

**REMARKS DELIVERED BY MEC FOR EDUCATION IN
KWAZULU-NATAL, MS MBALI FRAZER, DURING THE NATU
WORLD TEACHERS DAY EVENT HELD IN NEWCASTLE ON
27 OCTOBER 2023**

- Programme Director: NATU Deputy President: Mr. Mabuza
- **Minister of Basic Education: Honourable Motshekga**
- Minister of Employment & Labour: Honourable Nxesi
- **NATU President: Mr Malinga**
- General Secretary: Mr Ngema and the entire leadership collective of NATU
- **Former NATU President: Mr Ngcobo**
- Bishop Dlomo
- **Members of the Thompson Family**
- Government officials
- **All NATU members present**
- Ladies and gentlemen

I greet you all

I am honoured to be a part of today's special gathering as we pay tribute to the heart and soul of our education system – our educators.

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I stand before you with a heart full of gratitude and respect for the tireless efforts of our dedicated educators, who shape the destiny of our nation.

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Programme Director, our educators are the eternal flames that light the path to the future for our learners.

They are the true patriots who tirelessly guide our future leaders towards knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment.

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Ladies and gentlemen, without dedicated educators like yourselves in our classrooms every day, our children's dreams and aspirations would remain but flickers in the dark.

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Your commitment and resilience, even in the most challenging times, are nothing short of inspirational.

Allow me to take this moment to say to all our educators, 'SIYABONGA KAKHULU.'

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Mr. Malinga, as the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, we know we have an invaluable partner in NATU.

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I say this because NATU has been an unwavering stakeholder in our pursuit of delivering quality education to more than 6 000 schools across this province.

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On behalf of the Department, I hereby reaffirm our commitment to working with NATU and all our educational stakeholders for the betterment of the education sector.

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Together, we will continue to champion the rights of our learners and educators and ensure the improvement of their standard of living.

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Programme Director, allow me to take this moment to pay tribute to a great man, the late President of NATU, Mr. SA Thompson.

Allen, as many of us called him, he will forever be remembered as a passionate and selfless education activist who dedicated his life to protecting the rights of learners and educators.

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His legacy lives on in the hearts of every educator he touched and in the positive changes he brought to our education system.

We must honour his memory by continuing to fight for what is just and right in the education sector.

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Ladies and gentlemen, as we stand on the threshold of year-end examinations, I want to wish all our educators a peaceful, safe, and successful examination season.

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We know the enormous responsibility that rests on your shoulders – the responsibility of preserving the integrity of these examinations.

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It's a responsibility that both the government and the people of South Africa have entrusted to you because they know that you want only what is best for your learners and this country.

You, our dear educators, are the guardians of the education system, and we have full confidence in your abilities.

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With those words, Programme Director, it is an honour to introduce you to an activist of the ANC, a seasoned educator, and a unionist.

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I'm talking about a former teacher at Ikusasa Senior Secondary School who headed the social sciences department during his tenure there.

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He holds a BA degree from the University of Fort Hare, a Bachelor of Education from the University of the Witwatersrand, and a Higher Diploma in Education from the University of South Africa.

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He joined the struggle against apartheid at a young age, which resulted in him being expelled from school on several occasions for his involvement in political activities.

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He previously served as Assistant Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) from 1990 to 1994, and for a second term from 1994 to 2010, respectively.

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Ladies and gentlemen, this leader also served as the President of Education International, as well as the Secretary of the National Education Union of South Africa.

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He was the Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform from November 2010 before he was appointed the Minister of Public Works in October 2011, and then re-appointed to the same position in May 2014.

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Between March 2017 and February 2018, he held the position of Minister of Sports and Recreation, and then he was once again given the responsibilities of the Minister of Public Works from February 2018 until May 2019.

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After the 2019 General Elections, he was appointed as the Minister of Employment and Labour.

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Ladies and gentlemen, please rise and give a warm applause to Minister Nxesi as he joins me on the podium to address this gathering.

Ngiyabonga