

**Address by the Deputy Minister of Public Works Mr Jeremy Cronin at the Occasion of the opening of Gulandoda Junior Primary School in Engcobo in the Eastern Cape on October 12, 2012**

Aa!!! Bakhangele

Ward Councillor Mr Macozoma

Representative from the Education Department Mr Tywakadi

IDT Board Chairperson Dr Fikeni

IDT CEO Ms. Nwedamutswu

School Principal Mr Luke

Parents

Teachers

All Officials from various departments

Learners

Community of Gulandondoda

Firstly let me thank the Chief, Aa!! Bakhangele, and the community of Gulandoda for the gift of a sheep. It is very kind of you. I would want to share my gift with Grade R learners. In other words I would want it to be slaughtered here and let them enjoy with me.

IDT is so important for us as a country. As we move from being a tendering state to an implementing state or developmental one, we should not lose that capacity from entities of them being implementing agents.

It impresses me to discover that IDT understands that infrastructure is about the people. Infrastructure development is undertaken with the communities not for them.

There ought to be some touch and feel in relation to infrastructure. The manner in which IDT responds to community needs is the way to go.

Yes, we need to better coordinate infrastructure development. The only way in which we would have an impact it is when we dynamically link different aspects of it together. Attached to schools should be recreational facilities. But further than that it is important to undertake integrated planning, that should give rise to integrated development. In that way the development that we embark on would not be sparse or patchy or like attractive islands surrounded by colourless sea. A sad story was narrated to me upon my arrival here by more than one person, and repeated by the principal when he spoke, that learners are instructed not to come to school when it is raining, this is as a result of three of them who were rescued from drowning due to the lack of bridges to cross rivers. I was also informed that if this event was yesterday it wouldn't have happened due to terrible roads after rain. I was briefed that in Gulandoda there is no clinic. These are the issues that need to find a space in our planning, that is the coordination and integration that one is referring to.

Having said all that we need to celebrate and protect what we have achieved and also make the best of it. This is your school. This is your victory. This school was established in 1930, and parents of this area took it upon themselves that despite all the difficulties they would make sure that there is a structure where their kids would go and learn.

We are now here to celebrate with the community of Gulandoda and hand over this hugely improved school to you, for your children.

Amongst you are those who said I might not have had the opportunity to go to school or to get educated but I will make sure that my children go to school and learn. And that is an earth-shattering contribution to the entire country that must be celebrated.

In the same breath as we express our gratitude to the community of the location that played a role for this school to be here we should not forget all the teachers the past and present ones who knew how to complement the good work that was started by the residents of Gulandoda location. These are the teachers who gone beyond the call of duty.

I see this school as the heritage of this area. I see it as the product of creativity, of hard work, of determination, of working together, of cooperation, of a focussed community.

The creativity you have demonstrated, attracted us, drew our attention and that is why we are here today. It is the same creativity that you must continue demonstrating in developing this village further.

We thank you for giving the department of Public Works a chance to learn. Let me also thank you on behalf of other areas we will go to, to do what we have learnt and done here. In building this school we used light weight steel frames that are then clad with highly compressed fibre cement boards and filled with lightweight concrete mix. We tested durability of each an every material we used, the building or school itself gone through vigorous test and inspection to make sure that all kinds of weather come and go and leave the school standing and intact for years.

I trust that those who got an opportunity to acquire skills in the building of this school will further sharpen them to a point where we are all proud of them.

Sometimes due to the slow pace of development in our communities in the eyes of some it is as if, there is absolutely nothing that is happening, whereas a lot is happening but sometimes the pace undermines the progress, but the manner in which the department constructed this school is quicker than the normal way of building schools. The faster we do things the more visible the evidence.

Lastly, it is one thing to have a school, which is an output, but it is another to have a school with outcomes that have an impact in Gulandoda Village, in eNgcobo, in this province which is one of the most important provinces in the country in relation to being a home to many brightest sons and daughters who have gone as far as brightening the country, the continent and the world.

Yes, there are other hurdles that we have to jump over but with the participation of everybody, parents, teachers, learners. Let this school be a model to the country by its positive impact to the reconstruction of South Africa to its completion and let Gulandoda Junior Primary School put the Engcobo Village on the world map.

I do not know, but you can tell me, I was told that Gulandoda means get sick man but somebody else said no it means push man, so let everybody push.

Together we can do more!!!