

OPENING SPEECH AT THE UCDP FEDERAL CONGRESS

SATURDAY, 29 JANUARY 2011

MMABATHO CONVENTION CENTRE

P H K DITSHETELO

ACTING LEADER

It is a great time of the year when calves are frolicking with joy, young ones are running around having just started school, some have just matriculated and head for tertiary institutions while others are looking forward to their graduation days later in the year.

It however gives me pleasure that as a party we have been clinching victories in the high court in our efforts to save the soul of the party and make it belong to the people, the members of the UCDP.

Yesterday evening we won another such victory against Kgosi L M Mangope who is intent on making the party his personal property. We have to stand up and speak out to save the soul of this magnificent party. Congratulations on the brace of victories.

We saw justice and truth prevail when the judge of the Mmabatho High Court stopped Kgosi Mangope on his tracks in his ill-advised efforts to stop this congress.

We have spent a great part of the last six months in courts and council meetings instead of ministering to the needs of the members of the party and the greater electorate.

It is something that we saw happen to the forerunner of this party some 39 years ago when Kgosi Mangope was hauled before the Supreme Court then in Kimberley because of dissent in the party. A similar situation has been plying itself out in recent times but we are grateful that we have been vindicated. After all the truth shall

prevail; we thank the Lord for having cleared the minds of those who presided over the case.

We must be warned that this is but one victory; the appeal is lying ahead but even then we have to work hard and make sure we vanquish all on our way, the Lord being our helper.

I have to sound a word of warning to some employees and councilors of the party. These people make it their business to sabotage the party at every turn by holding clandestine meetings that seek to destabilize the UCDP. They are bent on satisfying the interests of some individual and sacrifice the UCDP on the altar of self interest. No one is ever bigger than the organization, in this case the United Christian Democratic Party. Respect the organization and it will respect you and care for you and your family.

We are holding this congress under circumstances that will leave some of our compatriots with envy taking into account that other political parties are at each others throats. We pray much that brains and not brawn should hold sway.

It is 10 years when last the party held elections. We should therefore get into these elections with a great sense of responsibility and elect people who will take the party to a higher level. It is not the wealth of individuals that should determine who our leaders should be.

While some conduct their elections under trees we are privileged that we do that in an air conditioned structure which by the way is the product of this very party in its earlier life.

Your elections should be as peaceful as they are meant to be moreso that an independent body has been requested to run them to dispel any doubts of foul play. We hope this will also serve as a dry run for

the local government elections later in the year especially when it comes to the number of ballot papers to be used.

The little resources we have be they financial, human or physical should be used very sparingly and wisely to promote the party.

Our young people and women should also follow suit and see how they transform their organizations.

As you receive the reports on the labours of the executive on behalf of the party study them and consider them with the knowledge that they are meant to cover 10 years and there are bound to be slips if one has to report after such a long period of time.

Resolutions that will be adopted in this congress should be progressive and contribute to the well-being of the Party.

Good luck to all the candidates and may those who will serve the party well win!

I declare the Federal Congress of 2011 open.

I thank you