

MATJHABENG



MUNICIPALITY

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AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS

African Future Depends On Its Human Resource

The 25th of May 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU). The OAU was formed on 25 May 1963, six years following Ghana's independence in March 1957. Ghana's independence set the impetus for the decolonisation of the Continent, whose countries have been colonies of mainly the British and the Portuguese.

The 2013 Africa Day will be celebrated under the theme "Investing for Sustainable Success". The formulation of this theme is very instructive. It suggests that while there is consensus that Africa has registered serious success in various fronts of human development since the call for unity 50 years ago, there remain stubborn challenges that threaten the prospects of sustainability of strides that have been made.

Generally, most African states have democratised their governance system to ensure that there is respect for and commitment to human rights. Fifty years later, the continent is proud to say that autocracy is no longer as prevalent as it was in the immediate aftermath of independence of many African states. Today, majority of our African countries have multi-party democratic systems and hold regular elections, consistent with the African National Congress Freedom Charter of 1955 that no government can claim to be legitimate unless it is based on the will of the people.

It is for this reason that the 2013 Africa Day theme could not have been more relevant. We have seen some undermining of the expression of the will of the people in various other countries, particularly West Africa and some parts of Southern African Development Countries (SADC). It means that we have been unable as the continent to sustain the transformation outputs we have registered. Complete human development is impossible without strong democratic institutions, with the citizens of the continent at the very centre of any meaningful development initiative.

In wishing our continent well for another prosperous fifty years of quest for humanity, we must reiterate that people must always be the determinants of their own collective destiny. This means that all of us, especially the practitioners of local government, must act deliberately in concert to invest in our people. It is only when we have an adequately educated and well informed and engaged citizenry that noble ideals of democracy, oversight and accountability will come to bear fruits. We cannot

negotiate investment in our human resource. The rich mineral endowments that the continent is known for will be meaningless unless our people are trained strategically to use them to the benefit of all our citizens of the continent.

Human resource is therefore the single most important factor that holds the difference between our desired success or lack thereof. We must particularly invest in our youth as they are the heirs of the future of our country and continent. It is for this reason that my office will be collaborating closely with the Office of the Executive Mayor in the new financial year of the municipality to design programmes aimed at placing the youth at the centre of governance processes.

As we congratulate our forbears who forged the African unity, we have an equal responsibility to join hands together now to ensure that our successes are sustainable.

Message from the Office of The Speaker : Charles Stofile

GERMAN RAMATHABANE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER

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