CLOSING REMARKS BY MEC FOR HOUSING, SAFETY & LIAISON
DURING THE WOMEN’S SUMMIT HELD AT MBIZANA LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY AT MZAMBA

12 September 2008

DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS
OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS
TRADITIONAL LEADERS
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
LOCAL COUNCILLORS
REPRESENTATATIVES OF SAFETY GROUPS
DISTRICT MAYOR, CLLR
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Programme Director

Many people including delegates attending this important summit would
assume that by being present here would intrigue excitement and hope
amongst all of us here today. Efforts such as these evoke mixed emotions to
many of us due to the continous incidents of assaults, rape, abuse and
murders perpetuated by criminals against women and children in our
communities.

However, iam overjoyed that platforms are created for information sharing
and empowerment of our people through these platforms. We must never
underestimate the strength in consolidating our efforts and intervention to
empower women. Just last month the whole country commemorated the
women’s month by raising awareness on issues affecting women today. Yet
you still find disturbing reports that women are raped, brutally murdered and
abused almost every day. Where is the respect for women in these perilous
days? Even worse, most of these perpetrators are young men who should be
protecting women.

In confronting women issues we must be cognizant of the needs of women
and the modus operandi of engaging women on matters of safety and
security and other socio economic conditions. It is an open secret that all of
us heeded a call to come here driven by the cries of a mother whose kid was stabbed in Port Elizabeth on Monday, the series of gruesome killings, rape and many other incidents that have occurred here and in other areas throughout the province. Our homes and streets have become a place of torture, pain and abuse inflicted on us by criminals who delight themselves on inflicting pain to women and children in our province. Through such incidents women throughout the province are imprisoned by the fear of standing up on their own at the different spheres in their lives.

This bestows a challenge upon all of us here and else where to rise up and make inroads regarding the emancipation and empowerment of women. Our resolve should be premised by passion to be ambassodors for women at home, at work and at play. This congregation has been able to identify specific areas that need our urgent intervention to advance the emancipation of women in our province. People are watching with desperate eyes to what is being done to avert the status quo. Through his convention, we are creating a platform for women to table their needs on safety and security by empowering women on their rights and domestic violence Act, Restore their dignity, share best practices on family values and encourage women to participate in crime prevention initiatives. Women need attention since they are prey to criminals and abuse. We must asses women’s needs for development and how to access service delivery. This congregation has proved to be a better platform to empower rural women with essential information and other government initiatives.

Programme Director Delegates here vigorously engaged on crime prevention, rural women movement, Victim empowerment programmes, family value system and role of the independent complaints directorate. It is evident that through discussions at the commissions, this congregation has been imparted with information and knowledge to make a difference in their jurisdictionalambits in consultation and partnerships with the communities needing the information solicited here through our interactions and deliberations.

Crime and abuse of women is descending across the province like spring water descending at Magwa falls during rainy days! This enacts huge responsibility upon our shoulders to influence our homes, workplaces, and social gatherings and impart this important information to many people who could not grace this educational gathering.
We all attest that recommendations and inputs from this gathering must reach out to our people and be implemented at all levels of our jurisdiction. If we want to be heard, let’s make some noise!

I wish every delegate here a safe journey and blessed fruitful weekend.

I thank you