

Public Works Commemorates Women and Heritage

By Nolwazi Ndhlovu

“It’s a fantastic thing, a very simple idea. Irrespective of your politics, of your culture, of your race, of your whatever, here is one thing that can unite us irrespective of all of the things that are trying to tear us apart.”

–**Archbishop Desmond Tutu** on Heritage.

Cultural pride and women empowerment were venerated at Melodi ya Tshwane church as Head Office staff members took the day to celebrate women and to honour and promote the vast cultural bodies in South Africa at an event organised by the Gender Unit.

In his address during the day, Mr Clive Mtshisa, Deputy Director-General: Corporate Services emphasised the importance of the event.

“The significance of this day can be appreciated as a day that affirms that celebrating heritage is part of our efforts of healing the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.

“As we celebrate and commemorate the role of women in the struggle for freedom in this country, today we can look back and reflect with pride the contributions made by them,” Mr Mtshisa added.

The event was also graced by the presence of Mr Jabu Baloyi from the Commission for Gender Equity, who addressed the crowd about employment equity and gender transformation in the workplace. He emphasised greatly that structures should have the understanding that women empowerment and eradication of gender inequalities were the cornerstone to development as there would be no growth in the absence of equity.

According to the DPW Gender Unit, although some improvements have been recorded in achieving employment equity targets in the Department, more still needs to be done. Nationally (in South Africa) the representation of women has declined at SMS (Senior Management Service) levels from 38.2% in 2012 to 37.2% to date.

However, despite this, the Department remains steadfast in its commitment to achieving its set equity targets, said Ms Mankwana Masemola, Acting Director: Women Empowerment.

Ms Masemola closed off by thanking everyone present and promised that her unit will ensure that next year’s event becomes a much bigger and better one.