



## **UMAFRIKA NEWSPAPER RELAUNCH**

Introduction of Premier Mchunu, KZN Premier

March 23, 2017

**UmaFrika Premises**

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Programme Director, Mr Mthembu,

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Hon Willies Mchunu,

Editor, Mr Thulani Mbatha,

All special guests,

Members of the Media,

All Protocol Observed,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

**Sanibonani,**

It is an honour for us to be invited and become part of the relaunch of uMafrika newspaper. What is important is to be in one house with journalists, politicians and church.

This reminds me of a time when media was more sympathetic to the views of the poor and were part of the agenda for liberation.

Most importantly, is that this event take place during the month of Human rights and 20th anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic.

These are important events in our historic calendar because we should value all human rights and media right is not above human rights.

As this democratic government we made it a point that we include media rights in the constitution that we are celebrating.

We did this with an understanding that media freedom plays a pivotal role in the life of any democracy, for our democracy to thrive we needed a free media.

Freedom of speech, access to information and a free media are entrenched in the Constitution and the media operate in an environment free of oppression, persecution and the repressive legislation which sought to restrict and control the media.

The Constitution protects and provides for the freedom of the media, freedom of expression and access to information.

In Polokwane, the ANC reiterated its commitment to freedom of expression in society, including the media, within the context of the Constitution of the Republic.

However we still believe that these rights need to be weighed against other constitutional rights, such as the right to human dignity and privacy. We have many instances of people being trialed and found guilty by the media before court decisions.

This is not just affect the individuals who is accused but their family, children, institutions that work for and so forth.

The media sometimes seems to entrench a narrative that says that black government lacks capacity to take this country forward and sometimes a narrative that says black people are corrupt.

If a black person drives a Lamborghini he is definitely corrupt or he has stolen money from OR Tambo Airport.

We believe that this UmAfrika will not fall into that trap of being newspaper that pushes a narrative against this government and its people.

It should move away from carrying one-sided stories. We expect balance reporting and respect for human rights.

UmAfrika must go back to its old motto when it first started which was to "sustain community spirit and life". It's motto: 'Better fields, better homes, better hearts'.

We were indeed sad when it closed down but we are happy because we are going to have alternative media.

We will be able to read and hear different voices of our people. We will not be hearing these commentators who are now analysts – who analyse everything under the sun.

Program Director,

My task here is to introduce the man who needs no introduction. This task was supposed to be done by our Mayor who is away in London to engage investors.

I am pleased to introduce a very humble and easy man to work with. He is a source of all wisdom in politics, government and in life in general.

He is the man we all respect and a man we are proud of. He is not a stranger because he was born in this city of Durban.

He is a progressive stalwart of the struggle who doesn't go to the media to sort our internal differences.

He was an ANC Underground Structures Member (1980). He was a Union Organizer for Metal and Allied Workers Union (NUMSA) and a Trade Unionist Member.

Kuyomele ayoyilanda iNUMSA ibuyele kuCOSATU. He served as Chairperson of the ANC Northern Natal Region (1990). He was the First Co-

ordinator of Joint Working Committee of the UDF & COSATU in pursuit of peace with the IFP (1988).

SACP Provincial Chairperson in 1998, and ANC Provincial Executive Committee Member (1995).

He was the Deputy Speaker of the Legislature in KZN (1994) and later a Speaker. He has served as MEC of COGTA and later appointed MEC for Community Safety and Liaison, Transport in KZN.

He is now the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, his name is Baba Willies Mchunu – our honourable premier.

Ladies and gentlemen, please help to welcome on stage, our Premier, Honourable Willies Mchunu.

**I thank you.**