

**Minister of Public Works
Ms Stella Sigcau
22 July 2000**

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Official Hand Over of the Amandawe/Dududu Cluster Community Based Public Works Projects

Master of Ceremonies, Mr Khayo E Mpungose (Director of Administration, Ugu Regional Council)
Chairperson of the Ugu Regional Council, Councillor Mntomuhle B Khawula
MEC for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Narend Singh (who is representing the Premier)
Inkosi PR Bele and Inkosi MJ Mqadi
Amakhosi, Councillors, local leaders, officials, community members, media representatives, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen ...

I am happy to be with you here in the area of the Ugu Regional Council.

The relationship between Public Works and the Ugu Regional Council is a long one, particularly working together on the Community Based Public Works Programme. Since 1997 the communities here have been actively participating in the creation of local infrastructure, be it facilities for education, increased mobility or access, market, gardening or tourism facilities or amenities for community activities. I wish to acknowledge the positive role that Mr Mntomuhle B Khawula, as Chairperson of the Ugu Regional Council, has played in the delivery stemming from this partnership.

Politically we have once again affirmed our commitment to addressing the plight of the poorest of the poor amongst our communities – to enable our rural people to fulfil their full potential as valuable citizens of our country.

I am sure that you agree with me that our rural areas need developmental opportunities that can encourage young and able-bodied entrepreneurs to expend their energy in these areas to sustainably contribute to socio-economic progress and growth.

Commitment to working together for a better life for all, does not stop at government. It requires all of us, each and every community member, to dream, to plan, to make real, to work and to harvest together in an effort of improving our daily livelihood. Every step that we take in realising an aspiration, even if it is something that we hope will benefit our children, is a step in the right direction for our entire country.

When I talk of working together, I am not talking something foreign to our communities. In rural areas, starting with the extended families, we are used to working in teams voluntary. We call it 'ilima' – for example when groups of people successively work each others fields, making the task a shared one and building a spirit of belonging. This 'ilima' spirit is easily achieved because of its obvious benefits to all participating members, and brings joy and pride to the work.

Public Works is proud of the steps taken in respect of the projects done in the Amandawe/Dududu, Jolivet/Hlokhosi, Phungashe, Oshabeni and Inyavini clusters. The constructive partnership that has arisen between the different spheres of government and the local community in the concrete delivery of some more than 80 projects in this area, is reason to be proud of. In a very real sense we are witnessing devotion to creating a future "living community" – one where, as a community, we can take charge of our opportunities, our economic activity and service delivery, thereby shaping our destiny.

The South Coast area has in the past been affected by violence and many lives have sadly been lost in the process. I would like to encourage the people of this area to continue working hard in maintaining the peace and stability, as they have done since the mid-90s. I also wish to acknowledge the role played by the Amakhosi and other political leaders, together with their communities, in creating the peace and fellowship currently experienced here.

This area has been honoured by a visit from our former President, Mr Mandela, in October 1998 when the Rural Anti-Poverty Programme was officially launched from here. Also our current President, Mr Mbeki, has paid a visit in his then capacity as Deputy President. By handing over the market stalls, the sportsfield, the upgraded community garden, taxi rank and the new tourist chalets at Dududu today, we are continuing in the tradition of building up, fostering community life and creating potential for growth in this area.

During the construction phase, 212 people have been employed on these projects. Women accounted for 65% of participants, the majority of them heading households. Thirty three per cent of the people employed were youth. The money earned, I am sure, has already made great difference to their lives and that of their dependants. And now, with the completion of these facilities, more job opportunities are created in the operation and services to be rendered from these premises.

It is appreciated that an environment conducive to investment and tourism development should be created to stimulate economic growth and social empowerment. We cannot expect tourists to visit an area where they might feel that their safety is at risk, more so if we want investors to put business interests in place.

Tourism in the area should be boosted by the operation of the tourist chalets and view points, particularly with the spectacular scenery and natural sense of tranquillity. Also the market stalls allow our local people to enhance their creativity and productive capacity more fruitfully and to bring the wonderful examples of their craft work to the attention of tourists and visitors.

Since 1997, the Community Based Public Works Programme has invested more than R40 million on projects in the Ugu Regional Council area of jurisdiction. The projects have spanned the categories of social cohesion, directly productive and improved access, including facilities for sport, education, trade promotion, community activities, access routes and agricultural production.

By expanding on this clustered infrastructure development, your communities should benefit optimally in opening up future development potential around areas of collective use and activity, made more accessible by transport, to eventually become economic nodes in itself. This is where the continued participation and dedication of all members of this community to care for their environment and build lasting and sustainable working entities from these premises, are of the utmost importance.

In our new democratic South Africa, we all need a new focus on a redefined future for our children and ourselves.

I trust that the people from the Ugu communities will rise to this envisaged future in a new spirit of peace and collective prosperity.

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