

**Minister of Public Works**  
**Mr J Radebe**  
**12 March 1999**

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## **Official Hand-Over of the Zamimpilo Community Market Hlabisa**

### Ceremonial Greetings

I extremely delighted to be in your midst this morning to share in the joy of handing over this exciting Zamimpilo Community Market project. Allow me at the outset to congratulate all of those that have participated in making this project a reality. You have shown the people of this beautiful province of KwaZulu-Natal and indeed all South Africans that with relentless determination and the will to succeed we can indeed make a difference in shaping our destinies.

Your success highlights the powerful lesson that regardless of the historical hurdles, the lack of access to finance and established markets, the lack of adequate infrastructure, the lack of viable business opportunities; that if we are determined to succeed we will indeed do so. You have shown that despite difficult and trying circumstances, whilst some of you had lost your jobs on the mines, you were not prepared to give up the struggle to earn an honest and just living. You are indeed living up to the name of your project, Zamimpilo-to make a living. Today we salute your achievements and wish you well for an even better future.

I am confident that the partnership that has been developed between this community and government at the local, provincial and national level will continue to grow to greater heights. When I first heard about the history of this community market I was most impressed by the highly motivated entrepreneurial spirit demonstrated by its pioneers. Out of virtually nothing, literally with your bare hands and the most meagre resources you have created opportunities for yourselves and many others. This is really the spirit that our country needs to build prosperity and peace for all our people. I want to urge other communities over the length and breadth of this province to follow your outstanding example. It also reminds me of the women in Ha Mudjadji in the Northern Province that started bottling chillies and making tomato sauce from their humble but poorly equipped kitchens. Today through the Community Based Public Works Programme(CBPWP) and our Rural Anti-Poverty Programme(RAPP) they have the infrastructure of a chilli factory and are vigorously marketing their product beyond their provincial boundaries.

I am told that the origins of this Zamimpilo Community Market project is that a group of women whose husbands had lost their jobs in the mines in former Transvaal now Gauteng decided to do something about their plight. They received assistance from the Department of Agriculture and formed associations and established vegetable gardens and hand-craft projects in order to support their families and send their children to school.

Realizing the potential market of the passing tourists, they built a wooden structure amongst themselves next to the road from where they would operate. From those humble beginnings I am told that the membership has experienced steady growth with the active Zamimpilo Market association membership now standing at 240.

The association has been so successful that they were not only able to look after themselves and their families but were experiencing unprecedented success in scooping up first prizes in both the local Agricultural shows and the main Hlabisa District Agricultural Show consisting of 4 Tribal Authorities.

I am encouraged by the fact that there are indeed other communities in this province that are showing similar initiative. Last month I was with His Majesty King Zwelithini to hand-over the Mahashini Nursery Project at Nongoma. There a group of women have started the first black-owned nursery cultivating seedlings. Their aim is attaining self-sufficiency, ensuring adequate food security and above all breaking free from the stranglehold of poverty. Their vision is realisable because they have committed their energies, time and resources to making it work.

This Zamimpilo Community Market located just off the N2 likewise has the potential to make in-roads into a much greater niche area. Not only is the N2 the lifeline of South African tourism because of the thousands of miles of scenic beauty it is also a major artery of trade and travel. We must therefore explore ways and means to ensure more effective marketing strategies and maintain the production of an excellent quality of products that is able to hold its own in the global and competitive overseas export market.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am proud to inform you that the Zamimpilo Community Market Project was one of 12

National Public Works Programme(NPWP)Pilot Projects that my Department had undertaken. As a key strategy of government the NPWP aimed, within a single programme, to create jobs, provide infrastructure, develop human resources and empower communities. I can say with confidence that this has been achieved through this project. The training that was imparted was quite comprehensive. It ranged from training in committee procedures to basic bookkeeping and project management. Fifteen members of the community were trained in basic building skills, five in carpentry, five in bricklaying and five in plastering. Most of them gained valuable practical experience and has given real meaning to our vision of education for empowerment. They have been able to go out with their newly acquired skills into the job market with improved prospects. In fact in some instances some of those trained in our projects have been able to increase the value of their skills as trained artisans and improve their earning potential.

What we see around us here at the Zamimpilo Market, is a great improvement on the poor and derelict structure that was previously utilised. I am told that there was no water or electricity on site; no telephones and no formal access to the site. The infrastructure was simply an informal wood and iron market stall and some old existing buildings that were used as storerooms by the stallholders.

I am therefore pleased that during the course of the project the following infrastructure was built or provided:

1. A 20 stall market building with toilets, a kitchen, storage rooms and office/meeting room space.
2. A 6m long steel storage container
3. A site office
4. A traditional Zulu kraal
5. Electricity supply
6. Water supply
7. Gravel parking area
8. Gravel access road (constructed by Roads Department)
9. Security fencing and gates
10. Security huts and toilets
11. Main gate, entrance and signboards
12. A sewage disposal system
13. Basic landscaping and stormwater control
14. Public Telephones (to be installed)

I am pleased that this project could provide employment for upto 40 people at peak production and that 25% of the total workers employed were women. In accordance with NPWP principles labour intensive methods were applied wherever practicable. I believe that the R1,5 million allocated for this project was well spent.

I am also pleased to inform you that some 1300 similar projects have been implemented and we are creating more than 250 000 job opportunities throughout South Africa. In total government has invested some R609 million through the Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) to develop infrastructure similar to what you see here at the Zamimpilo Community Market. These include rural access roads, irrigation schemes, water reticulation, poultry plants, community gardens, brickmaking projects, fencing, culverts and stormwater ducts, bridges and animal dips etc. Through these projects our government wants to send a clear message to rural communities all over South Africa. The mandate that you have entrusted us with of reconstructing and developing our beloved country is well on track. We have begun the enormous task of building up our country from the ravages of Apartheid's distorted development planning and put in place the infrastructure in hundreds of villages that will ensure the sustainable socio- economic development of those rural communities.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the level of engineering improved co-operative governance, I would also like to commend the local community, the Mpukunyoni Tribal Authority, the Uthungulu Regional Council and the Province for their excellent co-operation and understanding. Your co-operation symbolises the genuine partnership and commitment that is required in this province. In brief I can say that our common future depends largely on the degree to which we can place the development needs of each and every poor, starving and unemployed person above any party political agenda. For peace and prosperity to reign freely in our beloved province we must simply focus our energies on developing the latent potential vested in the people of this province.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Allow me briefly like to draw your attention to the scourge of AIDS which is tapping the life-blood of our communities and destroying our efforts to improve the quality of life of our people. Deputy President Thabo Mbeki when he launched the national AIDS Awareness Campaign on the 1st December

(International AIDS Awareness Day) last year called on our entire nation to be vigilant in rooting out this widespread disease through practicing safer sex and taking precautionary measures to protect ourselves against infection. We are particularly concerned about the increasing number of rural women, new born infants and youth that are becoming vulnerable victims of AIDS/HIV. We need to ensure that we develop the capacity within communities to deal with this reality that is confronting us. Rather than bolt the stable door, we must deal compassionately with victims of AIDS/HIV and provide the necessary moral and social support that will help us as one community and one family. I want to appeal to each and everyone to educate themselves about this catastrophe staring us in the face and posing a threat to our social fabric. Unless we adopt effective strategies it will destroy the most vulnerable sections of our community.

One such important constituency that especially needs our attention and must be accorded the necessary priority is youth. For this reason we have invested substantial resources through the CBPWP in developing sport and recreation facilities in remote rural communities. We must however go beyond merely providing the infrastructure to occupy our youth with sport and recreation. We need to develop and harness their potential in the very process of reconstructing and developing a future South Africa in which they will live. We need to engage their energies in processes that recognises the significant role that they have played historically in South Africa and the wealth of potential that they have to contribute to our national transformation project. I want to take this opportunity to pledge my personal commitment and that of my Department of Public Works to strengthening our partnership with the National Youth Commission. In particular we want to take the lead in piloting the implementation of National Youth Service Programme projects. I believe that this is essential in order to test the basic principles that will come into legislation later this year. Our own experience with pilot projects, such as the Zamimpilo Market that we are handing over today, is that it has sharpened and refined the focus of our initiatives leading to greater benefits and more sustainable impacts on targeted groups and beneficiaries. I am positive that by embarking on such pilot projects for youth we will derive similar benefits. I therefore want to assure the Chairperson of the National Youth Commission who is in our midst today of our continued support and commitment of taking this process forward.

Finally, I once again wish to thank the community of Hlabisa, the Mpukunyoni Tribal Authority under chief MM Mkhwanazi, the Uthungulu Regional Council, the Provincial Government of Kwazulu Natal and all who continue to support the process of developing the potential of our rural communities. I particularly want to assure those communities most severely affected by poverty that together we will continue to fight poverty and deprivation wherever it occurs. I want to assure you of my continued support and co-operation in building a better life for all our people. I have no doubt that the foundations that we have laid in projects such as Zamimpilo Market will form the bedrock of prosperity, social stability and peace in this province.

I call on all in this province to intensify our efforts in building peace and prosperity and to avoid all efforts seeking to undo the good work done over the last five years. The future of this province, its vulnerable children and aged deserve a chance at continued peace, security and stability. Our government remains committed to making development and peace work in this province and throughout South Africa. In this endeavour I am positive that we can continue to count on your support.

I have pleasure in sharing with you the good news that government has committed itself to provide further funding for the Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) for the remaining years of the current Medium Term Expenditure Framework cycle. I will therefore be returning to Kwazulu Natal in the near future to inform you of our additional allocations for projects in this province. We remain committed to finding long-term and sustainable solutions to the challenges facing us. The building has begun, let us continue working for a better future for all.

I thank you !

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