

TALKING NOTES FOR THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF WATER AT THE LHWP ROADSHOW ON PHASE II OF THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATERS PROJECT

AVANI LESOTHO

THE 29th MAY 2017

- **HIS MAJESTY KING LETSIE THE III**
- **THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER, DR. PAKALITHA MOSISILI**
- **THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**
- **HONOURABLE MINISTERS**
- **THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, THE MINISTRY OF WATER**
- **MEMBERS OF THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER COMMISSION (LHWC) FROM BOTH LESOTHO AND THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**
- **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF LHDA**
- **SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA**
- **LHDA MANAGEMENT**
- **CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS IN RELATED SERVICES**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

Programme Director,

I am very much pleased this morning to officially open this important forum as we embark on an exciting journey in the implementation of Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

In doing so, it is befitting to go down the memory lane and recall that slightly more than thirty years ago, the two nations of Lesotho and South Africa, through their respective governments did, here in Maseru in October 1986, sign the LHWP Treaty on Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP).

The Treaty, in its preamble indicates that the two countries recognize that co-operation between Lesotho and South Africa with regard to the development of mutual water resources can significantly contribute towards the peace and prosperity of the Southern African region and the welfare of its peoples;

The two governments further express their desire to enhance the conditions of life of the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the people of the Republic of South Africa by raising the level of development of the water resources; This is why we are here to today. We are here to talk about preparations for developing the water resources and in the process create jobs for companies, jobs for the people and water for industries and electricity for Lesotho.

It is opportune to remind the audience that the 1986 Treaty committed to cover only Phase I of the Project, namely, the construction of the Katse Dam, the Mohale Dam and the Muela Hydropower power stations and implementation of related social and environmental programmes.

Article 5(1) of the Treaty makes a provision that the phases subsequent to Phase I shall be subject to an agreement by the Parties. This explains why before the two countries could sign on the next Phase there had to be an Agreement hence forth known as the Phase II Agreement which was signed in October 2011.

To have that Agreement put into effect it had to be ratified by both Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa. The effective date was 22 May 2013 when both countries had communicated through their diplomatic channel that their respective constitutional requirements necessary for entry into force of the Agreement had been fulfilled.

The ratification of the 2011 Phase II Agreement therefore was a key milestone event paving way for the implementation of Phase II of the Project. Most of you will recall that His Majesty the King and His Excellency President Jacob Zuma officiated at the launching ceremony that was held in Polihali, Mokhotlong in March 2014.

Of critical importance to us representing the two governments are the provisions in both the 1986 Treaty and the Phase II Agreement that foster equal opportunities for Lesotho and RSA nationals in the implementation of Phase II of the LHWP. The Government of Lesotho is committed to ensuring this noble ideal becomes a reality. This is a commitment we undertake to see through. The officials will, of course, brief you on other equally important provisions and issues that you have to bear in mind as you later submit your tender documents to the LHDA.

I am very pleased that today the LHDA is at a point where it will soon be issuing tenders for construction of some of the facilities and infrastructure works. The people have been waiting and I must say for far too long!! Therefore, all I can say is “full speed ahead” but also bearing in mind the outmost need to exercise due diligence and to follow the approved Procurement Policy and other relevant guidelines.

It is the fervent hope and wish of the government that as in the previous Phase, this second Phase will see an expansion of the window of opportunity that was created by Phase I of the Project. We are visualising a window

where we will see joint ventures forming in both countries, a window where we will witness real growth in capacity of our contractors and professional service providers and of course jobs for our people. If we achieve this, then our governments would have a good report back to the electorate.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I want to end by reiterating that the Government of Lesotho is committed to ensuring there are equal opportunities for Lesotho and RSA Nationals in the implementation of Phase II of the LHWP. I therefore, urge the local business community and the investors to grab this opportunity provided by the LHWP.

It is my express wish and that of the government of the Kingdom of Lesotho that you will all leave this session with a very good idea of how the road lies ahead and therefore what the expectations are in terms of response to the tenders that LHDA will shortly be issuing.

With these few remarks, I would like to thank you all for your attention and declare this road show officially open.

KHOTSO

PULA

NALA