

# **Keynote Address by MEC Madoda Sambatha during the World TB Day Commemoration Event held at Maquassi-Hills in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District**

**24 March 2022**

Programme Director,  
Executive Major of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality,  
The Major Maquassi Hills Local Municipality,  
Executive and Programmes Managers of the Provincial Government,  
Delegation of the South African AIDS Councils,  
Members of the District and Local AIDS Councils,  
Our TB Survivors,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet here today in Maquassi-Hills for is a very important day in the health calendar which is World Tuberculosis (TB) Commemoration. Each year, we commemorate World Tuberculosis (TB) Day on March 24 to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of TB, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic.

People of Maquassi Hills, we are here to talk to you. We are here to ask you to join us in the fight to end TB. TB is fought globally but it is only through local awareness campaigns when individual community members join hands with each of us that we will win this battle.

it is true that TB remains one of the world's deadliest infectious killers. Each day, nearly 4000 lose their lives to TB and close to 28,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease. Global efforts to combat TB have saved an estimated 63 million lives since the year 2000.

Furthermore, 2018 estimates suggest that over 300 000 South African developed TB in that year. Whilst these may appear to be just numbers, putting these into context places us amongst the top 5 countries with high TB global deaths, amongst countries such as India and Nigeria. The reality is that patients that are not treated are more vulnerable to other infections including coronavirus disease.

We are fighting a huge task against COVID-19 but our resolve to fight the TB pandemic has not diminished and we are calling all of your to join us in this fight. With the theme, "Invest To End TB. Save Lives", we join the national effort of rallying all stakeholders and the broader civil society to have meaningful contribution in the fight against TB. The theme is an earnest call to all South Africans to rally behind national efforts to end TB.

Today we are calling you the people of Maquassi Hills. We believe that that there is an urgent need to find, initiate and retain TB clients on treatment, as well as to regain those who have been lost-to-follow-up hence the call to have a mutual accountability between leaders and ordinary South Africans.

So if you know anyone who was on TB treatment but failed to complete it alert them of the need to go back on treatment. Help us find TB and

stop it on its tracks because TB is curable if you take your treatment as directed by the doctors and complete it. We are to have a mutual accountability between ourselves as leaders and ordinary South Africans.

I am worried that the number of TB patients treated successfully is less than those initiated on treatment due to this challenge of high loss to follow up (defaulters) and deaths. TB patients who become loss follow up (not retained in care) increase the number of missing TB cases, TB mortality and impose the risk of developing drug resistant TB (while treating drug resistant TB is more expensive and drugs have more or severe side effects) and infecting other community members.

Two districts with a challenge of high TB loss to follow up are Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati and Dr Kenneth Kaunda. Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District has also a challenge of low TB case finding related to the least to TB screening.

We need to remain on track in implementing targeted programmes towards meeting the TB targets as outlined in the National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs for the period 2017-2022.

South Africa is one of the 14 countries worldwide that have a high burden of both MDR TB and Drug Sensitive TB. Nine (9) of these countries are in Africa while 5 are in Asia. In South Africa, Bojanala and Dr Kenneth Kaunda are among those 11 high burden Districts. Men have the highest TB rate infections than women especially men in the age group 35-44 years (27%).

North West Province has a total population of 4,027,160. Bojanala District has a total population of (1,7 million), followed by Ngaka Modiri Molema District (889 108) and Dr Kenneth Kaunda (742 821). Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District has a smallest population of 459 358.

Bojanala District and Dr Kenneth Kaunda District contain the mining towns of Rustenburg and Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stillfontein and Hartebees, respectively, resulting in the unique socio-economic challenges of informal settlements in and around them. These areas also see the emergence of HIV, STI and TB.

The Province has collaborated with stakeholders like traditional healers, traditional leaders, faith based organisation and community organisations to tackle HIV/AIDS and TB.

Our TB Treatment success rate are affected by mainly loss to follow up as patients move from one area without reporting. It is for this reason that we have embarked on the 90-90-90 strategy which target to have:

- 90% of all people are screened for TB
- 90% of those diagnosed with TB are treated for treatment and retained on treatment and
- 90% of those on treatment are successfully treated

There is a need to intensify community awareness and health education on TB and importance to seek assistance early and those who have being confirmed to have active TB disease to be initiated on treatment as soon

as possible and to remain in care until completion of their TB treatment. Strengthening utilization of WBOT's for tracing, supporting and conduct home visits.

It is therefore important that you the people of Maquassie Hills partake in the multi-sectoral collaboration to ensure holistic or comprehensive approach of care and support. TB is curable. Let us therefore make extra effort to find it, treat it and cure it.

**I thank you!**