

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE YOUTH DAY COMMEMORATION

ON SUNDAY, 16 JUNE 2013

AT THE PHELANDABA SPORTS GROUND, EMADADENI, NEWCASTLE

WORKING TOGETHER FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND A DRUG FREE SOUTH AFRICA

On the morning of 16 June 1976 following months of frustration thousands of African school children in Soweto walked to Orlando Stadium to protest against what the then regime took as a matter-of-fact issue, teaching almost all subjects in Afrikaans. Those young people felt that enough was enough, that much, and nothing further.

My party the United Christian Democratic Party, has adopted the slogan: "Stand up, Speak out and take risks, if necessary." The students stood up against authority, spoke out against the injustice of being forced to learn in another foreign and language and in the process risked their lives, further education and some even had to skip the borders; all these in their quest to set the record straight.

It is very interesting that that wave and subsequent ones were mounted by these people while as sober as judges. They had not taken any intoxicants let alone drugs. All they wore were their school uniforms and the resolve not to be fed something they did not like, Afrikaans in this case.

It is unfortunate that nowadays young people's lives are marred by drugs and substance abuse. It is unfortunate that these days most young people are addicted to various substances and find it difficult to exercise restraint even from indulging in unprotected sex.

The youths on whose account we are gathered here today walked around in solidarity, boys and girls moving as brothers and sisters. The girls never feared that any of the young men in the march could

turn against them and rape them. It is unfortunate that nowadays incidents of sibling brothers raping sibling sisters are common.

Such conduct will stunt whatever development we are dreaming of. This has to be avoided. We have to fight our common enemies, unemployment, lack of sporting facilities in most areas, prejudice, disparities in living conditions and standards even in the present day.

Fortunate young men should desist from offering jobs for sex to unsuspecting young women. Young women should resist turning themselves into mattresses for unscrupulous people. Young women should have pride in who they are.

Disrespect for adults is a common occurrence these days. I need to advise the young men and women here today and all over the world. You never know with whom and where you will end up in life. As a young man you may end up getting married in the family you once despised. The same goes for the young women: you may end up being *umakoti* of the mother or woman you once told to get off. It may not end there, being in party X, be it the majority party or whichever, does not give you license to insult, abuse and cheat those in another party **because *inde lendlela siyihambayo empilweni. Siza kudibana phambili ngenye imini.***

The way ahead in this country needs people who will take up its development to a higher level. This country will need skilled people *ad infinitum*. If young people of today do not live up to expectations the future will not be guaranteed. As young people you have the world at your feet. Stand firm and walk tall.

Stand up and speak out against any injustice, at school in the social club, at the work place for those who are fortunate to be holding jobs and take risks for as long as you know you are right because you

will be vindicated in the not distant future. Here it is the likes of Nelson Mandela stood up against oppression, they spoke out against racism, they took the risk of being incarcerated and even being executed but here we are, we are standing on their shoulders as a free nation.

We wish to call on all young men to desist from raping unsuspecting women and people old enough to be their grandmothers or great grandmothers *nogal*. It is as immoral as it is unacceptable in society.

Everyone is the architect of his fortune. Let us explore all available resources to create a fortune for ourselves. We should move from being consumers to being producers. We should move from being perpetual employees and become employers. We should move from being job seekers to being creators of jobs.

All these are possible taking into account the refashioned National Youth Development Agency, the opportunities offered by the DTI and the courses offered at the Further Education Colleges which are tailored to have products ready to face the world.

The constant refrain by President Zuma in emphasising the importance of education has to be commended. Take care and not allow the opportunity to go past unexploited.

Stand up and “follow knowledge like a sinking star beyond the utmost bounds of human thought”, you will rejoice for better days to come.

I thank you