



**SPEAKER NOTE FOR THE HEAD OF THE HOD, SPORT, ARTS,
CULTURE AND RECREATION, ADV TSOARELO MALAKOANE,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY, 18
MAY 2012, SMITHFIELD.**

**Programme Director
Honoured Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am delighted to be part of this occasion during which we celebrate international Museum Day. By observing this day, the provincial Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation continues to promote and preserve the rich and diverse heritage that has come to characterize the Free State. We host this event as part of a national and international programme to enhance public awareness on the critical role that museums can play in preserving our inherent history while also developing society in general.

International Museum Day has been observed around the world on this day since 1977 and has ensured that we are able to showcase the importance of museums as a vehicle to understand and contextualize our history as a nation.

It is relevant that the theme for International Museum Day 2012 is “Museums in Changing World”. The theme clearly recognizes the progressive technological advancements in modern times and seeks to promote the evolution and adaptation of museums in order to remain relevant and interesting.

This theme also recognizes the importance of unique set of goals, interests and audiences that visit our museums for research and educational purposes. This year's celebration will contribute towards positioning museums as a tool to foster nation building and social cohesion as well as to reaffirm their role as custodians of our cultural heritage. By celebrating this day the Department is indeed making a meaning contribution towards encouraging the revival of the cultural, social and moral regeneration of our communities.

As a build up to this event, the Department has been involved in programs that have encouraged interested parties to engage in social dialogue on the need to reconnect with the past in an effort to shape a direction towards the future. We have to note that our history plays a crucial role in determining our future.

We have observed that museums are facing a daunting challenge with regard to attracting visitors. With the advent of electronic media it becomes imperative for us to keep up with the advancements and to attract more people to visit our museums while also providing an environment that will conducive to their needs.

Museums have a role to play in educating communities about the importance of our history and heritage. It is within this context that the department has undertaken outreach and awareness programmes for both adults and the youth. We encourage schools to use our museums as a platform to further enhance their curriculum. Learners should be encouraged to participate in the in our educational programmes that include heritage debates and cultural dances so as to embrace our cultural diversity.

Hosting this event way complement our mission to promote unity and enhance social identity and cohesion. This day presents us with an opportunity to

illustrate the importance of museums as part of the cultural heritage of our country to our communities and the youth in particular.

Let me take the opportunity to thank all those who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this day is a success. I sincerely hope that collectively will continue to highlight and promote the importance of our museums as an integral part of our society.

I thank you