

**Eulogy by the MPL Nomusa Dube-Ncube / The Leader of Government Business**

**KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government**

**Funeral of Dr Deborah Fraser / The Station / Urban Event / Durban Station**

**21 May 2022**

**Programme Director**

**Fraser Family;**

**Religious leaders;**

**Member of Parliament and Chair of the Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture**

**Pastor Vusi Dube;**

**Friends and neighbors;**

**The Creative industry as a whole;**

**Representatives of the entire value chain of the entertainment industry**

**Leaders of faith;**

**Distinguished guests;**

**Members of the media;**

**Gospel and music lovers following the funeral proceedings on various platforms;**

First and foremost, on behalf of the Provincial Government, we wish to express our appreciation to the Fraser family, for having given us a remarkable musical giant.

We thank you wholeheartedly for allowing us to pay our last respect to a well renowned daughter of the soil.

We can only imagine the pain that the entire family is experiencing at a loss so great that no man can heal.

My late sister Dr Deborah Fraser served our country and the whole music industry with dedication and talent until her last moment.

As a child of KwaMashu Township myself, I wish to salute the entire community of KwaMashu for naturing this talent and putting it on the pedestal for the whole world to see.

Messages of condolences that have been pouring in from different parts of the country and continent from leaders of society, is an indication of the impact that my dear Sister made throughout her professional life as a musician.

Judging by accounts given by fellow musicians, business associates and ordinary members of society in all media platforms, it is clear that the whole country has been shaken by this tragedy.

What saddens us most is that her departure is a depletion of solid talent not just produced by this great province but by the Republic of South Africa.

My dear Sister earned the respect of the entire entertainment industry because of her maturity, cool temperament and incredible sense of humour and friendship.

She was a good and a kind woman, a mature and compassionate friend.

She was not prone to rudeness or inflammatory language even at times of pressure which characterizes the entertainment industry. Not once do I remember a harsh word from her.

At all times, Sisi Deborah promoted respect and a spirit of trust amongst fellow musicians.

Fellow mourners, we are not here to mourn the passing on of Deborah Fraser, but we have come to pay tribute to a great Daughter of South Africa.

Public records are decorated with her achievements to many to highlight. But allow me to mention but a few. Sisi Deborah was awarded :-

- Best Gospel Artist at Kora Awards
- Best Female Artist at Crown Gospel Music Awards
- Best Gospel Artist at Metro fm Awards
- Best Gospel at South African Music Awards(SAMA)

Having reflected on her achievements, it is important to point out that Dr Deborah Fraser was a:-

- A great motivator;
- A symbol of hope for both the youth and adult;
- And above all, a humble woman of God and a deep Believer in Christ!

That is how Dr Deborah Fraser has been described by millions of people since her sad passing away.

During the two memorial services held yesterday in KZN and on Thursday in Gauteng - neighbors, musicians, friends and fellow church goers praised her for making valuable contribution towards inspiring the nation with her music.

She remained humble despite fame associated with her achievements as a Gospel singer.

Her compassion for her fans and ordinary members of the public resonated well with her deep faith in God. There are dozens of photos circulating in the social media of Dr Deborah Fraser and her music fans.

It was not just sheer luck that propelled her to greater heights but it was her hard work, honesty, courage and bravery.

She was a champion for professionalism in the entertainment industry.

As KZN government we commit to preserve her work for future generations. She had the strength, stamina and respected her craft until her untimely passing.

**Fellow mourners and viewers at home**, there are few things that perhaps we may need to highlight as we draw towards conclusion.

It would be the betrayal of her spirit if we do not talk about the state of the music industry.

The state of the creative industry in this province and the country as a whole has not reached the level that we all desire.

It is true that the decades of transformation and de-racialization of the economy has not benefitted the majority of artists on a large scale.

The reality we are facing is that very few artists are involved in the entire value chain of the creative industry. We need to change this as a tribute to my dear sister.

We know that our province once hosted the Creative Industry Summit which was held at Coastlands Hotel Umhlanga. It was attended by artists from across districts from 26 to 27 February 2016. This was the most important platform which discussed concrete plans on how to ensure the advancement of the creative industry in KwaZulu-Natal.

Unfortunately the resolutions of that Summit have not been implemented. This is a concern that has been raised by artists since the untimely departure of my dear sister.

I offer to ensure that in my capacity as the Leader of Government Business we convene a meeting involving the leadership of the following structures:-

1. Cultural and Creative Industry Federation of South Africa;
2. South African Music Industry Council;
3. KwaZulu-Natal United Music Industry Association

My fellow colleague, the MEC for Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation Hlengiwe Mavimbela will ensure that we find way of ensuring the implementation of the resolutions of that Summit.

Even more urgent, is a need to strengthen efforts aimed at assisting the creative industry as we recover from the devastating impact of COVID-19.

The reality is that many of our artists are still relying on the traditional ways of making money. These include bookings for live performances, recording contracts, licensing, marketing and distribution of their work in the country and worldwide. We need to discuss concrete interventions that will benefit all of you as we recover from COVID-19 and reposition our province as the cradle of creativity.

In addition, we also need to find a way of assisting many our artists to manage other aspects of their music which will enable them to be economically dependent.

I am referring to areas such Music Publishing, Artists Management, Performance, Mechanical and Needle-time Royalty collections; Music Post-Production, Streaming Revenue and Endorsements.

We need to get more of our artists to be involved in the manufacturing of music instruments or music digital apps.

Importantly, the creative economy must be enhanced so that it can take the youth out of poverty. Undoubtedly, unleashing new talent in the gospel music will be the lasting monument that will make Dr Deborah Fraser rest in eternal peace.

**In conclusion**, we once again wish to express our appreciation to the entire Fraser Family for allowing us to celebrate the life of our sister.

We express our appreciation to the Premier of Gauteng David Makhura and the Joburg Traffic Department Chairman for the assistance given to the Fraser family.

We thank all the people of Gauteng for supporting the Fraser family during the difficult period.

We thank the entire leadership in the music industry fraternity for showing compassion to the family.

We thank healthcare workers who cared for Dr Deborah Fraser before her untimely death.

May God give the entire Fraser family the strength to bear the pain. May God reach deep into your grieving hearts and erase the anguish and make your spirits strong and your faith deeper.

May this verse comfort you:-

2 Timothy Chapter 4 Verse 7 and read as follows:

".....I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith...."

We also accept that as verse 8 on the above chapter states, for him "there is in store a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge will award him."

Thank you for sharing her life with us.

May her soul rest in peace.