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FREE STATE PROVINCE

# Media Release

November 21, 2013

## Former MEC hailed as a leader who fought for human dignity.

The Free State Provincial Government and the Provincial Executive Committee of the African National Congress (ANC) in the Free State paid tribute to the former MEC for Local Government and Housing, Joel Mafereka, at a packed to capacity City Hall in Bloemfontein, on Wednesday, November 20, 2013.

The late Joel Mafereka (62), affectionately known to his comrades, colleagues and friends as “Oom Joe”, died on Monday, November 11, 2013 after a long illness at the Sunning hill Net care Hospital, in Johannesburg. At the time of his death, he was serving as Commissioner in the Commission for Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims, in the North West.

Various institutions of government, the ANC and the Tripartite Alliance Partners all spoke in one voice when it comes to the good public service and freedom struggle credentials of the late Joel Mafereka. He had an impact on many lives and moreover ensured that communities were afforded the ideal of a better life for all.

Former Premier Beatrice Marshoff, under whom Mafereka served, alluded to the principled leadership which he provided in the delicate sphere of local government and housing.

MEC for Social Development Sisi Ntombela credited Mafereka as one of the leaders who molded her into the selfless and strong leader she is today. “He spent 20 days in a coma, and I have no doubt that while he was fighting for his life like the fighter he was, he was thinking of his family, children and the ANC which he was part of to the end”, said an emotional MEC Ntombela. “While many individuals left the ANC when the going got tough in recent times, Mafereka remained true to the organization and fought to make it true to its cause”, she added.

Basil Sikhakhane, who represented the Commission of Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims, hailed the late Mafereka as a leader who brought people alike together and always had answers to problems. He described Mafereka as a man with an extremely high work ethic and he was impatient with lack of progress.

This fallen gallant fighter was hailed as a dedicated leader and servant of the people who relentlessly served the country with pride and zest. In the North West, where he served after leaving the Free State, he is credited with improving service delivery, thus leaving behind an indelible mark in the area of his work. He immensely contributed to building a fully functional institution that resolves traditional leadership disputes and claims in the highly contested platinum belt of the North West.

In his tenure as Commissioner of Traditional Leadership Claims and Disputes, the institution was never taken to court for any disputes nor claims. He was a skilled negotiator who strived for peace at all times. “He served the country with distinction and laid a foundation for us and that is why today, we are able to build decent houses for our people as amply articulated in the Freedom Charter” said MEC for Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements, Olly Mlamleli.

The Chairperson of the ANC and Premier of the Free State, Ace Magashule said that Mafereka was a genuine leader who always spoke the truth. A deeply touched Magashule described Mafereka as a simple man who lived amongst the people and an exemplary leader who showed that as a leader, you need to be in touch with your people and not let status get into your head. Premier Magashule said that Mafereka was a loyal, fearless warrior of the people who still had so much to offer not only the ANC, but South Africa as a whole.

The details of the funeral are as follows:

**Date: Saturday, November 23, 2013.**

**Time: 8h00**

**Venue: Anglican Church of Grace, Oppenheimer Park, Welkom, Free State.**

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