for all and the realisation of the National Democratic Society. This is what we are about.

We want to use that which works for Gauteng, replicate it, and possibly improve upon it, and vice versa. We see Gauteng as a great destination to showcase our heritage, arts, and culture and to monetise this. Since time immemorial, Gauteng has attracted millions of people not only from this province but across the length and breaths of the globe, thus making the region a melting pot of cultures that have morphed into a uniquely South African experience.



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In the performing arts, Gauteng has taken, for example, the *Amapiano* music genre across the oceans, which is a significant achievement. We believe we can do the same with *maskandi*, which is currently the music genre to beat these days.

In conclusion, I wish to quote former **State President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela** when he said: ***“I like friends who have independent minds because they tend to make you see problems from all angles.”***

I urge all stakeholders present here today to actively participate in this benchmarking exercise and to contribute their insights and ideas. Let us embrace each other's differences in working style and approaches for this where we can learn to make change.

Together, we can build stronger, more vibrant communities and ensure that our cultural heritage remains a source of pride and inspiration for generations to come.

I thank you.