

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE LEBONANG MONICA SETOU

AT PITSE-DI-SULE-JANG, MADIKWE

SATURDAY, 06 APRIL 2013

Sipho Mfundisi

(President: UCDP)

Lebonang succumbed to injuries sustained in a road accident on Monday 25 March 2013. This took place on a road between Boshhoek and Silverkrans, Moses Kotane Municipality in the North West Province.

This is one of the roads that were supposed to have been ready in by 2010 to be used during the World Cup period. It is worse than what it was before 1994 yet we are made to believe that the new dispensation has brought about better infrastructure.

Whenever someone has died there is a worn out cliché used that it is the will of God. In this case we as family and members of the party and I believe many South Africans will concede that this death and others on that day in that road were occasioned by ineptitude on the part of those in power. There question of predestination in this case is unacceptable. This death and others could have been avoided if the government knew and accepted that roads are the responsibility of those in charge regardless of whether a tendepreneur failed to deliver.

Mrs Setou was one of the pillars of strength in the United Christian Democratic Party. She served the party unreservedly, she loved the party, she did not serve to impress anybody; she was out spoken and never hid her views when she differed with others.

Lebonang lived up to our new approach to of business unusual. She had come to accept that a political party, rally or meeting should not be mistaken for a lecture conducted by Aristotle, where people could not question what was being said. She had come to accept that politics is a place where ideas are exchanged. Politics is an arena where people stand up to speak out and even take risks. All these Lebonang lived up to.

I am one of those who will miss this phenomenal woman. On one occasion she said to me: "As much as you wish to speak out to the nation and even the international community by using English, do not forget that we still have many simple people who depend solely on the use of the African languages". Since then I know when to change gear depending in which part of the country I am addressing.

It is common knowledge that the Madikwe Region, the area where she lived, with only 8 out of the 22 villages in the Moses Kotane Municipality, always had the highest number of votes whenever we had municipal elections. This shows that she was a hard worker as the chairperson of the women's league in the area.

Mrs Setou has been with the party before. She remained in the party even post 1994 when those who ascended to government mocked the UCDP because of our Christian principles.

She was not deterred even when her husband was harried out of office as Assistant Governor then; she remained loyal to her party.

She went out to recall and recruit more people for the party in preparation for 1999 when the party contested elections nationally and in all provinces. She was not the one to quit, even under difficult circumstances.

Mrs Setou endured frustrations in the party. Her Son-in-law had the door closed on his face after organising and recruiting people for the party in the 2006 Local Government elections. And as if that was not enough her late daughter was expelled from the party untried. She was saved by the High Court when she and others approached the court to come to their stead in the arbitrary action.

Even with all these, Mrs Setou endure and slaved on as she was in the UCDP because of the party's principles and beliefs. A lesser person would have quit under the circumstances.

While Mrs Setou has departed, we who are left behind must gird our loins and work hard not to let the organisation she strived for to perish. It is the responsibility of all people in the UCDP to strive to make this country a God fearing one. WE have to take a leaf from the books of countries such Uganda and Burundi that have since awakened to the need of enhanced sense of patriotism and responsibility to their nations and Africa through among others building nations that have lasting values and thereby leave a legacy worth of emulation by the future generation. This is one ideal Ma-Setou strove for.

As the UCDP we should not be shy to ensure that leaders in churches take active part in politics. The sterile argument that they need not carries no weight. The Archbishop Tutu has spoken truth to power from his pulpit and continues to be recognised world-wide. Mrs Setou would have loved to depart from this world leaving it transformed.

To all women remaining behind, in order to emulate Ma-Setou read Proverbs 31: 10 – 31.

Much as it is day light, I say to Lebonang Monica Setou: "Good night" because with all the sorrow in this evening of death, there will be joy in the morning.

Rre Setou, children and all family, the religious and political members of the family, take heart, this is the way of all flesh.

You will be fortified by Him who keeps us from falling.

I thank you