



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MS REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, MP, DURING THE HANDOVER OF THE MTN MEDIA CLASSROOM TO IMBUBU PRIMARY SCHOOL IN PIETERMARITZBURG, KWAZULU NATAL

17 October 2013

Programme Director

Your Worship the Executive Mayor of Umgungundlovu District Municipality: Cllr Yusuf Bhamjee;

Your Worship the Mayor of Msunduzi Local Municipality: Cllr Chris Ndlela;

Councillors;

Representative of the Department of Education;

Representative of Umgeni Water;

General Manager of MTN Foundation: Kusile Mtunzi Hairwadzi;

All government officials

Members of the School governing body

Principals, Educators and Learners

Distinguished guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great joy to be with you here in Pietermaritzburg.

The Department of Water Affairs is implementing the 2020 Vision Water Educational Programme that seeks to educate grades R to 12 learners about the integrated water resource management, climate change, and environmental management and to promote water related careers.

Through the 2020 Vision programme, the Department hosts the annual Youth Water Summit, which entails a week-long intensive educational programme for young people where they engage in various exciting activities such as excursions, public speaking, debates and national competitions.

Today we are here to celebrate a culmination of something that started as a dream for a group of learners from Imbubu Primary School.

Our crusade towards the fulfilment of nationwide Water Education and Awareness has brought us together to honour these young people. Indeed, South Africa is a better country today than it was twenty years back.

These learners heeded our clarion call and managed to rise to the occasion when they took part and became victorious in the Music category of the Baswa Le Meetse (BLM) competition at the annual Youth Water Summit.

Baswa le Meetse (Youth in Water) *is a competition-based project that targets Grade 6 learners and conveys health and hygiene messages through mediums of art such as drama, traditional music, poetry, praise singing and posters.*

The involvement of our in and out of School youth in water resources management needs to be broadened so that we can effectively work towards securing the much needed sector skills and increasing the available service pool.

Water sector careers will remain a key component of our water education programme with awareness and behavioural change set to raise larger community involvement.

Our country largely remains dependant on surface water for domestic, industrial and recreational purposes, this demand places a lot of pressure on our environment and compels us to come up with much more intensive and creative ways of driving water conservation and water demand management. For this we will continue to rely on our young ambassadors as they embody the spirit of resourcefulness and creativity.

Access to clean and safe drinking water remains our core business and while noting the historic and existing service backlogs our Department together with it's stakeholders and delivery partners are persistently working towards ensuring that good quality water is reliably available to all our citizens as set out in the constitution.

While carrying out the required diligence we will reiterate the important message of responsible use of water as our precious resource, because at the current rate of inefficiency we certainly will be restricted in ensuring reliable supply based on the fixed nature of our water resources coupled with the currently high cost of augmenting our supply stream.

I would like to encourage you young people to pursue water related careers. The water sector is faced with the challenge of ageing workforce. We need engineers, scientists, technicians, process controllers and many more experts.

I will once again urge you the youth of Imbubu Primary School to continue being the ambassadors for water education and awareness spreading the values and messages of positive change in water use for all those around your community.

We commend you for your involvement and dedication towards the entry level action project of the 2020 Vision for Water Education Programme. To you we say the sterling results you have achieved are highly notable and are but a fraction of what we as a people can achieve through having a committed role in water resources stewardship.

Ladies and Gentlemen we are here today to congratulate Imbubu Primary School winners of the state of the art media classroom sponsored by MTN Foundation equipped with 21 computers, an inter- active board and R6000 cash prize.

We would like to thank the principal and educators and the school governing body for their commitment, support and encouragement that they gave to this learner to participate in our educational programme.

Let me end by acknowledging and appreciating the role played by MTN Foundation in partnering with us on the 2020 Vision for Water Educational Programme.

I would like to express our gratitude to our important partners, the Department of Basic Education, Umgungundlovu District Municipality, Msunduzi Local Municipality and Umgeni Water Board.

Water is life: Respect it, Conserve and enjoy it.

I thank you