SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE MINSITER OF PUBLIC WORKS KWAZULU-NATAL MR M.B. GWALA AT THE FUND RAISING DINNER OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH ON THE 4TH MARCH 2005 AT THE VELDENVLEI COMMUNITY HALL IN RICHARDS BAY: 19H30

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Luke 24: 36 this verse has the greeting that the Lord Jesus Christ used when He awoke from the dead and appeared before his disciples, He stated "Peace be unto you" I greet you all in the same greeting.

Programme Director, I am humbled and honoured to be invited by your congregation to share with you this auspicious occasion and to address your fundraising dinner.

I appreciate the privilege and honour of addressing the congregation. Ladies and Gentlemen, our beautiful country is faced with the challenge of creating economic freedom especially for the previously disadvantaged members of our country, hence the topic of this evenings gathering: "**CREATING JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES."**

South Africa is a country where various cultures merge to form a unique nation that is proud of its heritage. The question of relationships between the Church and the State dates back to the Middle Ages, when conflicts surfaced from time to time in running battles between Popes and Emperors. An issue which often caused conflict was: Is it the spiritual authority of the Church or the power of the State which should prevail? Fortunately with the modern society this question has been largely addressed, except in dictorial governments.

The State and the Church both have a responsibility towards society. The State derives its mandate from the people that it serves while the Church's mandate is God given. The State should not be expected to be the only player in the very

difficult task of seeing to the well being of humanity. The Church and the State should in almost equal partnership, pool their resources in fulfillment of God's requirements, that His people be accorded basic dignity. When we talk of joint responsibility, I mean no divisional of responsibility where the Church take moral responsibility and State providing material need.

The meaning of the joint responsibility is that the Church should understand that it cannot provide food to empty stomach. I therefore see a Church profoundly concerned about economic issues and guiding the State about the needs for the poor.

The religious leaders need to install values such as dignity, honour, respect, sympathy, empathy and love for the common good of all, within the community.

The government has the duty to ensure safety and security for the society. At the same time, the Church has to help us find ways to address the immorality in our society which gives birth to crime, corruption, lack of respect to life and the conviction among many that it is only survival of the fittest that matters.

Church leaders, political leaders and civilians, made enormous sacrifices and paid with their lives for freedom in this country. We will forever be indebted to these and many other unsung heroes and heroines of the struggle for freedom, democracy and justice that we enjoy today.

While we are mindful that today we are faced with many challenges, including the urgent need to improve the standard of living of all our people, to eradicate poverty, and close the gap between fibres of our society.

The church, which is one of the central custodians of the nation's morality, faces challenges to continue to participate in the important work of rebuilding our families and community ethos and values.

In 2003 in the State of the Nation address, the President draw attention to the fact that there was an enormous gap “between the first and the second economies of this.” (*Expanded Public Works Program Framework for the Provincial Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:1*) As a direct result of the President’s speech, the national Department of Public Works created the Expanded Public Works Program or EPWP. This program “required that all the public sector institutions prepare their EPWP plans focusing on their core business and demonstrate how they are going to increase the participation of the unemployed and the marginalized in their respective areas of jurisdiction.” *(EPWP Framework for the Provincial Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:1*)

“The Expanded Public Works Program is a nationwide program that involves the re orientation of public sector expenditure on goods and services to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work, so that workers gain skills while they work, and also increase their capacity to earn an income.” *(EPWP Framework for the Provincial Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:1)*

The programme “is aimed at creating productive employment opportunities through interventions in four main sectors of the economy namely: social, economic, infrastructure and environmental and cultural programs*.” (EPWP Framework for the Provincial Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:1)*

Our country is face with the enormous challenge of the escalating unemployment rate. According to the Provincial Profile report done in 2003, it was estimated that the average unemployment rate was approximately **42%.** It was established by the 2001 Census that KwaZulu Natal population figures are at **9 426 017** (about **9.4 million**) of which **85%** of this figure are black people. In addition the province has a high “dependency ratio with about **3.3 million** people below the age of **15** years and **437 000 aged 65 years** and over” (*EPWP framework for the Provincial*

Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:2). Even more alarming is the fact that **53%** of the population live bring home income that is below the poverty line.
These statistics indicate that the province of KwaZulu Natal has a number of obstacles to address before achieving economic growth for the people. The Expanded Public Works Programme main objective is to provide communities with skills and opportunities; in addition it targets backlogs in economic infrastructure. It is aimed at both rural and urban communities, by providing them with the necessary skills. This training includes two key elements: "basic life skills and technical skills of program beneficiaries." (*EPWP Framework for the Provincial Government of KwaZulu Natal, 2004:9).* The programme also provides quality of life and entrepreneurial training and also formal and work place training. The programme has a Code of Good Practice which stipulates that in all Public Works Projects, women should be **50%** of the work force, the youth **20%** and the disable **2%,** then the rest of society.

Through partnership between various organs of state and other social partners including the Church, government has identified provincial key strategies to meet growth and development challenges of the previously marginalized community. Some of these key strategies includes, *inter alia:*

- Building a people focused, effective and efficient government
- Building the economy
- Reducing Poverty and creating sustainable communities
- Investing in job creating economic growth
- Urban renewal and rural development
- Special Programme for Women Development
- Expanded Public Works Programme

The State regards the Church as one of its principal partner as we strive to improve the lives of all our people, especially the poor accordingly, we urge the

Church to continue to use its capacity and infrastructure positively to impact on the process of transformation and change.

The Department of Public Works invites the Church to establish this partnership with their unlimited involvement in working together to address various challenges facing the government which includes poverty alleviation, the HIV/ AIDS pandemic programmes and service delivery.

A moral and spiritual framework must underpin on effect as we strive to transform our land to set free the prisoners or subjects of poverty, dreaded disease and illiteracy.

Research conducted by the Church Land Programme (CLP) approximately five **(5**) years ago indicated that there are approximately **12000** residents on the land owned by Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa in KwaZulu Natal alone. This alone should create a vehicle for partnership in development of our society, it ensures that the church then in the best position engage government in the development of infrastructure and job creation.

I am aware that the question of the lack of infrastructure is unfortunately a problem faced by many rural and urban communities. The Department of Public Works majority of duties and mandate is the provision of infrastructure depending on the nature and scope of the project. Any infrastructure project other than provision of water and electricity is the responsibility of the Department of Works, and although this we collaborate with various parties in government to provide job opportunities.

As we build a people centered, caring society, we call on the Church and all our people to support the fundraising which in turn will assist in fighting challenges such as women and children abuse. According to the statistics found by

PEOPLE OPPOSING WOMEN ABUSE (POWA):

- **1 in 2 women** have a chance of being raped in their lifetime.
- A woman is raped **every 26 seconds** in South Africa.
- Most rapes occur within the rapists' community.
- **1 in 4 women** are in an abusive relationship.
- **A woman is killed every 6 days** by her intimate male partner in South Africa
- Women are more **likely to be attacked by someone they know than by a stranger.**
- **A child is abused every 8 minutes** in South Africa.
- **A child is raped every 24 minutes** in South Africa.
- **A child is assaulted every 14 minutes** in South Africa.
- **85 – 90% of perpetrators** are known to the child.
- **1 in 4 girls & 1 in 5 boys under 16 years** have been sexually abused.

These figures are alarming and are an indication of the decay of moral fibres in our communities. This situation poses a challenge to you as a church and to us as the government to work together to restore values and decorum in our communities.

The National Government has given all Expanded Public Works Programmes budgets in excess of **R1.2 billion** for the creation of **12 000** permanent jobs. During the construction of Public Works Projects, there are a vast number of jobs which are created, however not all are permanent. This budget of **R1.2 billion** given to all Expanded Public Works Programs, will defiantly create **12 000** permanent jobs, which will ensure that maximum participation of the community in job creation and business opportunities.

The Department of Works, therefore, call on the church community to ensure that we rally together in **“Creating Jobs and Business Opportunities”** in provision of infrastructure.

The department of Public Works in its endeavor to create jobs, will donate an amount of **R100 000.00** however this amount will not be in cash but through assets that the Church is in need of.

I thank you.

AMEN.