



**MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE MINISTER IN THE
PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES,
MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE
ON OCCASION OF
NATIONAL YOUTH DAY CELEBRATIONS**

HARRY GWALA STADIUM, PIETERMARITZBURG, KZN

DATE: 16 JUNE 2021

TIME: 11H00

TIME ALLOCATION: 10 MIN

Programme Director,
His Excellency, the President of Republic of South Africa, Mr
Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa
Premier of KZN, Mr Sihle Zikalala
Minister of Sport, Arts & Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa
Deputy Minister in the DWYPD, Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize
Deputy Minister of DSAC, Ms Nocawe Mafu
Mayor of uMsunduzi Local Municipality
MEC for Sport, Arts Culture, & Recreation, Ms Hlengiwe
Mavimbela
MECs present
Chief Executive Officer of the NYDA, Mr Waseem Carrim;
Youth of South Africa;
Members of the Media
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Greetings!!

I stand before you today, to deliver the message of support as we commemorate Youth Day 2021.

This year, our commemoration marks 45 years since the 1976 Students' uprisings. We remain indebted to the majority of those youth, whose lives were not in vain, because today we enjoy the

fruits of the liberation, attained through the struggle they pursued and sacrifices they made.

This year, we are also celebrating the contribution made by the Heroine of our struggle, Mme **Charlotte Mannya Maxeke** – one hundred and fifty years ago. It is within this context that, the theme for this year's Youth Month is: ***“The Year of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke: Growing youth employment for an inclusive and transformed society.”***

Indeed, mme Charlotte Mannya Maxeke stands out as one of the leaders of the liberation struggle who fought for women empowerment in the areas of education, religion, politics, community development and upliftment.

We, therefore, want to use Youth Month, to not only celebrate this struggle stalwart, but to also re-ignite the spirit of women who achieved and succeeded against all odds. At that time, those women were young. Today, as we continue to encounter the global pandemic, Covid-19, which continues to impact on our lives negatively, we draw our inspiration from their demonstrated resilience and courage. Mme Charlotte Mannya Maxeke certainly believed the saying by one of South Africa's proverb that, *“Even an ant can hurt an elephant.”*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme for this year's youth month, acknowledges that our struggle is far from being over. This is confirmed by Statistics South Africa's revelation of the first Quarter of 2021 Labour Force Survey that:

- Unemployment rate has reached all-time high of 32.6% since 2008;
- According to the expanded definition of unemployment, unemployment rate has increased to 43.2% in Quarter 1 of 2021, compared to Quarter 4 of 2020; and Among youth aged 15 to 34, unemployment rate is at 46.3%
- Among university graduates, the rate is at 9.3%; and
- More worrying is that, the number of discouraged work-seekers has increased by more than 6.9%, which is equal to two hundred and one thousand people.

In addition to their gloomy economic situation, many of our youth find themselves in a widening inequality gap. They also face a double-edged sword of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide.

Furthermore, the state of their mental health is severely and negatively impacted as many find themselves suffering anxiety depression or even consider committing suicide. LGBTQIA individuals are also experiencing discrimination, whilst persons

with disabilities remain excluded without access to opportunities and resources.

As a caring government, we continue to work with our youth and all sectors of society in moving South Africa forward. We are the first to acknowledge that government has done a lot and there is still more to be done in order to improve the quality of young people's lives.

We acknowledge that formal sector employment increased by seventy nine thousand, even though other sectors experienced declines. Even though the formal sector is a critical engine for productivity and growth, it cannot provide all the answers to the growing numbers of the unemployed. Therefore, it is imperative to keep the formal sector afloat and inject innovative ideas that would support and sustain the informal sector. We, therefore, continue to support informal sector – SMMEs and Entrepreneurs, so that they can generate more employment.

In March of this year, we launched the approved National Youth Policy 2030. The National Youth Development Agency is finalising an Integrated Youth Development Strategy, whereas the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is finalising the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to track implementation of our National Youth Policy.

In line with the youth policy theme of “**accelerating positive youth development outcomes,**” we are already building a cohesive and progressive nation through the sweat, hard work, and innovative solutions of our youth.

We encourage young women and young men, to look up and emulate the values of the struggle stalwarts such as Mme Charlotte Mannya Maxeke. Mme Charlotte Mannya Maxeke paved the way for all of us to become leaders. William Shakespeare said “**Nothing comes from doing nothing.**” More young women and men, must take up spaces, to show up, and to break the stereotypes assigned to them by our society.

In response to all these, our efforts seek to:

- intensify education and skill development in areas that are in demand;
- invest in accelerated inclusive growth;
- increase ownership and participation of historically disadvantaged individuals in the economy;
- reindustrialise the economy; and
- improve competitiveness through pursuit of the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my support to youth is to hear them express their aspirations, creativity, and interests.

You can Young people have enormous potential and capacity to transform a crisis into possibilities. All they need is to, rise up to the challenge and change the world for the better.

I Thank You!!