

**WELCOMING DELEGATES TO THE AFRICAN  
RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE  
ADDRESS BY PREMIER  
L P H M MTSHALI, MPP  
DURBAN : 31 MARCH 2001**

Chairperson, His Excellency President T M Mbeki, Hon Deputy President Mr J G Zuma, Hon Minister of Home Affairs Dr M G Buthelezi, your excellencies, Honourable National Ministers and Deputy Ministers, members of the diplomatic corps, members of the consular corps, delegates, members of the KwaZulu Natal Cabinet, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is indeed a privilege that our city of Durban has been chosen to host the African Renaissance Conference. We are delighted at the honour bestowed on this province. May I on behalf of the Government of the Province of KwaZulu Natal and its citizens extend a hearty welcome to His Excellency President T M Mbeki and Hon Deputy President Mr J G Zuma, all dignitaries, delegates and friends and citizens of Africa to this important conference on the topic of "The African Renaissance".

The ground we are on is the home of the largest segment of the population of our country. The overwhelming majority of the people of this Province are Zulus, AmaZulu, in our language. Historically, and in historical consciousness up to our time, this is the central home of the Zulu Kingdom.

The fame of Africa, among the nations of the world, rests essentially on the actions of two nations and peoples of the Continent, the **Ancient Egyptians**, and **Zulus (AmaZulu)**. In its days of glory and widest fame, the Zulu Kingdom was an amalgamation and fusion of various peoples of Southern Africa, held together spiritually by the philosophy of **Ubuntu** (Humaneness), and **Discipline, Order, and Respect** which arose out of military tradition established by Africa's greatest hero, **King Shaka**. The greatness and genius of King Shaka was his meeting, head-on, as a matter of utmost urgency in his time, the challenge of uniting all Africans in our region, for the purpose of dealing adequately with the new needs and new conditions of World Politics, and of the new emerging World Economy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the English traders of the time, who had an audience with the King, relates that King Shaka asked him to pass a message to the European Monarch, that the Monarch should unite all the White Nations of the World, while, he, Shaka, would unite all the Black Nations of the World. Having accomplished that, he, Shaka, and the European Monarch, would meet to unite! That, Ladies and Gentlemen, may elicit some laughter.

But, what a vision! --showing that King Shaka was already thinking in Pan African terms, and in terms of the unity of Humankind. Of course, generations after him would deal with the details of the historic mammoth task, with certain amendments to his majestic vision.

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We, in our time, are King Shaka's children, continuing in his footsteps to meet the gigantic challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which are, at once, regional, national, continental, and global.

It is supremely fitting that we are all gathered here, on the soil which is said to be place of origin of Humankind, to discuss the issue of **The African Cause**, and the issue of **The Human Cause**.

What is **The African Cause**? It is the raising of Africa back to her feet, after the most horrendous fall and degradation of human beings and human societies ever to occur in all human history. This horrendous fall and degradation of Africa and of her people was brought about by the actions of Africa's own close cousin-brothers and cousin-sisters from Europe and other regions of the world.

Since all Humankind originated in Africa, and since scientists even say that we can all be traced to one common African woman, it is obvious that all of us, Africans, Europeans, Indians, Arabs, Jews, Asians, Amerindians, -are, historically and biologically, close cousin-brothers and cousin-sisters.

The tragedy is that racism, underdevelopment, and wide disparities of wealth separated these close blood relatives from one another, mentally, spiritually, and socially, made us all alien, even hostile, to one another. Dealing with that gigantic, complex, and tragic problem constitutes **The Human Cause**, which is part and parcel of our agenda.

Therefore, the **African Cause**, and the **Human Cause**, constitute one and the same agenda of The African Renaissance.

The first bullet in the statement of the Aims and Objectives of this year's conference, reads as follows: "To bring together intellectuals, academics, community leaders, indigenous healers, artists and poets to debate issues around globalisation, the African Renaissance, Development and sustainability."

May I wish you fruitful deliberations and success in this most noble and challenging task before you.

