



# GAUTENG PROVINCE

ROADS AND TRANSPORT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## SPEECH

### **WOMEN IN THE MINIBUS TAXI NETWORKING SESSION**

Gauteng SANTACO

GNTA

Officials from: Pink Drive, Taxi Health and Future Life

Members of the Commission for Gender Equality

Officials from Gauteng Departments of Health, Economic Development and Roads and Transport

Members of the media

It gives me great pleasure to be addressing you during this special month where our country is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the heroic Women's March to the Union Buildings, Pretoria in 1956.

This year's National Women's Month celebrations are held under the theme: "Women United in Moving South Africa Forward". It reminds us that unity is strength. It is through partnerships, working together and collaboration that we can do and achieve more.

Women play a significant role in our society, be it in the family, at work, at school, in business, in government or in the community at large. Women are always a pillar of strength, providing guidance. Above all, their wisdom, encouragement and perseverance are unparalleled.

As we continue to celebrate the bravery of the women of 1956, we should recall their sacrifice in laying down a firm foundation for the restoration of our birth right, freedom, and the dignity of women. We should bear in mind that it was through principled unity and sheer determination that they were able to raise their voices against the degradation of African women, in particular.

It is because of their heroic achievements that government today continues to work at improving the living conditions of households, particularly those headed by women.

Today, we also recognise the contribution and celebrate the achievements of women in building this country, particularly women in the minibus taxi industry. We are encouraged to see women making strides in what is traditionally a male dominated sector, with some owning and operating their minibus taxis. Notwithstanding this, there is a lot more that still needs to be done to improve the conditions of women in the taxi industry. We must strive for full participation by women in the taxi industry. The Department should support the call

for more representation by women in top management positions in this taxi industry.

The Gauteng Provincial Government has made strides in providing opportunities for the economic emancipation of women. Women have been supported to start-up and grow their own businesses. Furthermore, the Gauteng Provincial Government provides services that include the registration, incubation and growth of women-led organizations. We believe that more can be achieved through the provision of support for co-operatives, facilitation of trade and investment as well as increased participation of women in strategic economic and transport infrastructure projects.

We were particularly pleased that only last week a predominantly women-led company, MPA and Associates, won the CESA 2016 Excellence Awards for the best managed road construction project valued up to R250 million. This was a project implemented on behalf of the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport. This on its own demonstrates that women can be successful in rolling out large transport infrastructure projects.

Through opportunities offered by public investments to the value of over R19 billion in integrated public transport networks such as the Bus Rapid Transit, the future expansion of Gautrain and other major road construction projects, the Gauteng Provincial Government is encouraging the participation of women in these programmes. Transnet too will be investing in the region of R300 billion to improve rail and ports infrastructure. The participation of women in the freight and logistics sector also must be encouraged and strengthened.

I would also like you to take advantage of services offered by the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller wherein you can be assisted with the registration and management of your businesses. Furthermore, the agency provides assistance relating to financial and non-financial support to SMMEs. By forming co-operatives and formalising your businesses you be able to take advantage of the economic opportunities, business ventures and financial assistance that these government entities offer.

Our aim is to see more and more women entering and being involved in the taxi industry. The industry should create an enabling environment for women to actively participate in and provide leadership for its growth and inclusion into the integrated public transport system.

As part of our commitment to providing the necessary assistance in the taxi industry, the Department will during October Transport Month hold a workshop where taxi operators will be exposed to various economic opportunities within the automotive industry and related sectors in South Africa. The workshop is also envisaged to facilitate partnership between role-players as well as to make available information to organisations responsible for the formalisation process of the minibus taxi industry.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the taxi industry leadership for their continued support and partnership as we work towards the transformation of the sector. I hope that our partnership will continue to grow and bear positive fruits that will be mutually beneficial for all of us.

**Ismail Vadi MEC for Roads and Transport (Gauteng)**

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**For media enquiries, kindly contact Ms Melitah Madiba on 011 355 7093 or 060 520 1820**