Programme Director;

Members of the Executive Council;

Members of the Provincial Legislature;

Mayors and Speakers of our Municipalities;

Mr Mthembu, Chairperson of the Public Service Commission;

Commissioners and Former Commissioners of the Public Service Commission;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and gentlemen

I am particularly honoured to witness this milestone in the life of an important State institution such as the Public Service Commission. During one of the coldest weeks we have had this year, the PSC has indeed brought about warmth through the celebration of its 100 years of existence.

I also join the millions in our country and across the globe in prayers wishing Tat’uMadiba a speedy recovery. South Africans breathed a sigh of relief when our President announced yesterday that our former President and international icon was responding better to treatment.

Programme Director, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Public Service Commission bringing its 100 Years Celebrations to the Eastern Cape. This is significant, not only owing to our Province’s contribution in the struggle to bring about democratic institutions in our country but also due to the dynamics in the arena of public service transformation in this Province. This is the Province where, on a daily basis, you really feel and experience the hardships brought about by apartheid institutions such as the homeland governments as were in the Transkei and Ciskei. At a particular point, we thought we had gone a long way in amalgamating the former
homeland systems but it soon became clear that the softer issues of mindset and attitudes required urgent attention.

As we are gathered here in this celebratory fashion we have a rare and significant opportunity to also reflect on the critical role that this Institution has played and what we must do to ensure that it remains relevant and strong in the next 100 years and beyond.

As some of us are aware, the Public Service Commission straddles variant political dispensations and has evolved from a Commission that previously dealt with appointments to a Commission that deals with, amongst others, Integrity and Anti-Corruption, Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Leadership and Management Practices. Let me also hasten to mention that we acknowledge the important facilitative role that the PSC played during the transition to the democratic dispensation.

In the post-apartheid period, the Public Service Commission has helped the democratic government achieve tremendously in the area of public service reforms and the transformational agenda of the state as led by the democratic movement. To mention a few, the PSC has been in the trenches dealing with:

- Promoting and monitoring adherence to the values and principles set out in Section 195 of the Constitution;
- Development of service standards in all departments;
- Management of Performance and Evaluation of Heads of Departments;
- Facilitating compliance with the financial disclosure system;
- Managing the National Anti-Corruption Hotline;
- Providing guidelines for handling Grievances in the public service

Had these issues been left with a home such as the PSC, they have a potential to undermine the transformational agenda of the State.

While we acknowledge these successes, we constantly have to deal with new tendencies that are emerging in the public service. These include unethical conduct which manifests itself through stealing from the poor, corruption and bad work ethics.
We all read newspapers and are aware of many officials that are looting the State coffers. We are all aware of high ranking officials who issue multi-million rand tenders in government departments and go catch them on the other side in their family businesses.

Government alone cannot deal with this syndrome. We count on the Public Service Commission to walk this long road to a corrupt free, service oriented public service with us. The PSC should remind us what it means to be a professional public servant that is driven by a goal of offering unbiased quality services to the people. As we march towards vision 2030 we are going to need a public servant that arrives on time at work; a public servant that goes an extra mile and stays voluntarily at the office until the work is concluded satisfactory; and a public servant who does the basics of public administration right; and a public servant who really is in that job to solve the problems of or people.

We have no doubt that the partnership we have natured over the past 19 years will deliver such a public service for us.

As I conclude, I wish to report that in the Eastern Cape, we have taken giant steps towards improving the image of the State in the eyes of ordinary citizens. Examples of this are the approval of the Policy that prohibits trade between civil servants and government; our vigorous Clean Audit Campaign as well as the deployment of senior government officials to service delivery sites as part of the Executive Council Outreach Programme.

However, we look forward to the proposed Single Public Service that will ensure that government systems are uniform and people are subjected to and experience similar service standards whether in national, provincial or local government.

As I welcome you to the Province of the Eastern Cape, I congratulate the Public Service Commission for reaching its centenary and wish the PSC many more returns.

I THANK YOU