

INAUGURAL SPEECH OF THE CBE 5TH TERM COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

MR ABSALOM MOLOBE – 16 January 2019



Left to Right: Mr Isaac Nkosi previous CBE Chairperson, Minister of Public Works, Hon Mr Thulas Nxesi, CBE CEO Ms Priscilla Mdlalose, Mr Absalom Molobe – CBE Chairperson

Absalom Molobe, is a Master's degree in Landscape Architecture graduate from the University of Pretoria who is registered as a Professional Senior Landscape Architectural Profession,

He is a part time lecturer at the University of Pretoria and runs his own practice Msavheni Landscape Architecture Planning & Construction (PTY) Ltd

He was recently appointed by the Minister of Public Works Hon Mr Thulas Nxesi as the Chairperson of the CBE.

Below is his inaugural speech presented at the CBE Council inauguration on 16 January 2019

Greetings my fellow Colleagues and Guests

It is both an honour and a privilege to be standing here and addressing in this event.

My recognition follows everyone in this room but mostly the Minister of National Department of Public Works Mr. Thulas Nxesi, having to trust me with such a commitment,

It really means a lot. To The Deputy Chairperson, Mme Maphefo Mogodi and My fellow council members,

To the CEO, Mme Priscilla Mdlalose, for welcoming me in the Council of the Built Environment with warm hands.

To fellow guests from various organizations, associations or institutes.

I welcome you all.

It is not by choice or chance that I'm standing right in front of you but by thought.

YES, I say "thought" because I already thought about this day for so long, it was just a matter of time.

I mean who ever thought a Landscape Architect, Landscaper "Gardener/ Garden Boy" would be elected the Chairperson of Council for the Built Environment?

But hey...

A "Gardener" knows what type of soil is good for plants

A "Gardener" knows when the right season to plant is and when to harvest

A "Garden boy" understands the interdependence between man and nature

A "Garden boy" understands sustainability than most of us (REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE of waste material).

A "Garden boy" knows the importance of water as a scarce resource – like coming up with better methods of storm-water harvesting for later use.

A "Gardener" understands the legislation regarding the Environment and Health and Safe of a nation. – Bio-diversity

A "Gardener" understands that History, heritage is important in the socio-economic transformation of a nation.

A "Gardener" understands that planting a tree is not only for aesthetic purpose,

But a Gardener knows that:

A tree is a shelter

A tree is a habitat

A tree is a natural oxygen machine

A tree feeds a nation

A tree regulates our micro-climate

A tree heals a nation both medicinal and psychological

A tree is sacred – for performing rituals and spiritual connections

A tree gives identity – Jacarandas

A tree gives meaning to life – "family tree" tree of life (I've never heard of concrete of life or Family facade)

You can tie a rope and a tyre to a tree... then boom pure fun and lifetime memory results from such an activity.

Most important a “Gardener” understands and knows the need to teach and transfer skill to the new generation through practical experience.

Some of us are products of Gardeners.

Our fathers are Gardeners,

Our grandfathers were Gardener.

Today we are:

Engineers,

Architects,

Town Planners,

Quantity Surveyors

Just to mention the few,

But today is not about me, but us,

My fellow colleagues, Change is upon us,

We must transform.

We have to be in motion to ride upon the wave of change.

We have been offered the space and time to lead and act effectively.

We must come out of the cocoon and reach out to our communities

(Especially Townships and rural areas) and inspire our youth to participate and be part of the Built Environment Profession.

We must strengthen our existing relationships with our Voluntary Associations, Built Environment Profession Councils, NGOs, Government and Academic institutions.

We need to work as a unit.

We must establish partnerships outside of our country and enable our built environment professionals to participate in the global community.

I can assure you that great work will come out of this appointment and no regrets will be heading our way.

My fellow council members, as we are a regulatory body,

We need the energy and commitment to achieve the set mandate.

Just as a sword is the weapon of a worrier, a mind is a weapon of every single human being alive.

We need innovative measures and initiatives that will bring us substantial results to fight poverty and impact our communities in a positive manner.

I have no motive than that of transformation, implementation and paying a great respect to our environment and society.

It is to my knowledge that everyone in attendance knows and agrees to my appointment, to this,

I would like to thank you for embracing this platform and seeing the best of it.

Again, it is a great privilege and humbling to be granted the honour of serving the Council for the Built Environment as the incoming "Gardener". I accept this with humility and will serve to the best of my ability.

I THANK YOU.