

**SPEECH BY KZN HEALTH MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of
the Men's March at Nseleni Sport ground**

26 November 2010

Amakhosi

Izinduna zaMakhosi

MEC for Education – Hon Senzo Mchunu

Umhlathuze Local Municipality Mayor – Cllr Mnqayi

Uthungulu District Municipal Speaker – Dr Mthethwa

Amakhansela

Brothers for Life

On behalf of our Honourable Premier, Dr Zweli Mkhize who so much wanted to be part of this event, we want to thank all those that have made it possible including the District Flagship coordinator, the District Man Sector Coordinator, Nseleni community leaders, Izinduna zeZinsizwa, Brothers for Life representatives, SAPS and all other Government Departments involved.

IsiZulu sithi: Okuhlula amadoda kuyabikwa! Ngithenami angisukume ngize nozakwethu umhlonishwa MaCingwane, sizokukhuza lelichilo; njengamadoda.

We are very encouraged by the progressive stance adopted by the real men of Uthungulu District to play a visible role in the prevention of violence against women and children and the spread of sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS through behavioural change.

I must admit that I am very impressed by the initiatives emanating from men residing in this District as I have learnt that as early as July 2005 men assembled at Esikhawini constituted themselves into an organisation called Men in Partnership against Aids and adopted the slogan that said:

***WE SHALL RESPECT AND PROTECT EVERY WOMAN AS OUR MOTHER,
WIFE, SISTER, DAUGHTER AND FRIEND***

Today we are again given a chance to look deep into what is happening in this District and to agree on what role we (men) can play in rooting out the rot perpetrated by cowards such as paedophiles, woman bashers and criminals.

In all that we are doing we will be guided by a simple philosophy that says

AMADODA ANGAWENZA UMEHLUKU.

I am also glad that in the planning of this event you took into consideration the presentation made by Honourable Premier, Dr Zweli Mkhize, during the

Partnership against HIV/AIDS Conference held on the 12th October 2010, where it was revealed that uThungulu District has:

- A 70% TB/HIV co-infection rate
- 70% of medical admissions that are HIV related
- UThungulu HIV prevalence in 2009 was estimated at 46.4%
- And that one in ten young men of 25 – 29 years is infected with HIV in the same way that the Male Distribution of HIV infection in SA is + 9% in ages between 25-29 years.

In the same presentation, we also learnt that uThungulu has a considerable number of people who are unemployed and the drug and substance abuse is very rife. We also gleaned that you are experiencing high levels of crime including women and children abuse.

Ngiyezwa ngandlethana ukuthi yize sesithi sadlula ezikhathini zama “No go areas”; lapha aseyinsakavukela.

My brothers, “No Go Areas” hold communities to ransom in the same way that criminality, abuse and sexual violence captivates their helpless victims. I have heard that KwaMbonambi is now fertile ground for criminal activities as evidenced by what has happened where we have seen several highjackings of public vehicles at gun point, and in your discussions I m told, you also

covered the issue of a doctor who was shot at and the matter of a municipal senior official was shot dead about two months ago as well as several reported incidents of females being beaten by their male partners.

The holding of this event is so very relevant as it takes place within the ambit of No to Violence against Women and Children calendar days. As good citizens we have to reflect and actually say, in a normal setting we do not need campaigns like this; but with the high levels of violence experienced we cant help it. This area has its own horror stories that have made for an example the Mobile Health Services to threaten to halt services because:

- They have been hijacked at gun point
- Been exposed to rape, assault and verbal abuse
- Lost personal valuables like cell phones; ID documents, and jewellery
- Have suffered severe psychological trauma from the very communities they are out to serve

If we do not stand up as we are doing today – we are all doomed.

Today we are assembled to mobilize every person to **speak out** against woman and child abuse. We are also here to encourage silent female victims to talk about abuse and ensure that they get help.

We also want people to report child abuse to the police. We are also encouraging children to report bully behaviour to school authorities. It is in this forum where we are saying men and boys must be encouraged to talk about abuse and actively discourage abusive behaviour.

As progressive thinking individuals, let us take it as our role to change the mindset of those close to us and commit to assist our country to meet its targets as set out through the Millennium Development Goals which include the following:

- Life expectancy must increase from the current at 53.5 years for males and 57.2 years for females (Statistics SA 2009) to 58 years for males and 60 years for females by 2014.
- South Africa's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) must decrease from the estimated 140-160 per 100,000 to 100 (or less) per 100,000 live births by 2014.
- Child mortality rates must decrease from the current 69 deaths per 1,000 live births to 45 deaths (or less) per 1,000 live births by 2014.
- The TB cure rate must improve from 65% in 2009 to 85% by 2014
- 80% of eligible people living with HIV and AIDS must access antiretroviral treatment.
- New HIV infections must be reduced by 50%.

(MMC) as it is in practices like these where boys are graduated into men; taught about hygiene and the correct ethos of how to treat, love and protect women.

Our progressive Government since 1994 has done a lot, through legislation to uplift the standard of both women and children, for instance, we now have:

- **Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000** which was passed to ensure that everyone enjoy Constitutional rights. This Act ensures that women have equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms.
- **Employment Equity Act, 1998** which is there to ensure that there is no discrimination in employment; occupation and income within the labour market. It also encourages equitable representation of women and other historically disadvantages persons at all levels of public and private entities.
- **Maintenance Act, 1998** that guarantees the rights of a child to a living standard which is adequate for physical, mental, spiritual and social development. The Act ensures that maintenance for the child is

recovered from the parents or other persons financially responsible for the child.

- **Domestic Violence Act, 1998** which was enacted to afford survivors of violence maximum protection from domestic abuse. Women, who are at the receiving end of domestic violence, now have a legal recourse that will ensure their protection.
- **Children's Act, 2005 and Children's Amendment Act, 2007** which was enacted to amongst others, protect a child from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.

As I again thank you for your initiative, I say **DO NOT LOOK AWAY, ACT AGAINST ABUSE!**

I thank you.