



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**

ROADS AND TRANSPORT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **SPEECH**

**Speech by MEC Hon. Kedibone Diale-Tlabela on the Gauteng Launch of October Transport Month at Smarter Mobility Conference at Gallagher Convention Centre City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, on 02 October 2023**

**Programme Director**

**Honourable Premier of Gauteng Ntate Panyaza Lesufi**

**Fellow MEC's from various provinces**

**Honoured guest,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am truly delighted to address you today as we inaugurate October Transport Month, an event that underscores the pivotal role of transportation in our society and provides us with an opportunity to embrace the future of mobility. This year's focus revolves around several key initiatives, including strengthening the state's capacity to deliver services to our communities, combating crime and corruption in public transport, improving infrastructure in marginalised communities, and modernising the taxi industry to support economic recovery and reconstruction.

Transportation serves as the lifeblood of any region, seamlessly connecting people, goods, and ideas, transcending continents, regions, and cities. As we convene here today, we are joined by our top trading partners from the East, Europe, and the West, as well as our neighbors from Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the wider African continent. We are united by the significant investments we have made in transportation. This connectivity enables the exchange of cultures, ideas, and goods, driving economic growth and prosperity.

However, our world is changing rapidly, especially in this era of the fourth industrial revolution, presenting new challenges. The fourth industrial revolution is transforming the way we travel. Just a few years ago, hailing a taxi meant giving an address and waiting in uncertainty. Now, all of this is managed on a smartphone, offering convenience and predictability. Moreover, we are

witnessing innovations like driverless cars, autonomous trains, and artificial intelligence, which have the potential to reshape transportation and the job landscape. In the coming years, the transportation sector will undergo significant transformations as artificial intelligence penetrates industries.

At the global level, we are confronted with mounting evidence of climate change. In South Africa, recent devastating floods in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape serve as stark reminders. This evidence underscores the urgency of addressing global warming and its implications for transportation, as it is a significant contributor to CO2 emissions. To combat climate change and ensure the well-being of future generations, we must radically alter our travel habits, modes of transport, and the types of fuels we use in our vehicles.

Europe is grappling with the conflict in Ukraine and the resulting energy challenges, while Africa faces its own set of issues, from rail and road infrastructure to vehicle quality, unemployment, and poverty. As technology, energy, and climate change reshape our world and job markets, we must seek sustainable solutions that prioritise our people's well-being and foster mutually beneficial partnerships between nations. With 80% of the global population projected to live in urban areas by 2050, we must develop clean, smart, equitable, and sustainable transportation systems that link urban centers with workplaces, education, and leisure facilities.

To navigate these global shifts in transportation, we must consider the following key factors:

**1. Sustainable Mobility:** Across the globe, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable mobility, with countries transitioning to cleaner and more efficient transportation systems, such as electric vehicles and public transit. We must draw inspiration from these efforts to reduce our carbon footprint by developing efficient rail systems, public transport networks, and well-maintained road infrastructure.

**2. Digital Transformation:** The integration of digital technologies is revolutionising transportation. Smart mobility solutions, like ride-sharing apps and integrated ticketing systems, enhance convenience and efficiency. Leveraging technology to improve traffic management and enhance the overall travel experience should be a priority.

**3. Mass Transit:** Internationally, significant investments are being made in mass transit systems, including high-speed trains, light rail, and bus rapid transit. These systems alleviate congestion and offer sustainable alternatives to private vehicles. Our plans in Gauteng for improved public transit are in line with this global trend, and we are also considering expanding our rail network to connect with neighboring provinces and regions.

**4. Intermodal Connectivity:** The seamless integration of various modes of transportation is gaining momentum worldwide. Ensuring easy transfers between trains, buses, and bicycles is essential for a well-functioning transportation network. Our government is actively working on Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions and integrated fare management systems to simplify travel for our citizens.

**5. Electrification:** Many countries are electrifying their transportation fleets, introducing electric buses, trams, and trains to reduce emissions and operational costs. In Gauteng, we are exploring similar initiatives to improve air quality. We are introducing electric cars and are on the verge of incorporating hydrogen vehicles. To support this transition, we are planning clean energy production through wind and solar farms in our region. Collaboration with European partners, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) nations, and other African countries to build smart corridors for both trade and energy exchange is on our agenda.

In closing, the global trends in transportation offer inspiration and guidance for our countries. By embracing sustainable, integrated, and technologically advanced solutions, we can enhance the quality of life for our citizens, stimulate economic growth, and contribute to a greener and more sustainable future.

Let us all roll up our sleeves and prepare for a productive October Transport Month and beyond. Our province relies on the collective efforts of the transport sector to build bridges and work together.. Now, let's delve into the details of our October Transport Month initiatives:

**Data-Centric Mobility:** We take pride in our efforts to integrate public transport through the construction of our state-of-the-art Transport Management Centre at our headquarters. This marks a significant step toward implementing the One-Ticket-One-Province system. Later this month, we will unveil the TMC, equipped with smart technologies that provide real-time data for informed decision-making by commuters and operators alike.

**Building Strong Institutions:** On October 19th, we will host the Gautrain Leadership Summit Career Expo, a pivotal event aimed at attracting talent to our sector. Our Smart Mobility plan places people at the core of resilient institutions and engaging young individuals in career development is a top priority. We are also partnering with stakeholders in the automotive sector to unveil g-Fleet Management's Auto-body Workshop on October 20th, a project designed to benefit entrepreneurs in townships, informal settlements, and hostels.

**Strengthening the Battle Against Crime and Corruption:** Our efforts will be in vain if we do not address lawlessness and crime in our society. As part of our contribution to combating criminality that threatens order and peace, we are on the cusp of launching a new, secure, and tamper-proof

number plate system. The official unveiling of the new number plate prototype will take place on October 23rd and 24th. Gauteng is indeed making significant strides in this project.

**Delivering Infrastructure for Communities:** We are excited to unveil new generation Driving Licence Testing Centres in Atteridgeville, City of Tshwane, on October 30th. Through our tireless efforts, we have dispelled the notion that government merely talks without action.

I thank you all for your dedication, and together, we can transform transportation for a brighter future. I wish you a successful Smarter Mobility Conference and a vibrant October Transport Month.

**Ends!**