

Speech by RTMC Board Chairman Zola Majavu at the Certification Ceremony of National Traffic Police

09 December 2015

Members of the Board

RTMC CEO

Senior managers

Guests

Ladies and gentlemen

We are gathered here to celebrate with members of the National Traffic Police who have completed a four-month intensive up-skilling training programme. We believe that this training has equipped our traffic officers with the necessary skills and expertise to help us embark on an intensified programme of road safety to save lives on our roads during this festive season and everyday thereafter for the rest of the year.

As a country we have made a commitment to reduced road fatalities by 50% by 2020. Last month the Minister of Transport presented our country's mid-term report to the United Nations 2nd Global High Level Dialogue on Road Safety. The report detailed the progress we have made to reduce road fatalities since the adoption of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2010-2020.

Our mid-term report for the period 2010 to 2014 indicates that the cumulative annual growth rate of South African road fatalities has slightly

improved. The report shows that we have been able to reduce road fatalities by 1.88% annually in the previous five years compared to the 0.52% for period between 2005 and 2009. This means in that there has been a drop in fatalities between 2010 and 2014. However more still needs to be done for us to reach the 50% target by 2020. To reach this target we have to reduce road fatalities by an annual rate of 6.7%.

Fatalities currently stand at 12 702 which represents a significant reduction compared to 13 967 recorded in 2010. Fatalities per 100 000 human population now stands at 23.53 compare to 27.49 recorded in 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen this ceremony takes places at the start of the festive season holiday period in our country. This is a period characterised by high traffic volumes and an increase in the number of crashes and people dying on our roads.

Today we are proud to unleash these highly trained, dedicated and disciplined officers to bolster our traffic law-enforcement fraternity's capacity to deal with lawlessness on the roads and reduce carnage.

These traffic officers are now available for deployment anywhere in the country to deal with any traffic situation. These men and women have received training in the examination of vehicle, the use of firearms, the

AARTO Act, the National Traffic Act and other legal aspects of law enforcement.

The training provided to these 130 men and women was part of an endeavour by the Road Traffic Management Corporation to develop a new cadre of Traffic Officers, who will be skilled and equipped to address an array of road safety matters in the 21st Century.

This training has paved the way towards the introduction of a new 21st century qualification for Traffic Officers in the country. The groundbreaking qualification will see traffic officers receive training for a minimum of three years leading to a national diploma qualification on National Qualification Framework level 6.

The Corporation is in the process of establishing a Centre of Excellence where this Qualification will be presented as from 2016. Plans are currently being finalised to ensure the successful implementation of this new qualification.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must expect to see these officers very soon at roadside checkpoints, multi-disciplinary roadblocks, high-impact visibility patrols, un-marked patrols and alcohol test centres. They will be tasked with dealing with bribery and fraudulent driver licences and to intervene in corruption-ridden traffic centres around the country.

These men and women are now available for deployment in areas which have been identified for special attention. These include national roads, provincial hotspots, municipalities and villages with high road accidents.

We therefore expect the highest standards of ethical conduct from them; they must be beyond reproach; they must be highly disciplined; they must have the highest standards of professionalism.

The immediate task they have is to assist in ensuring that this festive season registers the lowest number of road crashes and fatalities. Last year we saw a slight drop in the number of fatalities over the festive season from 1335 the previous the year to 1293 last year indicating a 3.15% decrease.

Today we pledge to do everything humanly possible to drive these numbers down even further. We owe that to ourselves, to our families and to our country.

We salute these men and women who have endured months of training for their resilience, hard-work, dedication and commitment to their studies. We now expect you to go out and put into practice what you have learned. The expectations are high. The whole nation is concerned about the levels of lawlessness that lead to crashes and fatalities on our roads. Let's go out and make a difference. Let this festive season be a turning point that we all have been waiting for.

Together we have the responsibility to make our roads safer.

Thank You.

