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National Heritage Council
SOUTH AFRICA

an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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VOTE OF THANKS

BY MR TSEBE

AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE

OF DR THULANI JOHN MBULI

Honourable Minister of Sports Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa

Members of the Mbuli Family and Mrs Mbuli

Members of the Heritage Sector

Members of the National Heritage Council

All our online participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

My assignment is very simple. It is to say realeboga, siyabonga, thank you, dankie, rakhensa.

We thank the family for affording us the opportunity to serve with Dr Thulani J Mbuli or simply John as he called himself. Through him we have a better idea of how kind a people you are, we have a better idea of what values were transmitted between the generations. Through him we met his mother, wife, children and siblings and the broader Makhunga family. Through him we saw Ubuntu, the value of human beings and their spiritual life. We never thought we would need that ability to connect spiritually so soon. While the circumstances of this day do not allow us to meet you in person, we reach out to you spiritually, we reach out to you digitally.

We should thank Dr Mbuli posthumously. He invested in a united board, he threw his entire being into the success of the NHC regardless of his health condition. He reached out to everyone with equal humility - whether you are staff, or management or council member of political principal. He did not wear his extensive superlative academic achievements on his sleeve or put them in the way of Ubuntu. He insisted time and again that do unto others only as you would love to be done unto you. He kept the faith, he ran the race with consistency and agility, he must have earned the crown if our judgement was to be used. His short life was lived in full and with decisive impact. It matters not that we lived, what is most important is that we live a life of impact, a life that results in changes.

We thank the Honourable Minister for assigning us such a qualified, competent and amazing chairperson; AND for and making time to pay tribute to our Chairperson. We thank friends and supporters of the NHC from all directions for joining us in this difficult time in bidding farewell to an amazing South African. You have made a very painful situation, honorable, bearable and dignified.

I thank Council Members for making Dr Mbuli's work smooth, for the collegiality they continue to demonstrate. Thank you Deputy Chair, thank you Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. CEO, even if it is your job to work smoothly with your Chairperson, we thank you – because you have done it well, we have not been in the media for negative reasons, we have continued to have unqualified audits. We have seen the two of you together in every significant heritage occasion in South Africa and abroad. This fitting memorial service to our chairperson is one illustration of that relationship.

We thank the NHC team for putting together such a fitting living memorial to a chairperson who served with distinction. It is a very different format to what every-one of us would have preferred. But you have made it work and we are grateful. We thank all the speakers who have painted for us such beautiful and true picture of Dr Mbuli as we knew him.

We thank the social and established media for the ways in which it has helped us reach out to society in celebrating this amazing life.

Thank you to all the many partners and stakeholders of the NHC and everybody that I did not acknowledge. We thank you all.

