



**SPEECH BY KOPUNG RALIKONTSANE, HOD: COOPERATIVE  
GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS**

**EVENT: GRADUATION CEREMONY OF WATER PROCESS  
CONTROLLERS**

**DATE: 09 NOVEMBER 2012**

Honourable MECs

Mayors and Speakers

Representatives from Aurecon Training Academy

Private Sector Representatives

Fellow Public Servants

Our guests of honour, graduates from the programme

Ladies and gentlemen

It is an undeniable fact that water is at the core of our existence, and thus, a vital resource for development of any nature. This is evidently highlighted by the position this resource holds in the hierarchy of needs, in countries' priorities and overall in nurturing life.



In the Millennium Development Goals, a global contract for sustainable development, this resource which is listed under Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability, stands as a joint and integrated effort by 289 countries towards its sustained availability, quality and preservation. The importance and relevance of water in the achievement of all 8 Millennium Development Goals can never be overemphasised. No development or sustainability can be achieved without water.

South Africa as signatory to the MDG is bound to make sure that by 2015 it would have halved the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water. While this goal has been achieved globally this year, 2012, governments worldwide are still hard at work on ensuring that clean water is available to all citizens; this against the backdrop of a global threat of recession of water levels from 2025.

On this, Treasury's Medium Term Review earlier this year indicated that without better management, South Africa will start running out of water 13 years from now.

"On current projections, South Africa's water demand will outstrip available supply between 2025 and 2030," the document states. Avoiding this required "better management and adjusted pricing mechanisms to support efficient and sustainable use of water."



The National Water Resource Strategy indicates that “South Africa is not well endowed with abundant fresh water resources. In fact, it is regarded as the 30<sup>th</sup> most water scarce country in the world.

Despite this major challenge, we have thus far done great in harnessing this resource in support of a strong economy and a vibrant society. This was and still is achieved through effective water resources planning, infrastructure development and effective service delivery.

It must however be stated that the country is facing various challenges with regard to its water resources and the management thereof. Various concerns have been raised recently regarding pollution and resource quality, water security for both social and economic development as well as services quality. These concerns must be addressed as they have major social, economic environmental, legal and political impact on our lives and businesses.”

The South African Government has, according to the Medium Term Review document, noted that while 97% of the country's drinking water met minimum standards, "only 71% of waste water is compliant". On this note, and as part of its effort to ensure sustainability, the government has, over the next three years, allocated R75bn to water infrastructure, quality management,



resource planning and support to local government, to address this and other water-related problems.

Our graduation ceremony today, is an expression of our commitment and contribution towards ensuring water sustainability in local government through water process management. The Process Controllers form a critical part of ensuring compliance in water and wastewater treatment operational compliance which in return, will result in improved water quality.

This is in fulfilment of the requirements of the regulations under Water Services Act, which aims at ensuring that no person will be allowed to operate a drinking water supply system or waterworks unless the person holds a valid Process Controller licence.

Government's priorities for this term of government include education encompassing skills development, creating decent jobs and economic development, health, fighting crime and rural development. Through this course, whose main objective is to provide skills, government is achieving multiple goals of providing education, sustainable jobs and improved economy, health and sustainable livelihoods in local government.

With 300 trainees successfully completing the course, this means that the lives of 300 families have been directly improved while



many more citizens in various municipalities will enjoy improved water quality.

This opportunity also provides a door that leads to improved qualifications in this field, career expansion and improvement to other related career fields such as pollution control, wet industries, electricity generation and environmental qualifications. This qualification will also provide access to employment opportunities in the water sector and career advancement as a result of improved qualifications and skills, and recognition of prior learning.

The overall advantage will be increased productivity in water sector, improve the health of communities and contribute towards ecological sustainability and improvement of water quality. We will need to train more process controllers in other municipality to ensure overall good water quality and water management in the process towards a better life for all. In order to achieve this, municipalities need to prioritise skills development in this area and get more trained process controllers.

While we are here to congratulate the graduates and celebrate this achievement, we must also use this opportunity to emphasise the importance of preserving our water to ascertain sustainability for our own and future development. We say always, that water is life, let us respect it and preserve it!



Congratulations to all our Process Controllers. Use the acquired qualification well to make a difference in the lives of our people.

This is yet evidence of a government that is committed to working for its people through sustainable partnerships. Working together we can do more.

I thank you.