

SMALL THINGS, SMALL MIRACLES IN SMALL PLACES WILL BRING CHANGE TO OUR LAND

To this land I owe my life. I owe everything I have. It was on it that I found my first breath, learnt to walk and to speak. Under these skies my parents and teachers patiently guided my siblings and I. My fondest memories are sprinkled with the songs of the birds, the petals of the butterflies, the romantic smell of the rare torrential rains and with dung of the cattle that graze our beautiful savannaland.

Here, I received the marvelous gifts that are my family and friends, some of them here today. It was here, on this same land, that I also lost Zingisa - sister, Isabella - mother and Baledzi - father – three lives that represented the finest qualities life has to offer. And this is why I call this land home – because through it all, despite the celebrations turning into tragedy, and tragedy into celebration, we still called it by the same name – home.

And the graves of those who loved us, quietly surround us, while the bright light of what they stood for, fought for, aspired for, in their homes and in communities reminds us of a golden

period that the generation before us created for itself.

And while their work was not completed, and their plans to uplift the country not perfect, no one can ever doubt they stepped forward and did their part. Even so, and through no fault of their own, the work that remained for us to build the future we aspired for our people still remained a long way off.

And in recent times, our country began to conspicuously veer off course. The sense that we were regressing and not building on our successes crept in, as the reality was that of an administration that no longer had room for fairness, or excellence. Here is a Government that does not believe in the potential of our people, here is Government that creates no space for our citizens to express their talents. Here is an administration that has planted bad blood between itself and our civil service.

Here is a Government that is refusing to serve its people, but expects to be served by the people. Here is a Government that does not believe that if our indigenous foods, technologies and resources were marshaled creatively, we would create prosperity unparalleled during our

lifetime. Here is a Government that has, for some reason, lost the capacity to plan and coordinate large infrastructure projects that our economy so desperately needs. Here is a Government that has instilled fear among its people. This is not right. We can better than this. We can do much better than this as a people, and as a nation.

We are the generation that will repair the broken trust of our people in our system. And we will succeed in it.

I borrow the words of wise leader of the past, that

“In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility – I welcome it. I do not think any of us would exchange places with any other people of any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it – and the glow from that fire can truly light the world”.

Lets light the world, by stepping forward, in small steps, doing small things, in small ways, in small places, but collectively doing one big thing, “doing what is right” for our country.

We can do better, we can do much better in this country.

In the crowd today is a great musical performer, and herdsman, Rikhomedenshene, a resident of Mosokaphala cattle-post in the central district. He has spent his entire lifetime herding cattle, a trade he does with distinction. But through his herding life, he has also harboured with him a dream to one day perform before a large crowd. I have known of dream throughout my life. Today he performs before not just an ordinary crowd, but an extraordinary crowd that harbours its own dreams. Rikhomedenshene may have lived to see his dream, and it is the small things that we must learn to appreciate. But this does not mean that we must accept that it has to take this long.

We can do better than this as a people.

I will not talk about big plans and large monumental fortunes for you or your country today, because it is the small things, the little miracles that happen in our daily lives that build our destinies:

All our people should be able to plant a dream in their hearts, and believe that if they nurtured it patiently and diligently, they will realize it;

A hawker should be able to start small, and know that their hard-work and innovation will grow them without the need to know someone who knows someone who can ensure he wins the Government tender

Every citizen, in their privacy or in public, should be able to express their view on how they see the world, and should feel they can share their views and experiences without thinking that they may be penalized somewhere by someone because someone or some people feel offended without saying so

Every citizen should feel safe in their homes, believing that no enemy will make it through the walls our security forces will build for them

Every farmer, doctor, nurse, teacher, gardenman – every choir-master, painter, carpenter, engineer, sweeper, petrol attendant, soldier, policemen, prison warder, and lawyer working in government or in the private sector should believe that they will be allowed to get better and better at what they do, and reap the rewards of

their excellence, and not because someone somewhere has to like how they smile to them or agree with them. But because their work continues to grow our national cake, and the colour of the rainbow above us.

These are the ideals our forbearers set for us. They ring truer today that they did when they were first expressed. Small things to do. Small miracles in our everyday lives.

We can do better. We can do much better as a nation.

And friends, many of you, I know have left behind small babies at home. I know Mr Sokwe travelled more than one night to be here today from those flat plains that are tsau, semboyo, makakung, habu, matsaudi, maporotla, places of people whose hopes he carries. I see faces here today, faces of new people I met last week in Molepolole who vowed to come today, to be instigators of change.

Every shade of our people are here, church leaders, and teenagers, I see party activists and many ordinary people that once upon a time loathed politics, but now are saying we all need to step forward and do our part. The South

Africans are here, all the way from South Africa, because they too harbor to live with neighbours with whom, in small things, in small ways, and in small places, we can build a Africa that is the envy of the world. The world can talk about a place of Ubuntu, where small miracles are part of our every day life.

Your faces and your presence today, to borrow from the words of a long passed leader, “symbolize an end as well as a beginning – signifies renewal as well as change”.

And today I ask of you only one thing. Do not look for change. Do not look for change as if it is some distant star that is beyond our reach. Do not look for something that is here, something that is within us, something that is in your breaths and your heartbeats. There is something stirring in this country. There is something stirring in this place. Step forward and embrace it. Embrace this change. Don't let it go by, embrace it now. Embrace it in 2014.

And although the Movement we serve, the Umbrella, makes a pledge to the people of Bonnington South, it is the same pledge that we make to all the citizens:

I meet some boys and girls in the open spaces in Bophirima and Morula wards and everywhere in this place. But this is the scene everywhere else. They are not done with GCSE, some of them don't know whom to ask about the way forward and no hand to guide them;

I meet hawkers, some of them trading illegally in liquor, from their homes. Some are mechanics. The other day I met a young man who is a piece-jobber – he explained the carpentry he does, but could not show me a brochure on anything on paper.

I walk into the yards, and find many people living in disabilities. No one knows about them except their families and their neighbours – no one knows what to do with them.

The bulk of the men and women are struggling to find jobs; worse, still they don't know what to do or where to ask about ways to empower themselves and their families;

We have graduates here, engineers, social scientists, artists – they can't find jobs. They don't know where to start or how to create jobs themselves for others;

I meet our young men, and women enlisted in the police and the security forces. Their morale is low. Our workers wake up in the morning and they do not look forward to their work or their futures. This is the same for our civil servants, and many of our professionals.

Even the kids in the colleges are worried about life after school

It is dark in the nights, no street lights, no proper sanitation, no proper roads in large parts of our constituency. The fences are down in some of the primary schools, there not enough computers for the children to learn from. I can go on about the daily challenges

It is easy to articulate the problems, but we should not get used to the habit of counting only our struggles and our suffering. For in this island of struggles, we are surrounded by a sea of opportunities.

For we can do much better. We can do much better than we are doing as a nation.

Our Manifesto gives our people this opportunity

The character of our Umbrella leaders gives our people this opportunity. We are fortunate to have Cde Boko, Cde Motswaledi and Cde Molapisi three leaders with the courage, tenacity, intellect and energy to lead our people. They are unyielding, unbending, unshaken, unmoving, and unwavering in leading the match to freedom, the match to prosperity, the match to fairness, and the match to excellence. We have some many other leaders, too many to count, in every part of this country. And many of you that are here, those who have heard and responded to the call of the trumpets, you too are leaders. Your voice and actions are what will inspire those that are not here today.

For we can do better as a nation. We can do much better.

With our Manifesto we seek to defeat hunger, disease and lack of opportunity. We seek to generate wealth at whose table the majority of our people can partake. We seek to unite an increasingly polarized nation. We seek to bring freedoms, and allow of citizens to pursue their life dreams. We achieve this through five pillars

An new age education system to build a well-rounded, productive, balanced citizen with initiative:

A decentralized, democratic, clean and effective governance and government:

A vibrant, diversified and growing economy in which our people are meaningful participant:

No citizen stays behind, no one:

Our families and citizens live pleurably and feel free to be who they are:

Some may ask, why talk about a manifesto that speaks about the entire nation and not just our constituency. They will say, we are looking for an MP who will solve our problems here, and not someone who tries to solve the whole country's problems and ends up not solving any.

Part of my responsibility as your MP in waiting, is to make you accept that you are not an island. Your children will not find jobs if we are not able to generate wealth as a country, in Soa or Orapa, in the Okavango or in Lobatse. When our nation creates jobs in the Kgalagadi, these jobs are for you too.

When the manifesto talks about a new education system, it means the people here, in Bonnington South will learn to artisans, electricians, drafters, heavy-plant mechanics, chefs in a system that will emphasise two year practical high quality courses

When the manifesto unveils new ways in governance, it deals with a new Government that values the empowerment of local Government; a Government that plans large projects in a coordinated fashion, delivers them on time and within cost, a Government with new ministries tailored to the demands of the job ahead of us. It means appointing the right people in the right places.

When the Manifesto un-bottles our economy from the shackles holding it back, it punches at archaic laws that discriminate against small businesses, and citizens from participating meaningfully in the economic mainstream:

Stringent laws that require a bank operator to have operated previously in other countries will be repealed, so Botswana citizens who are experienced and knowledgeable can start banks

Laws prohibiting hawkers from operating businesses at homes and other public areas will be repealed and reformed to make laws user-friendly to small businesses

We will promulgate laws to ensure Botswana citizens become shareholders particularly in certain sectors such as mining

We will ensure the role of Botswana citizens in Government tender-system is much more pronounced and fairer by forcing larger companies to work with smaller ones, and ensuring the criteria favours hardworking, innovative and deserving citizens

We will unveil a multi-billion “sky is the limit” infrastructure rollout plan to ensure a massive extension of our rail line, building of water-pipes, sewerage systems in high density areas, overhead bridges in dangerous pedestrian crossing like here in Gwest, building of leisure parks, planting of trees, more IT infrastructure

We will unveil a major research and development initiative in partnership with a raft of players, to bring out Botswana’s natural advantages in the production of processed meat,

processed food, medicines, solar power, and indigenous drinks.

We will revise laws that are restrictive on nurses setting up clinics

We will ensure there are medicines available for the sick

We will ensure no one remains behind, by establishing a comprehensive scholarship and schooling system for people living with disabilities. There are not enough women holding public offices, yet so many women are the instigators of real change

We will return our forces to high professionalism, and work on reviving the moral of our teachers, doctors, nurses and other public servants.

Many of you here understand that Government cannot do everything for us. The Government alone cannot help our children exercise better manners, or help them become more patient. Government cant remind your children to say “thank you”, or a sister to be more considerate to a brother. Government cant stop our children from taking drugs or abusing alcohol. We have to

understand that these are our responsibilities as a community and as citizens.

In this constituency, I have discovered some of the best doctors, engineers, teachers, nurses, businessmen and artists. My pledge to them:

Let us work together in small ways to assist the schools in teaching our young through extra-classes

Let us bring our artists together and help them work together to become international stars

Let us work in our small ways to sharpen the planning skills of our hawkers, small businesses and home traders

Let us work with the unions to ensure our workers are not exploited

Let us organize a Bonnington South marathon that will attract tourism to our constituency and elevate the name of our home

Let us be responsible and work on a programme to care for environment, by planting trees, and making good use of open spaces

Let us find a way of fixing these dark street lights, that attract crime in the night

Lets put pressure on authorities to ensure the improvement of living conditions of our people l in high density areas

There is something stirring in this country; something stirring in the hearts of our people. Deep deep down we all understand that what we really need in this country is a new beginning. We all know what we need is a fresh beginning. Some among us are afraid of this change. Some are in denial. Some are angry at us, because they genuinely believe that we are spoilers. Yet it does not matter if some are angry, or some are in denial, because change is coming. Change is coming to this land; in fact change is here, it is stirring in the hearts of our people; they are tossing and turning at night because they feel there is something in the air.

We have a tremendous responsibility as a movement to lead with humility. We must not make anyone feel they are going to be punished when we are in Government simply because they disagreed with us. We must not make our people believe our role is to oppose or put down others. We need to distinguish ourselves and

demonstrate that we are a new generation of responsible leaders. We understand the heavy burden and sacrifices of leadership. We understand that that it is the little every day things, the little miracles that will build our country. We need to unite our people and make them see that this is their country. They are a powerful generation that will lift this country high.

In me, please, do not look for a messiah, or a great leader. Do not look for big ideas or big deeds. I ask you to look for a citizen among citizens, a citizen willing to serve with all his mind, heart and soul. This is my promise to you, that I will do my best; it may be small, it may not be enough, but it will be the best of me.

Tsamayang le boele ko Morula, ko Bophirima le ko Bosekangwetsi

Palamang di-combi le boele Molepolole, Lobatse le Manaka

Palamang dikoloi tsa Maun le tsa tsao

Le ba bolelele gore mapantsola le maCat ba ne ba kopanetse lehelo; baruti le bo DJ ba ne ba reeditse dikoma tse di tshwanang, basadibagolo

le magamma ba ne ba kgabile ka go tshwana,
bahererero le babui ba Setswana ba ne ba bua
teme ele nngwe hela

Ba boleleng gore batho ba, ba ne ba bua puo ele
nngwe hela, ba re go nale sengwe se se
tsubutlang mo dipelong tsa batho ba lehatse la
rona; le ba reye le re “a re amogeleng gore motlha
wa diphetogo tse di siameng o gorogile; ba
boleleleng gore ke tiro ya rona eseng ope gape go
netehatsa diphetogo, tlhophang ka palo ya
bonyonyo jwa ditshoswane, dirang ka mashetla
ko le leng teng, emeleng boammaruri ko le leng
teng go nne Modimo o tla le thusa, o tla hodisa
lehatshe la rona, o tla nesa pula mo lehatsheng la
rona, o tla tlisa kgora mo lehatsheng la rona.

Le ba bolelele gore ke ba opelela pina ke ye, “ Rea
u boka, Morena
Re ntse re thabela uena
Re sa phela hamonate
Ka pabalalo ea hao, Ntate

Re pholositsoe ka mohau
Ka lineo tsohle tsa hao
Reko la hao le leholo
Le re thabisitse pelo

U re nee ho thabela

Speech by Ndaba Gaolathe: Launch of parliamentary and council candidates by the Umbrella for Democratic Change on 22 February 2014, Rainbow School Hall

Tsee u li ratang kaofela
Thato ea hao e phethehe
Ban aba hao ba khethehe

End