

## SUMMIT HAILED A SUCCESS



President Thabo Mbeki seen here with PSC Chair, Prof Stan Sangweni and Deputy Chair, Mr John Ernstzen, at the National Anti-Corruption Summit

**“C**ongratulations on a job well done!”

These words, uttered by PSC Chairperson Professor Stan Sangweni, echoed throughout the OPSC after the successful hosting of the second National Anti Corruption Summit by the National Anti Corruption Forum (NACF) on 22 and 23 March 2005 at the CSIR in Tshwane.

The keynote address of the high profile Conference was delivered by President Thabo Mbeki who lauded government's many successes in dealing with corruption. He told delegates that government has a responsibility to protect the poor and the weak from the corrupt practices of those in powerful positions.

The theme of the Summit, which was attended by Cabinet Ministers, Parliamentary Committee Members, dignitaries from government, civil society and the private sector, was: “Fighting Corruption – Past Achievement, Future Challenges.”

The Summit sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To assess strategies and past achievements in fighting corruption;
- To examine future challenges for both combating and preventing corruption; and
- To unite sectors in a common programme of action.

Some of the messages that came out of this Summit were that:

- All sectors in South Africa are forging partnerships to fighting all forms of corruption;
- National Anti-Corruption Summit is not a talk shop;
- Corruption prevention and combating is everyone's responsibility; and
- Corruption undermines human rights and development.

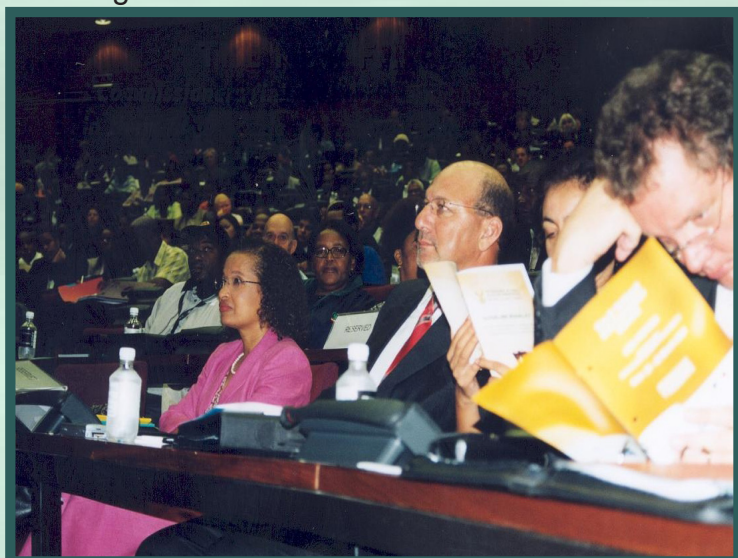
At the end of the Summit, various resolutions were reached and the delegates committed themselves to implement them. The resolutions covered issues such as:

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- Ethics, Awareness and Prevention;
- Combating;
- Oversight, Transparency and Accountability; and
- How to make the National Anti-Corruption Forum (NACF) a stronger, more focused and effective organization.



Minister for Public Service and Administration, Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel were amongst the many high profile delegates who attended the Summit

Amongst the key resolutions emanating from the Summit are the translation of relevant resolutions of the Summit into NACF's programme of action, and implementation thereof, as well as the regulation of post public sector employment.

The delegates also made the following commitments:

We the delegates drawn from various sectors in South African society do acknowledge that corruption is an obstacle to development and that all sectors represented here should unite in preventing and combating corruption.

We recognise that during the years of struggle against apartheid, South Africa was a fragmented country and the majority of its people were subjected to a politically, socially, economically, and morally corrupt regime. In 1994 the Government that was elected democratically by the majority of people embarked upon a programme to reconstruct and develop South Africa to the benefit of all its people. The programme of growth, reconstruction and development was fraught with obstacles and legacies created by the apartheid regime such as the prevalence of corruption and poor service delivery.

We heed the President's call to unite in the fight against corruption and recommit ourselves to this cause. We commend the positive progress that has been made in implementing the resolutions made in the first anti-corruption summit. However, we recognise that there are still a number of outstanding challenges, which we need to tackle together.

In the fight against corruption we commit ourselves to ensure that the South African legal framework fully complies with international conventions of the UN, AU, and SADC in respect of corruption.



Mr Roderick Davids, Project Manager for the Summit

We recommit our support to the NACF as an appropriate multi-sectoral structure to drive a joint national anti-corruption strategy.

Speaking to the OPSC's Mr Roderick Davids, who was the Project Manager for the Summit and Secretary of the NACF, he said "the success of the Summit could not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of OPSC staff; the support of the Commission; and the co-operation received from the Government; Business and Civil Society sectors".

Izwi wishes to congratulate Roderick and the team for a sterling job that was done under trying circumstances.

A detailed list of the resolutions is available under 'What's New' on the intranet.

\*See also pg 7



Some of the OPSC Staff who assisted during the National Anti-Corruption Summit



# OPSC's A-TEAM READY FOR ACTION



By Nelly Lukhero and Ben De Villiers

Imagine working tirelessly in your office around 10am on Monday and suddenly you hear people screaming “FIRE! FIRE!”. The whole building is on fire and everyone is running for cover. There is panic everywhere; you see people running up and down, others wanting to jump out of the windows to escape the wrath of the flames....others faint out of sheer fear...there are cries for help everywhere around you....what do YOU do?

Well, for starters, you listen to the instructions given to you by members of the newly formed OPSC Emergency Team, also known as ActionTeam or the A-Team. The team was formed after the establishment of the Security, Health and Safety Committee which looks into contingency plans for the Office.

Designated staff members and representatives from the National Intelligence Agency and the SAPS serve on this Committee. The Committee has already developed an Action Plan and emergency procedures for the following :

- Fire procedures;
- Evacuation;
- Bomb threat;
- Suspicious parcels;
- Armed attack/hostage; and
- Floods.

Some members of the Action Team have already

completed training in First Aid procedures, Fire Fighting and Emergency Awareness and Evacuation. The First Aid training was presented by the SRQ Academy of Emergency while the other two courses were done by the Tshwane City Council. All trainees will be awarded competency certificates after completion of the courses.

During the First Aid course, the participants practiced bandaging each other. A basic fire fighting course in April saw team members being taught how to use a fire extinguisher.

The trained staff members are expected to provide their newly acquired expertise in cases of medical emergency at Commission House. Those who attended the emergency courses agree that it was interesting and practical.

The following staff members are part of the OPSC's Action Team:

Martin Chale, Karen Grobler, Ernest Selolo, Ginny Mngomezulu, Claudia Halefose, Sibusiso Mngomezulu, Joyce Matloga, Connie Gunn, Marcus Mokgopa, Phaniel Ngomane, John Matobela, Julia Aphane, Mabel Morontse, Nelly Lukhero, Samkelo Buso, Wesley Lebotse, Bongani Mathonsi, Solomon Lefoka and Colbert Vele.

Officials will be kept informed about the details of the Contingency Plan and its implementation. There will also be emergency drills to make everyone aware of what to do during an emergency.



# INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME OPENS NEW DOORS

## DCIS first to let one go

By Manase Makwela

When the Office introduced an internship programme close to a year ago, it was greeted with excitement and in some quarters, with scepticism for fear of the unknown. While some officials may have seen it as a chance to get their own 'stuurboys and -girls' in the name of 'teaching you work', others saw it as an opportunity to contribute to the betterment of the lives of the youth.

With time and better management from components' managers, those who thought they would get stuurboys and -girls out of this supervised off-campus work experience, which earns academic credit(s) and employment opportunities, gradually got disappointed.

Once the teething problems that normally go with new programmes stabilized, the Intern-Office relationship proved not to be one sided. While Interns saw their participation in the programme improving their employment prospects, management also started realizing how much the programme was increasing capacity in the Office albeit for short periods. It is this short-term increase of capacity that makes the Internship Programme look so cruel at times. As one manager said, "you do your best to train the Interns; just when they are where you want, they start receiving calls for interviews and you know they are on their way out". Although this is exactly what we want to see happening, it is one reality that managers find difficult to come to terms with.

DCIS had to come to terms with this reality. Although Nonduduzo Mazibuko's call for an interview came as no surprise, losing her only five months into her contract was a sad experience. Fresh from tertiary institution, within a few months she and her fellow Intern in DCIS, had learnt the ropes and were ready to be counted – thanks to the timing of PSC News and PSC's co-hosting of the AfrEA Conference that exposed them to various aspects of communication. Nonduduzo was the first OPSC Intern to get a permanent appointment.

Following on Nonduduzo's footsteps, was Norman Hlungwani who was based in the Human Resource Management and Development Directorate. When Norman left, there was still four months on his

contract remaining and like a bird from the cage, he had to be let free.



Norman Hlungwani



Nonduduzo Mazibuko

The last to leave is Mandy Mapengu from Directorate: Information Technology Services. She still had two months to contribute to the OPSC and now she is gone.

All the three Interns that left the OPSC have been appointed within government.

Seeing these positive developments on the internship front, Izwi spoke to Mr Alfred Maluleke, Director: Human Resource Management and Development to find out what they(positive developments) mean to the Office and this is what he had to say: "This is proof that the Branch: Corporate Services and Regional Liaison is on the right track when it comes to people development. We are very excited about these achievements because they translate to the 'People's Contract' as championed by our Honourable President, Mr Thabo Mbeki. As these Interns leave the OPSC for permanent employment elsewhere in the public service, they bring bread on the tables for about three to five people per case. I would like to congratulate all my colleagues for the job well-done in mentoring the Interns. Please keep up the good work! Your deeds speak for themselves!"



Mandy Mapengu



# KHAZAMULA SAYS GOOD-BYE TO O/PSC

By Tiro Mahlakoleng

Thursday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2005 saw the Director of Labour Relations Disputes and Litigation, Mr Alfred Mahesu's departure from the Office of the Public Service Commission.

During his farewell speech, Mr Mahesu alluded to the fact that his departure was creating an opportunity for one person to be employed or be promoted. Izwi spoke to Mr Mahesu regarding his more than 30 years' experience in the public service:

IZWI : Since when have you been working in the Public Service?

Alfred: I started working in the public service on the first of February 1970.

IZWI : Where did you start, in what department and which position were you holding?

Alfred: I started working at the National Department of Health, as an Assistant Health Inspector. I was based in the former Eastern Transvaal (Now Mpumalanga).

IZWI : When did you start working at the OPSC?

Alfred : I started working here on the first of January 1996.

IZWI : Why are you leaving the OPSC?

Alfred : To explore new avenues.

IZWI : Do you have any special experiences you would like to share with us?

Alfred : I was leading the team that was involved in the amalgamation of the Departments of Health of former Lebowa, Venda, Gezankulu and Transvaal Provincial Administration. I was also involved in the process of change from Commission for Administration to Public Service Commission, and the concomitant paradigm shift in its duties and functions. I contributed towards the drafting of grievance rules for the public service. I also served on the Interim Management Team (IMT) in the Eastern Cape.

IZWI : As a seasoned public servant, what advice would you like to share with the up and coming public servants?

Alfred : They should plan and prioritize work. They should also be dedicated, loyal and self-disciplined. One must love and enjoy one's work and ask questions if not sure of something.



Mr Alfred Mahesu

IZWI : What's your last message to the OPSC employees?

Alfred : On my last day at the OPSC, my DDG, Ms Odette Ramsingh, informed us that the concept of "Red Tape" originated in the USA and referred to the red ribbons that are tied on submissions - typical of the PSC. My view is that it is time to do away with the ribbons to show that the PSC is not bogged down with red tape.

O/PSC also had to say farewell to other valued staff members who resigned and those who were promoted and transferred to other departments. Izwi wishes them good luck in their future endeavours! THEY ARE:

*1. Mr Norman Hlungwani*

*2. Ms Bernadette Greyling*

*3. Ms Patricia Mokgoatjane*

*4. Mr Alfred Mahesu*

*5. Ms Nonduduzo Mazibuko*

*6. Ms Nomonde Radu*

*7. Ms Mumsy Phoku*

*8. Ms Malebo Baloi*

*9. Ms Mandisa Mapengu*

**Internal Transfers:**

*1. Ms GL Kunene*

*2. Ms MM Shai*



# REGIONAL FOCUS

*A bird's eye view into the KZN Regional Office  
By Bongani Konjwayo, Regional Director:KZN*

In her liaison activities at the political level within the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province, Regional PSC Commissioner, Ms P Tengen, was invited to address the Provincial Legislature on the State of the Public Service Report earlier this year.

The Commissioner responded to all questions; pointing out that the PSC has various projects, some of which may shed some more light, once they were completed, into some of the concerns such as the issue of women representation in the Public Service.

Let's now look at some of the projects that the KZN Regional Office is engaged with:

A Management audit was conducted in Northdale hospital following an investigation of grievances that the Office had received from some officials. As a spin-off, the Department of Health has requested, through the Office, that PSC extends its management audit to include Manguzi and Stanger hospitals in the northern parts of KZN.

In addition to the foregoing, apart from its other functions, the Office has been involved in the high level review of service delivery readiness of certain provincial departments in collaboration with members from the DPSC. The project has mainly been driven from the OPSC DG's office.

The HoD evaluation project in the province has been affected by a number of HoD's that have left the service. As a result, for the year 2003/04 there will be less than five HoD's evaluated. One evaluation has already been successfully conducted and two others are in the pipeline.

While waiting for the publication of the M&E report for the KZN Treasury that was completed last year, the Office is poised to continue with the M & E programme with each senior official having been allocated a department for this purpose. This helps in creating the required capacity within the Office with regard to the use of the framework. Interviews will soon be conducted in the Department of Health as appointments are currently being planned.

With regard to Service Delivery and Quality Assurance the Office participated in the assessment of the Department of Education in the province with respect to their readiness to supply schools with learner-teacher support material (LTSM) towards the end of last year. The Office, in collaboration with a consultant, conducted interviews in various parts of the province with different stakeholders and a report was compiled. The MEC has subsequently taken proactive steps to close some of the precarious gaps that the report had highlighted.

Regarding service delivery improvement, provincial departments were assessed last year in respect of their service standards. Findings revealed that quite a large number of departments did not have service standards



even though they might have good work plans. For this reason, training is required around the setting of service standards in order to ensure that Batho Pele and its principles can be implemented successfully. Another report is in the pipeline in this regard.

The issue of voluntarism in the public service following the President's call to the nation to push back the frontiers of poverty, remains a challenge within the policy-making arena. In certain sectors of the society within the province, men and women, young and old have girded up their loins and put their hands onto the plough, headed for the field of work in the various sectors of the public service.

Unintended consequences of the call are beginning to emerge as these men and women that heeded the call expect that when vacancies arise within the public service in the areas in which they have worked as volunteers, they could at least be short-listed and get an opportunity to contest for the posts. For some reasons the expectations of the volunteers, whether justified or not, have not been accommodated. This area requires some form of regulation in terms of policy development. It remains a challenge.

In conclusion - the kingdom, through its beautiful mountainous angulations, serene greenery throughout the year is a mental and physical salve to work pressures and stress. It keeps the staff of the OPSC in the region going despite the busy schedule reported above.



# REGIONAL FOCUS

## Highlights of Regional Anti-Corruption Summits

By Mabel Morontse

### FIGHTING CORRUPTION REMAINS A TOP PRIORITY FOR ALL SECTORS

The provincial Anti-Corruption Summits were held in Limpopo and Northern Cape Provinces as part of a build up to the National Anti-Corruption Forum which took place from 22 to 23 March 2005 at the CSIR in Tshwane. The rationale behind Provincial Summits was to come up with proposals from provincial perspectives, which would form part of the overall input to the National Anti-Corruption Summit.

In the Northern Cape Province, the Summit took place at Legislature Building on 10 March 2005 whilst in Limpopo Province, it took place at Oasis Motel on 17 March 2005. Representatives from the civil society, private and public sector attended both summits.

The Northern Cape and Limpopo Provincial Summits were a resounding success and a number of resolutions were reached, most of which were taken into account and subsequently incorporated into the National Anti-Corruption Summit's Resolution 2005.

#### Northern Cape Provincial Summit

The Honorable Premier, Ms Dipuo Peters, delivered the opening address which was followed by an open floor discussion consisting of six people in a panel representing Civil Society, Business and Public Sector. Sector representatives described their involvement in the fight against Corruption. The Public Service Commission represented the Public Sector and addressed different aspects pertaining to corruption.

After the Summit, proposals were made and summarized by the NACF Secretariat and submitted to Premier Peters and the Provincial DG's office. Outlining the outcome of the Summit in the Northern Cape Province, Mr J Malan, Regional Director at OPSC in Northern Cape said the summit was a great success since inputs were received and strategies developed for future implementation.

#### LIMPOPO PREMIER LAUNCH THE PUBLIC SERVICE PLEDGE

The Honorable Premier of Limpopo, Mr Sello Moloto, launched the Public Service Pledge during the Limpopo Provincial Anti-Corruption Summit that was held on 17 March 2005.

During the launch, Senior Managers from the Provincial Departments signed the Pledge, led by the Provincial Director-General, Ms MB Monama. There was an agreement that the Pledge should be cascaded to all employees in the Province and that they (employees) are expected to abide by it and enforce its implementation.

#### Limpopo Provincial Summit

The Honorable Premier, Mr Sello Moloto, attended his Province's Anti-Corruption Summit. In his address, the Premier conceded that one of the major contributing factors to the incidences of graft and corruption in the Limpopo Province stems from increasing levels of consumerism (expensive lifestyle which people are unable to afford).

The summit reaffirmed the need for the restoration of public sector ethos, by amongst others,

- Forging partnership with all stakeholders to deal with fraud and corruption;
- Mobilizing sectors in our societies to deal with corruption; and
- Committing senior managers in government in dealing with corruption.

After intense deliberations, the following concerns were raised:

- Corruption needs to be understood clearly in terms of the new Combating and Prevention of Corrupt Activities Act.
- The link, if any, between the Protected Disclosures Act of 2000, and confidential disclosures via anonymous hotlines needs to be clarified.
- Some managers failed to vigorously deal with corruption in their institutions and this failure is always apportioned to lack of capacity.
- Some senior managers failed to declare their involvement in businesses in the financial disclosures form.
- Commitment to official duties was posed to those managers who are Directors of more than five companies whilst employed in the public service.



## O/PSC TO EXHIBIT AT THE 6<sup>TH</sup> GLOBAL FORUM ON REINVENTING GOVERNMENT IN KOREA

The O/PSC will be taking part at the international conference on innovation, officially known as, the 6<sup>th</sup> Global Forum on Reinventing Government: Towards Participatory and Transparent Governance, to be held in Seoul, Korea, from 24 to 27 May 2005.

The O/PSC's participation follows the invitation of the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) to this Global Forum by the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, Republic of Korea. The CPSI's invitation was then extended to all other institutions with direct links to the Ministry of Public Service and Administration.

The Forum will provide a platform for sharing experiences and practices of government reinvention promoted by various countries for raising national competitiveness and improving public services. It will also focus on plans to promote better international co-operation, such as giving civil servants from developing countries an opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and experiences.

The Forum sessions will cover the following:

- Government Innovation and Governance;
- Democratic Governance and Social Integration;
- Market Economy and Corporate Governance;
- Local Governance and Participatory Democracy; and
- Civil Society and Participatory Governance.

As a side event of the Global Forum, there will be the 2005 International Innovation Exhibition which is intended to showcase the world's benchmark initiatives towards enhancing public service and promoting e-government and corporate transparency.

Participating in the exhibition is intended to increase publicity for the PSC's innovative services and projects to top-level government and industry leaders from all over the world. It also aims to build an international reinvention network to encourage mutual co-operation and understanding of participating countries and organizations.

Following the first Global Forum that was initiated by the United States in 1999, four others have been held in Brazil; Italy; Morocco; and Mexico.

The O/PSC will be represented by one Commissioner and two officials from the Office.

## LIMPOPO LAUNCHES ANTI-CORRUPTION FORUM

By Mabel Morontse

As part of Limpopo's commitment to the fight against corruption, Premier Sello Moloto launched the Province's Anti-Corruption Forum at the Oasis Motel outside Polokwane on 17 April this year.

The Limpopo Anti-Corruption Forum which is aimed at mobilizing sectors within society to confront the threat posed by corruption and fraud comprises Civil Society, Business and the Public Sector. The following people constitute the Limpopo Anti-Corruption Forum:

- Business Sector - Mr. M Charlton, Mr. H Venter, Ms. KM Makgae, Mr. M Matlala and Mr J Ledwaba
- Public Sector - Ms MB Monama and Commissioner KE Mahoai
- Civil Society - Rev AM Maja, Ms D Motuku, Mr. MW Mashakoe, Mr. MF Masemola, Mr. SK Seima and Mr. CA Mpho.

The functions of the Limpopo Anti-Corruption Forum include the following:

- To facilitate co-ordination of sectoral strategies against corruption.
- To advise the government on provincial initiatives on the implementation of the strategies to combat corruption.
- To share information and the best practice on the sectoral anti-corruption work.
- To advise sectors on the improvement of sectoral anti-corruption strategies.
- To promote integrity amongst members of different sectors of the community in dealing with government, such as procurement of good services.



# Celebration Time!!!

*THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE WILL BE CELEBRATING THEIR BIRTHDAYS SOON*

IZWI WOULD LIKE TO WISH THEM A HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND MANY HAPPY RETURNS!

## MAY

### HEAD OFFICE:

04 Mr S Buso  
20 Ms JA Coetzer  
04 Ms K Grobler  
27 Ms PT Khumalo  
17 Ms AE Kruger  
11 Mr PS Lefoka  
22 Mr MD Madaka  
31 Ms KS Mahlangu  
29 Mr TB Mdletshe  
06 Ms OR Ramsingh  
18 Ms LK Tseke  
18 Ms GE Van Der Merwe

### REGIONAL OFFICES

29 Mr J Malan: Northern Cape  
22 Commissioner KL Matthews: Northern Cape

## JUNE

### HEAD OFFICE

24 Ms MM Poto  
23 Commissioner EG Bain  
04 Mr RF Davids  
03 Mr TJ Mokomatsidi  
05 Mr NJ Mudau  
12 Ms S Nodu  
16 Ms AM Pool  
26 Ms GL Kunene  
28 Ms SW Lebeso  
12 Ms ME Tshidzumba

### REGIONAL OFFICES

26 Mr AM Dandu: Gauteng  
11 Mr JD Kgoedi: Gauteng  
28 Mr FT Gabuza: Northern Cape  
25 Ms WA Hayes: KwaZulu-Natal  
27 Mr BFN Khonjwayo: KwaZulu-Natal  
19 Mr SR Monakedi: Limpopo  
03 Mr MS Nelwamondo: Limpopo  
04 Ms MG Mahapa: Limpopo  
18 Ms LNS Ntomane: Free State  
30 Ms MS Santho: Free State  
28 Mr CH Robinson: Mpumalanga

Izwi would like to say **CONGRATULATIONS** to the following Head-Office based officials who have been promoted.

Mr DJ Fabricius  
Assistant Director : Financial Accounting

Ms L Human  
Assistant Director : Conditions of Service and Employee Benefits

Mr TD Thubakgale  
Assistant Director : Human Resource Development

Mr DS Mngomezulu  
Assistant Director: Security Services

Ms CM Mokoena  
Assistant Director: Information Systems

Mr MJ Mathubela  
Assistant Director: Network Operations

Photos will be available under What's New on the Intranet





# Woman Power for CD: Labour Relations

By Mabel Morontse

Ms Mmathari Mashao joined OPSC on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March this year as Chief Director: Labour Relations Improvements. Before joining the OPSC, she worked at the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) from November 2000 and was the Head of the Legal Department for over four years. Part of her job description included research projects; complaints processing; legal intervention and overseeing gathering of information for submission into law making processes; as well as providing the Commissioners and relevant staff members with the necessary educational background on laws relating to the mandate of the CGE. In the last two years before leaving the CGE, she was also Acting Head of its Research department. She also served as a Senior Investigator at the Office of the Public Protector for almost two years.

She is trained as a lawyer and received her junior degree and LL.B from the then University of the North (UNIN). In 1990, she completed her LL.M at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. Mmathari has also been trained as a Mediator, Negotiator and Arbitrator by the Independent Mediation Services of South Africa (IMSSA). Issues relating to rights of women and gender equality have been an integral part of her work.

During her studies in the late 1980's, she served as General Secretary of the UNIN Law Students' Organisation and also worked tirelessly with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Mankweng and Mamelodi.

*"I will ensure that the Chief Directorate carries out the mandate of the Commission"*

Her primary role was assisting indigent members of the community in resolving their legal problems. This project focused mainly on women and children relating to their rights and lack of service delivery and access to justice. She was also involved in some of the intricate cases where victims of police brutality in the late 1980's looked up to the NGOs for assistance.

Since 1993, Mmathari taught various law courses at the Universities of Venda; Pretoria and Vista over a period of six years. She got involved in community outreach programmes in the six years she spent in academia. From mid 1995, she was further involved in a research project (child rights project) co-ordinated from the University of Western Cape's Community Law Centre for a period of eighteen months. The information amassed from this project significantly benefited the National Department of Social Development in 1996.

When asked what value does she see herself adding to the OPSC, this was Mmathari's response:

"To the Office of Public Service Commission, I bring my expertise and skills in investigation and research, especially in relation to service delivery from government departments. My ability to provide guidance and creativity in investigation will come in handy when dealing with grievance and complaints investigation in the Office. With my background in law especially labour law, I will ensure that the Chief Directorate carries out the mandate of the Commission".





# Freedom Day's Golden Significance

## As seen through the eyes of Tiro Mahlakoleng

Around the mid nineteen eighties, the word freedom did not have any meaning for a young boy like me living in a rural area of the North West Province. No matter how many times this word was coupled with “aparateite” as elders would pronounce apartheid when holding conversation, I just could not understand why it was the talk of the time. Though not knowing the meaning of the word, I would dance and sing to the rhythm and tune of “Freedom is coming tomorrow” made famous by Mbongeni Ngema’s musical play, Sarafina.

As years went by, on 27 April 1994, South Africa held its first National Democratic Elections. I was still a small boy by then but when I was first told that, that historic day gave birth to the Freedom Day that we now celebrate, I understood clearly. This understanding was intensified by the miracle that I saw - all South Africans, irrespective of race, gender, colour, and class taking for the first time, a stand to democratically vote for their desired government.

Freedom Day to me appears to be the final chapter or summary of the South African struggle for liberation; it is the mother of all the politically motivated public holidays. Had we not made that important mark at the right spot on the ballot papers, some of the holidays we have today would not have been created. To mention but two, previously we did not have public holidays such as Women’s Day and Youth Day, so you will understand when I say I consider South Africa’s Freedom Day as a golden day. This day does not favour any particular political party, it does not favour any religion, it favours no specific gender, it favours no specific social class but all in all, it favours everyone.

Freedom Day is a golden day; it is through this day that the Pass Laws will never see the light of day again. Through this Day, not only a certain sector of the population of the country has access to free basic water, sanitation and freedom of expression, but all of us do. It was through our country’s long walk to freedom that today we have one of the best Constitution in the world.

This walk has also led to the creation of a new South African flag through which other countries can recognize us. It gave all of us, whether black or white, rich or poor, a common humanitarian identity. All in all, Freedom Day united us.

The significance of this Day knows no boundaries.

It is a blessing to everyone in this country and the world over. It is through this Day that South Africa is now regarded as a key player in continental interventions to create a human rights and democratic culture and stop wars in warring countries. It is through this Day, that today South Africa is an influential player in the world.

However, as celebrating this Day might bring sad memories to some of us, it should not be seen to be a pad with which to scratch healing wounds, it should rather be seen to be reflecting the harsh journey to freedom and our victory against the oppressive system of the time. It should not be manipulated for revenge or to avenge, but should strengthen the foundation of forgiveness. It should be a Day respected for leading us to where we are today.

The Ten Years of Freedom which South Africa celebrated from last year until early this year, is a good yardstick of how Freedom Day has contributed in transforming our country. The government has played its part and turned 27 April into a holiday. It is now upon all of us to celebrate this day in a manner which best suits it. Let’s not rely on the President, the Premier, the Executive Mayor, the Chief and or the media to remind us how important the day is. In our families, we can hold our little Freedom Day specials by teaching our children the history behind this day; we can hold family prayer sessions in memory of those who lost their lives during and after the struggle. In doing so, I think Freedom Day will forever hold its true meaning. Its meaning will get richer like wine that matures with time. Even the coming generations would not have to study history to know how important this day is.

I was lucky, the wisdom behind freedom and the history of freedom Day was not whispered into my ear for fear of arrest. I grew up at the time when children were able to play in the moonlight once again. Those who come after my generation may not be so lucky unless we take it upon ourselves to share with them the hardships that the oppressed people of our country went through and the valuable victory that we finally got.

As we enter the new decade of freedom, let us all be proud of the fight that we put up against the oppression and give ourselves a pat, for being so forgiving yet remaining ever so wise.

Principally, President Thabo Mbeki addressed thousands of people attending the National Freedom Day at the ABSA Stadium in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Nevertheless, other provinces complementarily held their Freedom Day celebrations.



# IZWIS Sports

In this edition of Izwi, we asked the OPSC Sports PRO, Mr Martin Chale, to shed light on the progress of the OPSC Soccer team and he responded as follows:

Izwi: Give us an overview of the last two games that our team played.

Chale: The last two games were against the Departments of Transport and Health. We lost 6-4 to Transport and played to a goalless draw with Health.

The team played fairly well against Transport but we were a bit disjointed in the middle of the park and I think that was the main reason for our loss. The striking pair of Sifiso and Fanie was what any coach could have wished for on the day. They played well off each other. Against Health, we played a much better game, even in midfield the team produced mouth watering football with pace and grit in winning tackles.

Izwi: What stands in the way of success for our team?

Chale: The team's main challenge remains the availability of players.

Izwi: What causes this problem?

Chale: I think it is mostly caused by external factors such as work arrangements and the timing of games (i.e. short notice games).

Izwi: How serious is it?

Chale: At times this becomes so serious that we have to field individuals who are not employees of the OPSC. During the game against Health for example, the team used three non OPSC employees and certainly the two (one playing in defense and the other in a central middle field position) contributed immensely towards the improvement of the team's performance on the day.

Though mostly forced by circumstances to field outsiders, those that can contribute better than some of our players are at times fielded at the expense of our own players. I feel that this practice could defeat our initial objective of forming this team.

Izwi: How can this problem be solved?

Chale: I think we need to understand firstly why we started the whole process. And I think it is all about team building and networking more than just self-expression in terms of the game itself. So if I have never played football in my life I should not be excluded when I want to be part of the team. We need to have a positive attitude about this whole exercise. That includes the support from management. Players should be released early when the need arises. Unless we take this approach, we may just as well forget about this process.



OPSC Netball Team, before one of their "learning curve" matches played recently in Tshwane.





## Soccer Team Draws Again

By: Tiro Mahlakoleng

Friday April the 23<sup>rd</sup> saw the OPSC soccer team playing to a 2-2 draw with the Road Accident Fund (RAF), in a thrilling match played at the Founders Community School ground in Pretoria.

Playing on a water-logged pitch that resulted from the heavy rainfall before and during the game, the OPSC team showed commitment and more hunger for success than it was the case with the last three games before Easter.

The draw against RAF was the second since the Easter holidays. The first draw came against the Department of Health. Considering a series of losses suffered by the OPSC team before the Easter holidays, these draws come as a relief and a sign of better things starting to happen.

My man of the match at this thrilling encounter was the Coach himself, Steven Shabangu. Bra Steve, as he is popularly called, had to play due to the constant shortage of players. However, with the mud pond in the goalposts and all, he did not disappoint. As a Coach and also playing as a goalkeeper, he had a good view and analysis of the game, consequently making life difficult for the RAF strikers.

Izwi spoke to him about the game and this is what he had to say: "If we had all our players, we could have easily won the game with a high score. Generally speaking, both teams played very well, but on our side, we need more training.

Playing for the first time in the OPSC colours, Thomas T-T Thubakgale scored an incredible goal during the first half of the match. This debut goal came as an equalizer after RAF had led 1-0 for the better part of the game. In the second half, OPSC came back from behind once again, with Ronald Mathabatha who was playing as a defender, scoring an equalizer that ended the game on 2-2 score.

Despite the good showing by the OPSC team, the

shortage of players is proving to be their perennial enemy. It has been months now, since all the players assembled for a match. This leads to the OPSC team fielding a new squad with new style of play every time there is a match.

The failure to assemble a squad made of regular players deprive the Coach a chance to come with exciting formations and also makes it difficult for players themselves to know each other's strengths and weak points, which might help them play as a well-structured unit.

What observers say the team needs is discipline and until it is instilled in the team, positive results will not be forthcoming. Maybe it is time, the team management found out what the reason for this poor attendance is, and deal with it once and for all.



The players in blue celebrate yet another goal against the OPSC team (Red and white gear)



# Photographs of Promoted Officials

Mr John Matobela  
Position: ASD Networks Operations  
Directorate: IT



Ms Lolla Human  
Position: ASD: Conditions of Service  
and Employee Benefits-HRM&D



Mr Niel Fabricius  
Position : ASD Financial Accounting  
Directorate: F &PM



Mr Sbusiso Mngomezulu  
Position : ASD Security Servives  
Directorate: F & PM



Ms Tina Mokoena  
Position: ASD Information Services  
Directorate: IT



Mr Thomas Thubakgale  
Position: ASD Human Resource Development  
Directorate:HRD&M



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## New Faces

Ms Nontutuzelo Zuba  
Position : Deputy Director  
(Eastern Cape Regional Office)



Ms Philile Khuzwayo  
Position: Admin Secretary(Temp)  
Directorate: EA

