NATION BUILDING AND SOCIAL COHESION
HARMONISATION RELATIONS FOR SOCIAL COHESION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITIES AND GOVERNMENT

Panelists

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PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

- To discuss nation building and Social Cohesion
- To discuss the role of traditional leadership in Social cohesion and nation building. The subject of social cohesion cannot be discussed without including traditional leadership given that we have a dual system in RSA comprising of traditional leadership and elected governance.
- Social cohesion is not about how Black relates to whites and other groups, but it is about relations within a group.
ISSUES RAISED BY THE DM FOR DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION

- Tribal undertones
- Scourge of gender based violence of vulnerable groups. People with the Albinism condition killed in areas under traditional leadership
- The role of the institution and how it should find expression in Moral regeneration Programmes
- The effects and influence of social media in the lives of the Youth.
UNITY IN DIVERSITY- PROF MOSOMA

- Explanation of the concepts unity and diversity, the advantages and disadvantages of each

- Social cohesion and Nation building are processes that lead to an end and are not ends in themselves.

- Nation building is about the creation of the sense of national identity. The challenge with SA is that its citizenry does not share common reference points. Statutes conjure up different emotions to different categories of the population.

- Culture, religion and language embody the totality of human experience.

- Protection of cultural heritage and retrieval of diminished and diminishing heritage should be promoted.
- Cultural concepts should be used to grow the economy and to learn from our own concepts which existed within the African communities. Learn from our own diminishing cultural concepts as opposed to other nationals.

- The quality of our concepts like *amalima/ letsema* which contributed to cooperation, and *mafisa/ukusisa* to empower and invest in enhancing the quality of life of the indigent families.

- The importance of language as the transmitter of culture and religion also serves to promote unity in diversity through effective dialogue among the people and also as a mark of personal identity.

- The important role played by languages is that it promotes cognitive development. Languages can flourish provided they are used as languages of commerce and record.

- As country, we are managing the heritage and languages of others instead of promoting the use of our own.

- The role of culture, religion, language and economy are inextricably bound as they have the potential, if properly mediated, to contribute significantly in the birth of a new nation on the foundation of its unity in diversity.
South Africa is characterized by a number of disparities which affect the social well-being and wellness of the nation.

RDP of the Soul was called for but never materialized. There is a need to revisit the concept and interrogate our value systems and what we stand for as a society. There should not be a disjuncture between the material and the soul.

Ethical leadership and integrity is required by the nation.

Foreign concepts have influenced South Africans and their way of life. South Africans perceive themselves through constructs created by others.

Lack of Ubuntu has weakened our institutions and has robbed us of our sense of communalism.

MRM mandate requires the leadership to be drawn from the people.
VALUES TO BE ESPoused BY AFRICANS IN THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND NATION BUILDING

Guided by Ubuntu which underlies democracy.

- Respect for human life and dignity
- Promote responsible freedom, the rule of law and democracy
- Improve material well-being and economic justice
- Enhance Sound family and Community values
- Uphold honesty, integrity and loyalty.
South Africa is at a difficult time and finds itself asking questions to which we have answers. We have been part of and are knowledgeable of our history.

Africans fought wars with settlers and they were defeated. This was due to the fact that Africans were divided in their fight and wars that ended up taking land away from them.

The recognition of this shortcoming, prompted Africans to come together and form an organization that sought to bring unity to the divided groupings.

In line with the principles underpinning the formation of the African Native Congress, it comprised of two Houses namely: House of Traditional Leaders and House of Commons.
Post democracy, South Africa established the TRC which focused on what others did during apartheid but shied away from atrocities committed by Africans themselves (Externally focused)

Proposal: National prayer day to be held annually on the 26th of April. The purpose would be to beseech forgiveness from all the wrongs and atrocities that were committed.

In the democratic dispensation, we have trampled on traditional structures that previously brought order and coherence within the communities.

The democratic dispensation further came along with new structures like Ward committees, Councillors, Community Development Workers etc. These structures are in perpetual contestation with the traditional ones and eventually traditional leadership institution lost and are not supported.

The local government space is now highly contested and government, like the former British government, is implementing discriminatory support.

The relationship between traditional leadership and local government and the support that is provided to the two structures should be similar and government needs to support and bring traditional leadership on par with the other democratic structures.
Government must recognize, support and promote the various cultural activities practiced within the country which will enable nation building. (Initiation/Reed dance)

Cultural practices serve the following purposes:

- Teaching the Youth about responsible behavior and acceptable conduct amongst communities.
- Fosters responsible citizenry that respects and holds in high regard women and children.
- Promotes cooperation, respect, tolerance and social cohesion which would lead to nation building.

Leaders should be exemplary and serve their communities with honesty and integrity. Leading by example is very important.

South Africa has laws in support of the institution, which are not being implemented. The unfortunate part is that there are no punitive measures for none compliance.

Promote and support the convening of Izimbizo

Bolster support from the family unit.
Tribal undertones, case in point is the Vuwani-Malamulele issue. The indaba should come up with mechanisms to deal with divisive undertones.

Develop mechanisms to revive morality, instill ethical behavior to all members of the society. Change in behavior should start with traditional leaders. Should use practical wisdom to change societies for the better. All countries that are successful have achieved success on the basis of their cultural beliefs which is embedded in the economy.

South Africa is Eurocentric and this indaba should propose the introduction of our own Kairetzu /amalema /mafisa to promote the well-being of our own.

Uphold the rule of law and support endeavours aimed to enforce the law. There should be consequences for actions

Alignment of traditional leadership structures with other government structures

Influx of foreign nationals and the businesses they operate in rural spaces should be addressed. Rural communities do not benefit from economic growth instead income is taken out of the country.

Issues are discussed in meetings and nothing become of the decisions. Meetings are used to manage traditional leadership, to keep them in the loop with the hope that something will be done and yet nothing will actual happen.

Religion has contributed to the oppression of the African people. There is need to discuss issues of faith in order to discover areas where we went wrong.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the President now has authority and must use his authority and final approval of the basket of proposals submitted between 2001-2003 by the Coalition of Traditional Leaders of South Africa made to him when he was still Deputy President of the Republic.

- Traditional leaders must revive the Coalition of Traditional Leaders and the Government must recognize it as the legitimate and representative mouthpiece on all traditional leadership issues affecting the institution.

- That disparities in terms of remuneration, allowances and stipends to traditional leaders at all levels and their institutions must be dealt with as a matter of urgency. In order for traditional leaders and traditional structures to function and achieve the goal of social cohesion, they will have to be supported by government and this would necessarily include technical support as well as funding.
There must be greater alignment sought between the modern constitutional democratic system with traditional systems, structures and institutions and these tiers must co-dependent and mutually reinforcing as opposed to working against each other.

Traditional leaders and Religious leaders should convene a conference in Bloemfontein, the purpose of which would be to confront this pointed question: how were the social compact and the moral compass lost and what to do to reclaim lost ground?

Traditional Leaders to hold national annual prayer day on the 26th of April which the Government should support. Such a day should be inter-denominational and interfaith.

Amend the Constitution to cater for the roles and functions of the institution and other related matters.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- There must be continued and bolstered support to the family as an institution to inculcate values, knowledge and the maintenance of discipline in each family unit (the understanding of the family unit here is in terms of its different social configurations – mindful of the disruption apartheid caused to traditional families).

- The institution of traditional leadership will take practical measures to stamp out tendencies of tribalism within their areas of jurisdiction.

- The influx of illegal foreign nationals has serious implications for social cohesion. Traditional leaders hereby call for an end to the porous borders so that only those that are deserving and have been vetted access the country including the rural countryside.
Traditional authorities pledge to have a more targeted focus on gender based violence, as well as violence against children and other vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people living with disability and albinism.

The general moral decay across South African society is of great concern to traditional leadership. The institution therefore pledges to give support to the moral regeneration project and would take an active role in leading the project, including the popularization of the Charter of Positive Values.
Cultural practices and customs in general are important to most traditional rural communities. However, it is also an incontrovertible fact that some have been found to be harmful and not consistent with other universal values that South Africa seeks to uphold as a modern constitutional democracy. Some of these practices have tended to denigrate the welfare and status of women and children in particular. As part of fostering cohesion, there must be an open engagement at the level of traditional leadership in the identification of some of these practices so that they are eliminated. This should be possible given that there is consensus that some aspects of culture and custom will evolve as circumstances dictate.

Traditional leaders should revive cultural customs and rituals that focused on leadership, integrity and exemplary conduct for future leaders of their communities. As part of fostering cohesion, traditional authorities will intensify efforts in the development of cultural and staging of cultural programs. However, more assistance is required, especially from the national Department of Arts & Culture as well as from the provincial departments and municipalities.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promotion of African languages and indigenous knowledge systems by traditional authorities will continue being a top priority. However, traditional authorities require assistance in the codification and archiving of this knowledge so as to undercut the overreliance on oral forms of knowledge repositories. This knowledge must be unearthed, organized, interpreted, analyzed, codified and stored in knowledge repositories within the traditional authority and be accessible to those who need it, especially the younger generation.

- There is a “single” public education system which is however differentiated and unequal; and consequently this hinders cohesion and unity, as those from poorly resourced public schools will have their life chances limited. Traditional leaders call for an equitable system of education which will not negatively circumscribe life chances of a certain section of the South African school-going children, especially the rural poor.
More focus on community development programs in traditional communities is needed and thus the role of traditional authorities in the development of the Integrated Development Programs (IDPs) must be strengthened.

A special Ministry dedicated to dealing with issues of traditional leadership is required and all effort must be made in ensuring that the Minister responsible is familiar with traditional leadership or preferably the Minister concerned is a Traditional Leader.

Return of traditional jurisprudence and traditional courts – accord them the necessary authority and respect. In this regard, this commission wishes to plead with the legislature to expedite the passing (and enactment into law) of the Traditional Courts Bill.
THANK YOU