

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF WATER AFFAIRS & FORESTRY, Mr RONNIE KASRILS, MP, AT THE LAUNCH OF NATIONAL ARBOR WEEK IN WATVILLE, BENONI, ON 30TH AUGUST 2001.

Sanibonani, Kunjani, namhlanje?
Dumelang, Asheni, molweni,
Salaamu alaykum,
Goeie Dag
Amandla! Awethu!
Awethu! Amandla!
Phambili
Siyabonga kakhulu

And to Nkosazana Africa Yvonne Chaka Chaka you know if we can dance with you and hear you sing everyday, Yvonne, we will all stay very young even after 40 years of marriage. And I want to say to this beautiful nightingale of Africa, ~~our nightingale of the entire South Africa,~~ Yvonne you will never die, you will have many trees planted when that sad day that you talked about comes, but we can all be sure ~~Yvonne Chaka Chaka will never die. She will always live~~ in our heart ~~with some birds,~~ of Africa, Nkosazana thank you. And, in fact, Yvonne whether a human being is gifted with such wonderful voice ~~and personality~~ that makes the spirit moves, we know ~~that we are here~~ today as Mayor Vlakazi reminded us that we will be planting these trees of life in memory of the giants of our continents such as Oliver Tambo. With the passing away of Govan Mbeki, Chris Hani who died near here, these freedom fighters, like those gifted with wonderful voices, magic of their pens, examples of life they never ever die they live on as these beautiful indigenous trees of our country and are wonderful monuments for us to plant and to pay homage and to remember those who passed away. Which is why ladies and Gentlemen, Nkosikazi amadoda nabantwana, why Arbor Week? Why is the planting of trees so important to the lives of people for all the reasons already given, the greenery the environmental aspects and to pay tribute to and in memory of those who passed away? And what I would like to announce right here in this week, with the onset of spring is that in our country we are going to institute a new term for our Arbor Week. I said so for the past two years the name arbour is from Latin meaning tree .and it's an international term but , we do need terms which can relate to our people in South Africa. And I had said that we must come up with some additional terms not just Arbor week and my department provided me with certain phrases, we discussed these phrases with the linguists of our country to make sure that the name we choose or chosen is a name which is a name that

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is absolutely correct and the name we have chosen for our arbor week is Iviki Lezihlahla, Iviki Lezihlahla. From next year, when this week comes around, we will be referring to it as Iviki Lezihlahla. I would like to invite you to enunciate this with me - phinda together, Iviki Lezihlahla, Phinda! Iviki Lezihlahla, Phinda! Iviki Lezihlahla.

Viva Iviki Lezihlahla. Viva Iviki Lezihlahla. Siyabonga, that's a marvellous way for us to launch our national Arbor Week Iviki Lezihlahla here in the town that Oliver Tambo had made famous regionally and the son of Wattville, Mayor Vlakazi, thank you for hosting

This national arbor week Ivikileihlahla in Wattville, home of the late Oliver Tambo, and ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests and all, I would like to ask the Tambo family representatives just to stand so we can see the offspring 2 of the daughters of Comrade Oliver Tambo, Thembi, Tselani and 3 grandchildren, Oliver, Theodora and Zachary, lets give them a very big Wattville welcome . Thank you very much indeed. I want to welcome the MEC for Agriculture and Environment here in Gauteng who has graced the platform, Mary Metcalfe, and who has delivered a message in relation to what arbor week, what Ivikileihlahla, is about in our hearts and our minds is all. I would like to thank the sponsors. I will come back to them at the end of my speech. They have done so much in terms of helping us to not only launch arbor week here today but for the rest of the week throughout our country.

So Total represented here by Khulu Nchingila on the stage thank you very very much and thank you for the million rands that you have contributed, R1 million ladies and gentlemen. from Total to help with the Arbor Week launch. Although I am talking about the official launch of Arbor Week here manje namhlanje e Wattville, I want to let you in on a little secret that actually I had the honour of launching arbor week ivikileihlahla yesterday in Tegweni the place that Bob Mabena says it's the only place where they still do their own clothes. We launched it yesterday at Tegweni at a very special event. We planted trees at the World Conference Centre against racism, against intolerance, racial discrimination and Xenophobia when our Foreign Minister, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma handed over the conference centre to the United Nations, to the person of the United Nations High Commissioner, Miss Mary Robinson. To mark the occasion the two of them planted our indigenous tree the yellow Walt with a plague inscribed both to the Conference against Racism and to Iviki Lezihlahla now let me just say that I regard the twinning them at the launch of the conference of racism and the start of Ivili Lezihlahla has been highly symbolic not simply coincidental because racism, apartheid , Xenophobia, Intolerance these are all diseases of certain states of people, of certain authorities such as apartheid rulers of the past in this country, and many such dictators throughout the world who secured and sought to secure the rule on the basis of repression and , divisions, xenophobia racism and the like. Failing the political, the social atmosphere of countries of the planet in the same way that apartheid gave rise to the bleakness of soul and mind in this country and the bleakness of areas such as our townships

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and remote rural areas that has been turned to desert or semi desert because apartheid simply favoured the chosen people of white skin pigmentation and we see in other townships how we got to catch up in greening this townships with the privileged areas of the past that the racist plight created. The blight of the environment and the planting of trees as Mary Metcalfe pointed out, is robbing the soul and spirit of something of beauty, of creativity, of hope and therefor e the launching of Ivikileihlaha and the opening of the anti racist conference become synonymous because they are about the health of the ennvironment, the human and the geographic, the habitat and the politics of all countries in the world. Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and the representative of the United Nations, Mary Robinson, said to me what a wonderful way to open the conference with the planting of a tree. They said to me Minister Kasrils phambili this week as we have our ceremonies of the tree ikelele South Africa, please remind the people of the anti racist conference, on how and what we are doing through the planting of trees is at the same time the planting of the correct seeds in the minds of people everywhere, so we banish intolerance, racism, xenophobia from the minds of the people of our worlds. Here we then, launching Ivikileihlahla 2001 and what a wonderful day and I say this particularly to Mayor Vlakazi to launch a Tambo forest here, it might be a miniature but we will be planting 70 trees. We will not just be planting single trees but also the planting of groups of trees and of symbolic forest and even bigger forests in memory of those who have fallen the heroes and heroes who have given their lives so that we can breath the sweet air of freedom the length and breath of our country and act as a marvellous act of living of our country, the entire South Africa, to the rest of the continent and the rest of the world. So we remember those fallen heroes headed on that list by the great Oliver Reginald Tambo and of course having heard the news of the passing away of Comrade in arms Govan Mbeki we will be planting trees at the homes of Govan Mbeki, Oliver Tambo and others as well. Let me say that in commemorating them, we commemorate the Mary Modley, the Sam Ntulis, the precious Eden as read out on that list by the mayor ...70 trees in memory of the fallen. I would like to inform you that my department has made 70 plaques bearing the names of the people who those 70 trees are representing and those plaques are in this little group of trees the small forest we are talking about. , and I want to say congratulations to the mayor, to his councillors many of them are here with us today to the Ekololweni Metro, to all the community-based organisations in Wattville and in Ekolweni

who have done so much to make this part of our country a model in planting trees in greening and in educating the people to the need to green and to plant. We celebrate the launch of Ivikileihlala here and the purpose of arbour week is precisely to do what this Metro is doing to educate, to inform people and to ensure that we plant the trees so its not only the former advantaged parts of our country Johannesburg, Sandton Cape Town Durban, Bloemfontein and Pretoria where the city centre and suburbs are veritable forests of trees but that our main

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aim is to ensure that such trees, such forests spread not only the disadvantaged, to rural areas where there is tremendous bleakness because of the suffering, the exploitation of apartheid of the past and we need greenest as well. I want to refer to 3 aspects of our theme for this year. Trees are life.

The first one is protecting indigenous forest, natural forest such as intlala, such as Amatola where the people of the past found their muti, where they buried their kings and generals. The forest where people sought refugee in times of war where the greatest Cetshwayo and Amakhandlas and selilor organised their armies embattled such as in 1906 to ambush the colonialists to embark on their campaign of resistance, these spirits to their former glory land to ensure that our people are educated in what these forest are being about in terms of history and interms of environments.

Economic value of our country, we see this in our commercial forests, big forests in this country, our forest industry which employees 500 000 people which assists the rural economy whose exports products have a greater value to our economy than the fruits and sugar industries combined. And am very pleased to note here sitting in the front role, my friend Mike Edwards of the Forest SA who works to make commercial forestry sector such an important contributor to our economy and our environment. Would you and your wife stand up and greet the crowd, Mike and Mrs Edwards, thank you very much.

The third one is the urban greening programme making our cities towns, and informal settlements and those rural settlements more beautiful bringing in their beauty to the lives of our people. Throughout history people have planted trees in memory of their loved ones and this is what we will be doing after the ceremony here and obviously joined by the Tambo family. We have started that campaign of remembrance under the message Trees help to heal our nation so in planting trees we show we have reconciliation forest in our minds and we believe that the planting for those who have lost their beloved ones is a wonderful way of healing their minds and their wounds.

Let me finally then thank the sponsors for their effort in promoting this week and a special thank you to Total SA, Telecom, Sappi, Ellerines, Fruittree and the official sponsors that have contributed so much. I would like to thank the organisers for their tireless efforts in making this launch such a wonderful success here today.

I would like to thank Jeunesse Park, alongside Bob Mabena and the wonderful Yvonne ChakaChaka and I would like to thank my department for doing so much as well.

In closing let me pay special tribute to both Yvonne and the other artists who have gladdened our hearts today with their dancing and their songs helping to promote the beauty of the trees for us.

We must green our land, trees are lifeMehlare

Phambili Iviki Lezihlahla

Long live the memory of Oliver Reginald Tambo

Long live the memory of Govan Mbeki

Viva Iviki Lezihlahla

I am putting one request to Bob, and that is having delivered such a long speech, we need an antidotes to ministerial speech and am really pleading with him to allow Yvonne to sing again.

Sanibonani

Dumelang

Abusheng

Molweni

Salaamu alaykum

Goeie dag

Sanibonani,

Yebo

Kunjani Namhlanke

Sikhona

Dumela

Asheng

Molweni

Salaamu alaykum

Goeie Dag

Yebo