

**SPEECH OF THE FREE STATE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION,  
MR DAN KGOHULE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OR TAMBO GAMES, THABONG/WELKOM**

28 October 2011

Programme Director  
Honoured Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen  
Comrades

We gather here tonight to mark the official opening of the Annual O.R. Tambo Games programme for 2011. On behalf of the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, I wish to extend our most sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of you for being part of this occasion.

Over the past seven years these games have been an initiative through which the department has honoured and celebrated the life of the late struggle stalwart Olivier Reginald Tambo. The conceptualisation of the O.R. Tambo games is premised on the realisation of the sacrifice and contribution made by this gallant leader in our quest for freedom.

Comrade O. R. Tambo, in his life time, distinguished himself as an astute thinker, politician, activist. It is without a doubt that the sacrifice and contribution made by Comrade O.R Tambo towards the liberation of our people is unquestionable and indeed formidable. This is a man who was prepared, against all odds, to lay down his life to ensure the emancipation of the majority of our people.

It is therefore befitting that we dedicate these games to the memory of Comrade Tambo. We are proud as the Free State province to stage an event of this kind in honour of such an iconic individual. Hosted under the theme "Celebrating the spirit of O.R. Tambo through sport" these games indicate our appreciation to selfless commitment shown by O.R. Tambo to the struggle for democracy. These games also present us with an opportunity to further entrench the ideal of social cohesion and to promote nation building through sports and recreation.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen your presence here tonight is highly valued. This is emphasised by the fact that we are indeed moving forward as a nation to work towards reconciliation. Through sport we become one nation, united in a common desire for us to prosper and achieve greater success. As we gather to honour this gallant hero tonight, we are collectively responding to the clarion call to build a better nation.

Ours is a history full of pain, regret, sadness and remorse. Yet we have, over the past 17 come to embrace forgiveness, tolerance, mutual respect and most of all the inherent African Tradition of Ubuntu (Humanity). I firmly believe that as a people we are destined to achieve greater success while we relegate the pessimists amongst us to oblivion.

Since the inaugural O.R. Tambo games held seven years ago, the games have grown in stature and have evolved to include more sport codes. Participating teams compete at ward level and progress to local, district and provincial levels.

The hosting of these games is premised on the objective of the department to identify and nurture talented young athletes and provide them with an opportunity to compete professionally in their respective codes at this prestigious provincial event.

During the course of these games athletes from across the province will demonstrate their talent in various sporting codes. I wish to remind the participants that this event also forms part of our talent

identification programme. You should give all you best during these games as they may be a catalyst for your future success in sport.

I should emphasise that the O.R. Tambo games also provide a platform for participating athletes to hone their skills and to showcase their talent.

Amongst those invited will be scouter provincial and national coaches in the various sport codes for them to identify suitable athletes that can be groomed for our provincial and national teams.

We are proud as a department of initiatives such as the O.R. Tambo Games because they indicate our endeavours to promote and enhance sport excellence in our province. Through these games the department hopes to develop and hone the skills of these young aspiring athletes and sport enthusiasts for them to become respected and responsible future athletes.

I wish to commend all those who have been involved in making the 2011 O.R. Tambo Games a success. I also wish to applaud the support and contribution we have received from the various sponsors and partners in this initiative.

To all the participants, I wish you all the best during the games. I hope all the athletes will take part in these games with enthusiasm, pride and profound sportsmanship.

I thank you.

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