

MEC's MEETING WITH BUSARY HOLDERS AT MAYVILLE

Date: 30 June 2008

HOD

General Managers

Management

Officials

Bursary holders

Ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to meet you today as I will have a chance to congratulate you for the study opportunity you have been given by the department of Public Works, especially as this happens at a time when our country is faced with acute shortage of professional engineers and technicians. The government has declared investment in education as a precondition for development and the shortage of professionals may impact negatively and be an impediment in our endeavor to achieve Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty by 2015.

The government has identified robust infrastructure delivery as driver of economic growth. However this requires adequate personnel in engineering and technical fields of which the country has not yet managed to produce in the required quantities. It is in view of this that JIPSA initiative was introduced. The department of Public Works takes pride in its effective response to the challenge of scarce skills.

There is a said reality that the government invests huge millions in training of technicians and professional engineers who are eventually attracted by the private sector and foreign countries through better incentives. Nothing can stop this chronic brain drain except social commitment by our graduates. This is a challenge which needs to be addressed. I want to pose a challenge to you. It is high time that our graduates embrace the spirit of patriotism. You should be prepared to serve your country. You have a moral obligation to serve your country. You should not be held by strings attached to bursary contracts with the government but you should be compassionate enough to contribute in the development of your country.

I am saying this as we are approaching June, the youth month. The youth of 1976 selflessly sacrificed their lives fighting for better education and emancipation of the oppressed. They were motivated by the desire to bring about change. The very same commitment is required in this dispensation with more emphasis on economic emancipation.

The department of Public Works is entrusted with the responsibility to provide the infrastructure which forms the foundation for economic development hence our slogan says “building communities through construction”. Therefore your knowledge and skills that you are acquiring should contribute to the cause.

I therefore wish to encourage you to work hard and ensure that you pass your degrees. The department will support you and will ensure that we keep in contact with you. Most of you will complete in 2010 and I look forward to see you joining our department, coming with new idea which will help our department realize its vision of building a thriving economy through infrastructure development and property management.

I wish you all the best.

I thank you.