

ON THE PATH TO RELEVANCE & INNOVATION AS A TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY



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Review Speech 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Annual Review Speech gives us the opportunity to reflect on our current position. We carefully consider our past and our present. We make a public commitment on how we aim to address the challenges of our future. This reflection and these plans are particularly important in a time of austerity.

Impala Platinum has informed its shareholders, including the RBN, that its dividend pay out for the next several years are likely to be very limited. This is due to output losses caused by what they term a 'perfect storm' of market, operational and societal challenges, including high levels of violent industrial action.

Impala still accounts for almost all of the Royal Bafokeng Nation Development Trust's annual income, meaning that our administration will have virtually no revenue for the next few years. Because of this, the 2014 budget for all RBN institutions remains similar to the 2013 budget at R670 million, but in 2015 and 2016 we project it will be reduced by half to around R340 million.

There are several implications of this situation:

- First, it underscores how necessary it is for us as a small, rural community to understand and actively engage with events beyond our valley, including South Africa, the continent and the world. It may feel like we are at the mercy of forces beyond our control, which is true if we act as individuals or as dispersed families and villages. But as a community, with the institutions and reputation we have built, we have a voice that reaches beyond our immediate context.
- Second, this experience reinforces the importance of diversifying our investment portfolio away from dependance on a single resource, and a single company, such as Implats.

Whilst 50% of our investment portfolio is now outside the mining sector, it will take a number of years for our non-mining shares to bear fruit as cash revenue.

The lesson here is not to change our strategy, but to remind ourselves that our strategy is long-term.

- Third, the prudence of our financial management systems and our administrative institutions is now clearly visible. When times are good, this administrative backbone is easily taken for granted. It is in times of challenge that we truly can appreciate the work that goes into daily stewardship of our community's resources. But we cannot be complacent and believe that our current systems are enough to carry us through hard times. We will use the cash crunch to scrutinise all our operations and ask if we are being as efficient and relevant as possible.

- Fourth, we now have the opportunity to forge new partnerships, especially with government but also with third party funders. We should not be using our resources to provide services that are the mandate of the South African government. We should be using our resources to monitor and support effective government service delivery beyond public minimum standards. As examples, we are identifying all indigent households living on RBN land so that they can benefit from municipal support, we are integrating our infrastructure planning with Rustenburg's IDP process, and we are engaging mining companies so that the current cycle of Social Labour Plan Development is coherent with our social developing planning.

We must neither hide nor downplay a challenge when it faces us, but we must also not stop thinking for the long term just because we face an immediate challenge. Our vision and our dream do not falter. Our response to any challenge needs to put us on a path that will let us emerge stronger, rather than weaker.

2. THE ROAD TO RELEVANCE PLAN 35

We already have such a path mapped out, so we have not been caught unprepared. When I took office, I inherited VISION 2020 from my brother. The Vision, crafted just after the fall of Bophuthatswana and the transition to democracy, imagined a self-sufficient community, that has its basic needs fulfilled; it also enshrined the steadfast protection of our land and our culture. We continue to interpret these goals in our ever-changing environment, a process that has brought us to our new map up to 2035, called Plan 35.

VISION 2020 helped us to focus on ourselves, laying down a strong foundation within our borders by developing our people and building institutions based on our history, our customs and our identity. Plan 35 builds on this foundation by recognising our inter-dependance with those around us. A key element of the Plan is to understand ourselves as inextricably linked into a wider world. We cannot succeed in our goals by only looking inward, doing everything ourselves and not participating and seeking to influence the conditions around us.

The goal of Plan 35 is to be a relevant and innovative traditional community in a changing world. What do we mean by relevance? Susan Sontag, a fiercely independent thinker, once said: "Existence is no more than the precarious attainment of relevance in an intense flux of past, present and future." It is impossible for anyone to control what happens in the flux of time, whether as a large country or a small community. It is, however, possible to be relevant to what happens, and therefore not to be at the mercy of change. To be relevant is to take a lead in areas that are pertinent to our everyday lives. What is pertinent to us is also likely to be pertinent to the rest of our country and continent. These areas include social justice; racial harmony; addressing poverty; economic diversification; education and leadership development.

If we consciously take a lead in such matters, then by default we become vital to national and global decision making processes. By taking a lead I mean acting boldly in our own space, while simultaneously engaging and influencing

national and international institutions. Our efforts in the past have included advocacy with government in the areas of taxation, mineral extraction, traditional leadership and land reform. Our inputs have been the decisive factor in the drafting and implementation of several pieces of legislation that have benefited not only us, but also other communities across the country.

We also participate in forums where global debates about sustainable mining, community based investments and poverty alleviation are shaped. By shaping policies that affect our everyday lives, rather than waiting for others to shape us, we ultimately come closer to our developmental vision.

The full mission statement of the Royal Bafokeng Nation reads: "We, the Bafokeng, Kgosi, Supreme Council and Makgotla, together with those who share our vision and values, will create an enabling environment for the prosperity of current and future generations by developing the people, the economy, and the land. Our strategy for excellence is realised through zero tolerance for corruption and through courageous, innovative leadership rooted in Bafokeng values." Our relevance lies in fulfilling this mission as well as in the partnerships we forge in this process.

A detailed document outlining Plan 35 is currently being formulated and will be published later this year. It will include not only a vision of what we are aiming for, but the processes, policies and partnerships we will need to build to achieve this vision.

3. UNDERSTANDING OUR CONTEXT

Long-term planning requires a continual assessment of the environment around us. Let me mention some recent national and global developments that have an impact on us.

3.1. The Honeymoon Is Over: Domestic Political Realignment

The past year was marked by the passing of our country's first democratically elected President, Nelson Mandela. Madiba was a man of compassion, but also a practical man of planning and building. He had a long-term vision for South Africa that allowed him to see beyond the seemingly intractable challenges of the moment. He was a principled and humble leader and by expressing strong values and living by them consistently, he inspired those around him to think differently about themselves, their fellow citizens and their contributions to a collective future.

Madiba grew up within traditional decision-making structures and drew on the power of consultation and consensus throughout his leadership. This made him all the more approachable, inclusive and influential. When the shape of our current democratic state and society were being negotiated, Nelson Mandela insisted on the need to build on, not reject, our particularly African cultures and structures, culminating in the integration of traditional governance into our Constitutional dispensation.

As we watch preparations for democratic South Africa's fifth national election, the realignment of our national politics is striking. Whatever the election outcome, the post-apartheid honeymoon is over. Not only are there several new political parties, but there are significant rifts within the ruling alliance's traditional support base, especially within the labour union sector. Given the power of unions in South Africa's political process, and unions' need to establish their influence on the shop floor, we can expect continued high levels of labour unrest and inter-union rivalry this year.

In addition to immediate political impacts, strikes have long-term systemic effects. Prolonged strikes in mining, energy, manufacturing, commercial agriculture and transport not only disrupt our local and national economies, but also the economies of those neighbouring

countries that import many of their goods from and through South Africa. If we continue to be unpredictable providers, they may decide to invest in alternative supply routes. This will not only threaten more jobs in South Africa, but also undermine our strategic position in the region. We hope that the country's leaders at all levels will factor such considerations into their decision-making.

Domestically, the new parties and union debates reflect a broad generational shift in what the majority of South African citizens expect from their government. Political freedoms and rights are no longer enough. The demand is for tangible social and economic deliverables. This may herald a period of pragmatic politics, where party loyalties become more contested and political coalitions more prevalent. It is likely that the coalition of opposition parties contesting the elections a 'Collective for Democracy' will be short-lived given their internal differences, but it sets an interesting precedent. In addition to coalitions at all levels, issue-based political alliances such as against e-tolling are likely to increase.

The demand for delivery should be accompanied by intolerance for corruption. Unfortunately, the rise of corruption in South Africa is frightening. In October 2013, Public Protector Thuli Madonsela told Parliament that: "Corruption in this country has reached crisis proportions." According to global integrity watchdog Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, South Africa has dropped from a ranking of 38 in 2001 to 72 in 2013 out of 177 countries surveyed. The Index is based on a survey of perceptions by South Africans, mainly business people. For the past two years, they have given South Africa a score of 42 and 43 out of 100. If one uses the metric of the Department of Basic Education, 43 out of 100 is a pass mark, but this is the tragedy of low expectations. Are our perceptions of corruption stabilising because we are getting used to low standards and accepting corruption as our normality? This should never be the case.

The demand for delivery must also be underpinned by a demand for effective and professional government institutions, without political targeting or favour. To date, the most effective and independent department has been SARS. If confidence in SARS starts to wane –if there are suspicions that rules are being selectively applied, whether more leniently or more stringently– then there is grave cause for concern. As an example, will President Zuma, as citizen and as employee of the state, be paying tax on the fringe benefits he has received through the improvements his employer has made to his private residence?

3.2. African Republics? Effectiveness of Government Revisited

Many of South African's current political challenges are not unique to our country. They reflect a shared continental history. Africa is not often associated with effective government. This is partly a negative stereotype, but also partly a truth based on the continent's history of colonialism and imposed borders. As we work to establish our own systems of governance in the RBN, we are faced with our country's attempts to deal with this history.

The big question is: How should the relationship between people and government be organised so that the government can be legitimate and effective? When government is not legitimate or effective, conflict ensues. The violent conflicts that have cost lives and retarded Africa's progress for decades have revolved around this challenge.

Since the end of colonialism in the 1960s, a 'modern' centralised state and 'modern' representative democracy have been lauded as the best ways to organise political life. But are these forms of state and democracy really serving us well in Africa? I believe they are not, and indeed cannot in their current form. This is not because states or democracy are inherently un-African. This understanding is false. It is because today's African states did not grow together organically by mutual agreement or a gradual process of incorporation. They were imposed. When Africa's borders were drawn by colonial powers in 1885, they disregarded the many existing nations, tearing some apart and

throwing others together into a shared political fate. This process disrupted the relationship between people, their leaders and the institutions of governance and administration. The legacies of this disruption remain with us today.

When the colonialists carved Africa up into new territories, they also imposed new political systems to centralise power within the new borders. This, I believe, created the conditions for destructive forms of tribalism to emerge, as leaders of different groups vied for access to the new, centralised power bases and resources. Rather than focussing on maintaining legitimate and effective systems of governance within tribal groups, these groups fought against each other for external favour and recognition. In most colonial systems, this process was worsened by the state granting preferential treatment to some groups over others. When African states attained independence, they kept the colonial borders. In many cases, this meant that tribal groups continued to compete for control over the central state, with the same effects: conflict and a lack of accountable governance.

South Africa likes to think of itself as different from the rest of Africa. We pride ourselves that we did not come out of Apartheid with politicised tribes competing with each other for power and that our democracy directly links our people and our central government in an accountable relationship. But we should not be complacent and believe that it cannot happen to us. The same historical, systemic conditions are present here as on the rest of the continent, including the imposed borders, the colonial politicisation of tribes and the concentration of power and resources in the central state. There are already strong popular sentiments, both in support of one's own tribal group and in suspicion of other groups. The more the state is centralised, the more people will watch whether some groups seem to be more in control than others. The more political parties are associated with tribal or language groups, rather than being broadly representative of all groups in society based on shared values and aims, the more the process of democratic contestation is delegitimised. The more leaders of central Government are chosen according to criteria other than performance, such as regional, tribal or personal loyalty, the more the legitimacy and effectiveness of the central state falter.

I therefore see the over-centralisation of power in our country as a serious risk to both political legitimacy and effective service provision. At the level of political legitimacy, other countries have adopted innovative means of addressing the legacy of imposed borders and multiple identity groups. Nigeria and Malaysia, for example, both have systems of rotating leadership, where the President of the country cannot be from the same region, ethnicity or race group twice in a row. South Africa has been moving in the opposite direction, with the increased hollowing out of provinces and other forums where regional identity groups could express themselves.

At the level of administrative effectiveness, there has also been increasing centralisation. National government has stepped in to manage municipalities and whole provinces due to a lack of local capacity to provide services. But for those local entities which have the capacity, the legitimacy and the will to govern effectively, over-centralised systems hinder local innovation. Rather than centralisation, South African needs substantive federalism that provides for greater regional autonomy, including space for special governance zones within the current municipal system.

3.3. The Global Picture

Moving to global developments, we saw many examples of short-term thinking in the past year. Regarding our own economic sector, platinum, South Africa and Russia signed an agreement in April 2013 to coordinate platinum and palladium production levels with the aim of influencing market prices. While controlling prices may seem like an easy win for two countries with 80% of global platinum supply, this does not take into account how increased prices may drive the search for replacement products and increased recycling. The recycling industry is already supplying about the same amount of platinum per year as South Africa's newly mined contribution. ⁱⁱ Our local strategy, in contrast, is not about increasing our control over new platinum production, but about decreasing our dependence on it by becoming part of the global trend around recycling, alternative technologies,

and completely mining-unrelated economic activities.

In terms of the overall global economy, we are not the only ones facing a cash-strapped year. While the global economy is recovering from its 2008 low, this recovery is slow and its sustainability is uncertain. The global economy grew at around 2.9% in 2013, and is projected to grow by 3.6% this year. ⁱⁱⁱ We remember it used to grow by around 5% before the onset of the global financial crisis.

The structure of the global economy is such that an inordinate amount of influence continues to lie with the US Federal Reserve and its strategies of increasing or fading out subsidised market liquidity. These strategies are primarily aimed at the needs of developed economies, while the effect on developing economies remains uncertain. Quantitative easing does not deal with the real structural fault lines in the global economy. Indeed, it is likely to lead to an even greater crash in the near future. We, like most of the world, have no influence on whether the United States government continues with its financial policy, but we shall have to bear the consequences far into the future.

In addition to the US' global reach, we see China asserting itself more strongly on the international stage, not least in Africa. China is using a combination of soft power in the form of cultural institutes, and financial incentives such as bilateral aid and direct investments. The latter includes Chinese companies, among others, buying large tracts of agricultural land on the African continent. While some of these investments will bring local benefits through technology and skills transfer, African countries will have to carefully monitor the impacts on food security and employment, quite apart from the larger political and social impacts of large-scale foreign land ownership.

In 2013 we also saw China dealing with massive internal social change, including the impacts of rapid urbanisation and the emergence of a large new middle class. The Chinese government responded with sweeping economic reforms and cautious political reforms. At stake is the transition from an economy driven by exports and government investment to a more sustainable growth model based on domestic consumption. Also at stake is whether this can be done without high levels of social unrest driven by rising popular expectations. At a much smaller scale, South Africa is faced with a similar task of lifting large portions of its population out of poverty, managing urbanisation, reducing its dependence on exports and responding to the popular anxiety caused by the gap between expectations and reality. The question for South Africa and even for the Bafokeng is whether we understand the Chinese well enough to plan our own engagement with them effectively. As one way of engaging, we are this year translating the book 'People of the Dew', which traces the history of the Bafokeng, into Chinese and several other languages.

4. STANDING IN OUR CURRENT CONTEXT - FACING INTO THE HEADWINDS

In terms of our response to this national and global context, we must learn from our own history. We have been working hard to build institutions that do two things. First, we aim to create an enabling environment so that our people can become self-sustaining, innovative and prosperous. Second, we are building a sense of self-worth and identity as a traditional community with relevance to a modern world. We will continue this work over the next twenty years. Yet just like the Kimberly miners who enabled us to buy our land, we are in many ways bucking the trend, or walking into a headwind. We are pushing up against historical legacies, including our own expectations and attitudes, making our progress an uphill battle. For us to succeed, we need to understand our challenges clearly.

4.1. An Innovative and Prosperous Community

4.1.1. *Avoiding the Resource Curse: "The Richest Tribe in Africa?"*

Our first challenge in achieving innovation and prosperity is our own internal contradiction: the resource that enable us to look into the future also constrain our imagination in the present. Decades ago, a journalist called us "the richest tribe in Africa." He had no basis for this, but the phrase has stuck in the minds of our people and many of our parents. The perception that we are 'rich' has given people high expectations for immediate improvements in their lives. Yes, the ability of our people to live fulfilling lives, without the daily indignities and deprivations of poverty, is the goal of everything we do. I emphasise, however, that this cannot be a short-term goal. The needs of the current generation must be balanced with the needs of future generations, our children and grand-children. Indeed, short-term gratification is a recipe for long-term failure. Just as we save individually to provide for our families, so must the administration in order to provide for future needs. We must never underestimate how long it takes for a society wracked by the mis-education of generations to transition toward a sustainably prosperous community.

The overall value of our portfolio stood at R35 billion at the end of 2012. Given the challenges our community faces and the hurdles we must

overcome to reach our goal of sustained collective welfare, this portfolio does not make our community rich.

There are four things to bear in mind about our portfolio. Firstly, very little of the overall portfolio is cash. Our investments are not freely tradeable at this point in time. As an example, our shares in Impala, Rand Merchant Bank and Vodacom cannot be traded for several more years, due to lock-in clauses in compliance with Black Economic Empowerment regulations. Furthermore, acquisition of these shares was debt funded, which will take a number of years to repay. Rightly understood, we all own the debt just as much as we own the profits, all in the interests of addressing the present day and future economic needs of our community.

Secondly, we have to use our portfolio to leverage additional resources into our area, without having to spend our own capital. The overall aim is to develop a diversified and technologically innovative local economy right here in Phokeng. This will generate quality jobs for our people. We will achieve this in a number of ways such as developing matching skills in sectors where we have significant equity investments, like in the telecoms or property sectors. We can then entice businesses to establish themselves in our area by offering a favourable combination of rental land qualified employees. Alternatively, we can use part of our portfolio as surety for investors or third party funders willing to build infrastructure and employment opportunities in our area.

This brings me to the third reason our portfolio does not make us rich, namely the need to address major backlogs in infrastructure and basic services. Over the years we have spent almost a billion Rand on basic infrastructure such as bulk water provision. This infrastructure needs continuous maintenance as well as upgrading and expansion to meet ever rising demand. Still ahead lies the challenge of addressing the need for dignified and healthy sanitation.

Much of the infrastructure we have built over the decades is actually the mandate of the municipality. The investment in piped water and roads, in improved schools and better clinics, was not a waste, as our overall standard of living is now significantly higher than it would have otherwise been. We are now in the process of considering how to share this responsibility with the municipality. Nonetheless, we will need to continuously monitor the provision of services to ensure the standards remain high.

The fourth and final point to consider is that our portfolio's purpose is to underpin the long-term survival of the Bafokeng Nation. As we work on reducing our exposure to resource cycles in the global market, we must not be tempted to undermine our enduring vision by cannibalising the core of our community's future.

Money alone will not solve our problems: high quality education, good leadership, specialised institutions, planning and personal commitment from all our people will. Our portfolio is an enabler. We must use it to get to the point where we can shift our energies from attending to our daily survival, toward planning for our children's and grandchildren's welfare.

In addition to a counterproductive expectation of immediate riches, the Bafokeng community shares three other constraints on the path of innovation and prosperity with the rest of South Africa: a dysfunctional educational system, an unproductive work environment and the breakdown of a broad contract between citizens and government.

4.1.2. Education

It is well known that the education system in South Africa fails us all. We are producing matriculants and graduates who are not employable and do not have the drive for self-employment. In 2011, only 41,000 learners passed matric with marks over 50 % in maths. This is 1 out of 40 of the 1.6 million children who started school twelve years ago. This means about 1,559,000 young people joined our economy in 2012 with low prospects for entry into higher education or vocational training, and without the conceptual skills needed for working in artisanal, manufacturing or

service jobs, or for starting and running a business. And the same number will do so again next year and the year after, because we do not have a strategy for reversing this dire situation.

The quality of learning in our education systems is fundamentally about the availability of quality teachers, yet here we are also faced with an ever worsening crisis. We currently have a gap of about 50,000 teachers in our country. We need to add 25,000 qualified teachers to our national pool every year to keep up with demand and to replace the many seasoned teachers who are reaching retirement age, but our universities are only producing 10,000. So every year we fall behind by 15,000 more. ^{iv}

Here in Phokeng, the effects of these trends are that we struggle to find qualified teachers, particularly for maths and science. For this and other reasons, we sought to invoke Section 14 of the South African Schools Act, which gives us joint management control of our schools together with the Department of Education. This status was granted in 2012 and it gives us the opportunity to augment the teacher complement and have an influence on teacher quality. We now have an aggressive strategy to train our pool of teachers. In 2013 our first cohort of eight foundation-phase teachers from North West University and we have 70 more currently enrolled for teaching degrees at different levels. We also have a programme of continuous professional development for all 800 teachers already working in our schools.

4.1.3. Work and Economic Relationships

Without fundamentally transforming our education system, there is little hope for transforming the unsustainable and disempowering employment patterns in our country. Our economy and tax revenue are based on the work of a small and shrinking percentage of the adult population. An unacceptably large proportion of our people are either working in informal or irregular jobs or are not working at all and depend on welfare transfers. The logic of a welfare state, which collects taxes from those who work and redistributes the resource to those who do not, cannot be sustained if we have three times more people receiving social grants than paying income tax.

More fundamental, however, is the psychological damage done to a generation of youth who do not see anyone in their family or neighbourhood in stable and productive work and who see no prospects for engaging in productive work themselves. Supporting one's family and contributing to one's community as a productive and independent member of society are a great source of pride and dignity. The hopelessness we see in much of our country's youth is not only about absolute poverty but about dysfunctional mechanisms for achieving aspirations and dignity. The pathways that should lead to a fulfilling future, namely education and work, should not end in disappointment.

There are many ways to think about creating conditions for dignified work and self-sustained value generation. Most of the debates in South Africa lack creativity. The unemployed expect government and big corporations to create jobs for them but this cannot be the only answer. We need a new approach that rethinks the relationships between workers, shareholders, corporate managers, government and communities. This approach would also bring the values of land ownership, financial capital and labour back together, instead of pitting them against each other.

4.1.4. Social Contract

Beyond economic relationships, South Africa needs a process to rebuild a strong social contract. Without it, we will not have a society that is stable and innovative. We must acknowledge head-on that we are facing a crisis of trust in our systems of governance and a crisis of youth identity and spirit. This crisis manifests in violence at Marikana in 2012 was the tip of an iceberg of protests about service delivery and working conditions. It is also expressed in the extremely high levels of personal violence across our country, whether in the form of violent crime, rape and the violation of children, as well as the violence people commit against themselves through alcohol and drug abuse. This violence represents a heart-breaking waste and misdirection of energy, talent which should rightly be invested in building rather than damaging our communities.

We must not think that we are the only ones trying to find a way forward in uncertain terrain. The entire world was deeply shaken through the recession of 2008, with economic and political patterns that once seemed unassailable now looking decidedly unstable. The first world having fundamental debates about its future. Youth unemployment is not only a problem in our part of the world but a concern for most developed countries across the globe. Arab countries are still struggling to stabilise after the regime changes triggered by youth unemployment and disillusionment. The jury is still out on what the final result will be in any of those regions. In any case, here in South Africa or elsewhere, exceptionally strong, clear minded and visionary leadership is required for the outcomes of these turbulent times to be positive.

These global and national trends affect us in Phokeng. We are no island, and we cannot pretend to have solved all the problems. Far from it. No matter what efforts we have made in the past two decades, we continue to suffer from the legacies of our past, like the rest of the country and continent, just as we continue to feel the effects of our collective present. Many of our people still live in sub-standard housing. Most of our households lack decent sanitation. We are fighting to fix a schooling system which remains broken to its foundations from decades of neglect and the institutionalisation of low expectations. Our community suffers from the violence and crime which accompany alcohol abuse. A third of us are unemployed. Due to our continued dependence on mining employment, unrest and strikes in this sector reverberate through our community at all levels. Of the 150,000 people who live in our 29 villages, a third have come from hundreds or even thousands of kilometers away, often as a desperate attempt to find work to support their families.

We also have youth who question our legitimacy as leaders, sometimes violently, and who feel their aspirations are being stifled rather than enabled. We must devise bold strategies to address these challenges, not just for the Bafokeng Nation but for rural communities everywhere that need solutions to our common problems.

When a local community is empowered with strong institutions and sufficient resources, it can address the crisis of youth identity and hope by marrying education and meaningful work opportunities with a sense of self-worth and a joint vision of the future. This is the true basis of sustainability and innovation.

4.2 A Self-respecting Traditional Community

Our approach to thinking about these challenges is to build institutions that reflect our identity as a traditional community. Once again, we are bucking the trend, and so we regularly encounter resistance from our surroundings. Traditional institutions are regarded as irrelevant and ineffective actors in representing and providing services to their people. This is both in spite and because of the way in which traditional structures are included in South African legislation. While officially recognised, we are seen through the colonial lens. This artificially 'froze' customs and traditions in time, not allowing them to evolve and adapt, as they have always done and should continue to do.

The opposition between "tradition" and "modernity", or between "traditional leadership" and "the modern state", is not something essential or natural. It is part of a colonial discourse aimed at disempowering the colonised. "Modern" Europeans proudly highlight the continuities between their current political and scientific systems and Greek and Roman traditions of 3000 years ago, or the Renaissance and enlightenment innovations of the 15th and 16th centuries. They also recognize that they draw on their traditions selectively, seeking to leave behind the slavery practised by the Greeks, the subjugation of women throughout European history, and the devastating wars. Why should we not also draw on our traditions as they have evolved over thousands of years, choosing to continue with those that serve us well today, while discarding those that do not?

In fact, I believe that governance systems that are local and rooted in cultural identity are the best, if not the only, vehicles for addressing the

5. ESTABLISHING A CLEAR REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

To achieve relevance and a strong cultural identity, we need a coherent regulatory environment. Two areas of our current regulatory environment particularly require improvement. These are our customary, Makgotla courts and our land management systems.

The South African Traditional Courts Bill has brought the question of customary law and courts into public debate. While we respect the parliamentary process, we will not wait passively for the controversies around this Bill to be concluded, but pro-actively identify and rectify weaknesses in our own practices in a principled manner.

Any court must be a place of justice, or else it does not merit existence. There are many understandings of what justice entails, from individualistic retributive justice to more communitarian perspectives of restorative justice, but there must always be consistency, equality and transparency of judgement. Decisions should not be arbitrary or discriminatory. The judgement must be clearly stated and accessible to all involved in the case, as well as to outside observers. We have embarked on a process of documenting and formalising our customary law and our customary legal practices, supported by a formal research process with a team from the Human Sciences Research Council. Throughout this formalisation process, we remain aware that part of the value of customary law is its living nature; similar to South Africa's legislated law that evolves through precedence cases and judicial interpretation of Constitutional concepts. This customary law system envisioned will include a regular built-in update process to allow for amendments and community participation.

We will also be taking another look at our land management systems. While we have principles and procedures in place for allocating residential and agricultural land to community members, the processes are often not followed. We therefore need our own version of a deeds office. The challenge is combining the strengths of communally owned land with the benefits of individual responsibility and rights in relation to

We have to deal with the 'tragedy of the commons', where shared land is overgrazed, improperly rented out or otherwise abused by a few because it belongs to all and where no individual is held accountable for the resources' protection. Everyone loses in the end.

Our land management system must allow us to attract investors to build sustainable economic activity on our land. It must help us to regulate the spread of informal settlement. It must enable us to turn the challenge of labour migration, and therefore the demand for rental housing, from a cost and a challenge into an income generating opportunity.

Just as our ancestors were innovative in acquiring the land for future generations, using the laws of the day and various partnerships, so today we must also innovate in how we manage our land.

What do we aim to achieve by retaining collective ownership of our land? In South Africa, land ownership is an emotional issue and often arguments are not clearly articulated. On the one hand, there are long-standing calls to increase black land ownership. Land is seen by some as an inalienable right of indigenous people; as a fundament of culture, identity, stable families and communities; and especially as the basis for economic activity. This is indeed what we aim to achieve with our land. On the other hand, there are critiques of communal land ownership that see communities like ours as a hindrance to the economic and social liberation of black South Africans. We believe that especially in the context of an instable economy and a dysfunctional education system, communal land ownership provides a crucial form of security that cannot be alienated through debt.

The value of a regulatory framework is not only how well it functions when it is designed, since systems tend to be established by individuals who believe in them and want them to work. The true test of a system is its ability to survive beyond the tenure of specific individuals, by being integrated into the very fabric of a community.

A strong regulatory environment should guide the individuals within it and not be dependant on them. We must be creative in using our traditional principles in ways that help us to deal with the changes around us, and our codification of customary law will allow us to do this more strategically. Once codified, our laws will not be static but will have provisions for amendment from time to time. This process will result in the development of a Bafokeng constitution, along with a pledge and a anthem that define, articulate, and enshrine our values, rights, and obligations as Bafokeng, within the framework of South Africa's constitutional democracy.

6. GOVERNANCE AND EDUCATION

For regulatory systems to move from words to reality they must be managed by leaders who understand and respect the principles behind them, and they need to be supported by the community they regulate. Imposed systems only generate resistance and subversion. Our systems of governance and community consultation are therefore at the centre of everything we do. This year we will be implementing a new format for our Kgothakgothe meetings as well as ensuring better complementarity between our Dumela Regions consultations and Kgothakgothe.

We are therefore exploring the possibility of offering cost-effective but socially and pedagogically excellent boarding arrangements for learners in public schools, to provide support to promising young people from challenging family environments.

Another governance challenge relates to our Dikgosana. Several years ago, I committed to ensuring that all our Dikgosana would have a degree within twenty years. The intention was that our local leaders would serve their communities better if they had experience in the wider world and a field of technical expertise to draw on. We now realise that while this logic remains valid, there are structural factors we need to address to make it possible. Not least, there is a tension between the personal aspirations of young and dynamic people to follow a professional career path after achieving an education, and the requirement for an active Kgosana to reside in his village and spend significant amounts of time on community commitments.

We also aim to establish an independent anti-corruption body, as a kind of ombudsman, which will support our quest for a transparent and fully accountable administrative and governance system.

In addition to governance processes and structures, education remains as always our central concern. Key ingredients of effective educational achievement lie outside the classroom. Even if we work to provide the best possible educational environment in the school setting, children will still struggle if they are living in families that are not supportive of learning or that are actively distracting or abusive.

7. CULTURE AND THE ARTS

This brings me to the role that culture plays in our lives. In 2012, I proposed that culture and the arts, including an increased appreciation for our heritage, should take a more central role in the life of our community. I am pleased to report that this year we are putting in place the structures to make this a reality. Let me expand on why culture is relevant.

Culture is something that is central to our lives, the expression of our values. A vibrant cultural and artistic life is key to an innovative and relevant community, not only because it improves our overall quality of life and our social cohesion, but because artistic endeavour of all kinds fosters creative thinking and the exploration of realities beyond our every-day experience. Cultural activities generate networks within and beyond our community, bringing together like minded people through links of mutual respect and exchange. This can also foster other kinds of links, including technological and economic innovation. Finally, research has shown that people who are regularly engaged in cultural activity are physically and psychologically healthier.^v

Cultural and artistic activities are entrepreneurial in nature. A cultural programme must therefore support and enable existing talent. We want to facilitate a cultural life that is both broad-based and actively scouts for talented individuals. For example, we have many good local choirs and by improving networks and opportunities for collaboration we can also identify and champion that special soprano or baritone singer.

We should remember that creative activity is not limited to what we usually think of as “the arts”, as in music, poetry, drama and visual arts. It also includes fashion and cuisine, storytelling and crafting of beautiful objects for daily use, such as clay pots or reed mats or furniture. An example could be the design and production of beautiful Tswana dolls that would simultaneously reflect our specific culture and creativity, reinforce the positive identity of our children, and generate income by filling a market niche for black dolls.

The arts should be an every-day part of our schools. Youth and adults alike should have opportunities to participate in cultural activities regularly close to their homes. The cultural spaces we hope to facilitate must be places of excellence, but not of exclusion. They must be integrated into our communities and be driven by continuous local activity. We salute those who are already holding afternoon dance classes in school classrooms and producing music in their own recording studios. I would love to hear of someone organizing an open-air film club, projecting good South African, African and global films on walls in our villages.

In 2012, I spoke about a Bafokeng cultural repository where our original songs, poems, stories, designs, recipes and other forms of cultural production would be archived. That repository has been created as part of the Bafokeng Digital Archive, and it is now up to you to populate it with your creations.

This repository is completely open and un-edited and it can be globally accessed via the internet. I also spoke about commissioning an anthem “that captures the vision of our forefathers as well as the dreams of our children, a song that we can sing with pride and reverence to renew our commitment to our land and our community.”

This year we take the first step towards this anthem by running a competition among all Bafokeng to submit poems that could become the lyrics of our future anthem. Furthermore, we are working towards building partnerships that will enable us to design a museum and cultural centre that will serve the entire Rustenburg valley.

These initiatives will culminate in an annual cultural showcase that will become a platform for ongoing cultural activities and regular creative exchanges. Examples of planned activities include an inter-generational programme to teach youth their clan poems and to record the poetry performances for distribution by YouTube. We will organise a design competition for contemporary Tswana fashion designs and coordinate volunteers to help with the renovation

There will be music performances celebrating our local musicians and those who work with our language in creative ways.

We have gained experience over the past few years in building a broad-based sports programme in our schools and villages, scouting and training promising youngsters, and competing successfully in several national and international sporting codes. We experienced just how far hard work and perseverance can take you when our football team, Platinum Stars, moved from tenth to second place in Premier Soccer League table in the course of one year. Dikwena also won the MTN8 championship for the first time. They have made us proud.

Now we plan to achieve the same level of success in the arts as in sports. Will we find a music group, theatre director, an author, a fashion designer, a master chef who will rise to the same heights as Dikwena in his or her respective field?

The arts are the most effective way for us to tell our story, both to ourselves and to others. The arts are an expression of our existing creativity, innovation and relevance, and will also help us to deepen these qualities through self-reflection and productive exchange with others.

8. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the need for austerity is an opportunity. Winston Churchill said “never let a good crisis go to waste”. This has become a management cliché, but it reflects the wisdom that has characterised the Bafokeng throughout our history: when faced with a seeming reversal of fortune, we have fought back with innovation and come out stronger in the end. Several times in our history, we have seemed close to losing our land, our integrity as a community or our source of income. Every time, we have not only survived but thrived. We have not only grown stronger on our own, but provided a model and a beacon for others to follow.

Many people look at our achievements and believe that it is due to preferential treatment and platinum resources, when nothing could be further from the truth. We are no different from many other communities in South Africa and on the continent. We faced the same challenges: being pushed off our land, being invaded by colonial powers; having to fight off large mining conglomerates and successive central governments who wanted to control the resources beneath our land without benefit to our people. What has distinguished us is how we responded to these challenges. Now is the time for us to show once again what a community can do on the basis of vision and collective effort. This is what makes us relevant.

To continue being relevant into the future, we cannot be complacent or rest on the hard work of our ancestors. We need to take a cold, hard look at ourselves and ask if the ways we are living our lives, individually and collectively, will lead us toward the future we want. Are we participating in our schools? Are we learning from our elders? Are we overgazing our land? Are we running our businesses responsibly?

The relevance of our community is our collective responsibility. Every one of us can contribute to this relevance in his or her own way. What am I as a teacher doing to make the Bafokeng relevant? What am I as a spaza shop owner? As a mine worker? As an artist? As a mother or father? As a learner?

We are where we are today because during Kgosi Mokgatle's time the entire community took the decision to invest their energy and resources to buy our land. Today, we must take a similar decision and invest our collective energy and resources in education and the relentless pursuit of relevance and innovation.

We cannot take the future for granted. Plan 35 sets out a path for us to tread but we will have to make sacrifices to reach our goal. I hope you will all join me on this path.

- i Chairman's Statement, IMPLATS Integrated annual report 2013
- ii Freer, G. (2013). South Africa and Russia's platinum 'pie-crust promises'. BDLive. April 5
- iii <http://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/index.php>
- iv Centre for Development and Enterprise (2011). Value in the Classroom: the quantity and quality of South Africa's teachers. CDE In Depth no. 11. A. Bernstein. Johannesburg, Centre for Development and Enterprise.
- v Healthy Attendance: The Impact of Cultural Engagement and Sports Participation on Health and Satisfaction with life in Scotland 2013. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/08/9956>