

MARIKANA

MEMORIAL LECTURE

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A future beyond the Marikana Tragedy

TRANSCRIPT

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Good day,

I thank Sibanye-Stillwater for the privilege of delivering the Memorial Lecture on the 8th Anniversary of the Killings in Marikana.

I was asked to speak on the themes of healing, renewal, and a positive and inclusive future for the Marikana region and community. I have added something to this, the act of remembering. So, my lecture is titled 'Remembering, healing and renewal – thoughts on building a positive and inclusive future for the Marikana region and community.'

Eight years ago, 44 human beings died. They did not have to, but they did. We were shocked, the world was shocked. My heart went out to the families. As a country, we were 18 years into constitutional democracy, 18 years into implementing a constitution that commits us to heal the divisions of the past and build a society founded on democratic values, social justice and human rights. What went wrong? This question prompted me to add 'remembering' to the memorial lecture. Marikana happened because we forgot to remember. We forgot to remember our ugly past, our unjust past, and the legacy it had left with us. We forgot about healing and we focused on renewal. A renewal without a foundation cannot work. It is like trying to rebuild a house that has a structurally defective foundation. At some stage, it is all going to tumble down.

I like the fact that Sibanye-Stillwater is putting people first, because Marikana was about people. Most of the time, when we remember the past, we valorise the leaders that were at the forefront, we valorise the heroes, but rarely do we talk about

the ordinary person, like Legogo Dlamini for example. When we talk about Marikana, everyone remembers the man in the green blanket, and that is important, but we should also remember the nameless people who died, the nameless people who were maimed. The nameless widows, sons, daughters, mothers and relatives who live today with the pain of the past.

One of the things that I like about Rwanda, is how they tell the story of the tragedy that befell that nation, just around the same time as South Africa was preparing itself for a new dawn of democracy. The Rwandan Genocide Memorial, is not full of stories of the heroes, of the political figures, it is a museum about the ordinary person, about how the trauma affected them, about how their lives unfolded during those tragic days. But the museum also tells the stories of courage from the other side, stories of people who stepped out and stepped up to help, at risk to themselves, their position and to their families.

When we say we are commemorating Marikana, we are saying ordinary people matter. The lives of ordinary

people matter. And we are saying to the families that were affected by the loss of those 44 lives, your lives matter, and the lives of your loved ones matter.

This is one of the reasons I accepted the opportunity to present this memorial lecture. I've given talks about a lot of heroes, but I think, for me, this is the most special one, because at the end of the day, it is the people that make the world go round.

Adam Smith once said the following about the justice factor, "Justice is the main pillar that upholds the whole edifice. If it is removed, the great, the immense fabric of human society must in a moment crumble into atoms".

On those few days from the 12th to the 16th of August 2012, the fabric of society was tampered with. And this process that is happening today and that's been happening since then, is a process to rebuild the social fabric that was torn. But the social fabric was not torn during those days of killing and anger. It was, in fact the broken fabric of society that made Marikana possible. And at the core of that, was the failure of memory.

I am pleased as I read the documents about this healing process that we are not just talking about healing the mine. You are looking at the Marikana region as a whole, and that is an ecosystem approach. Companies like IKEA of Sweden have always adopted an ecosystem approach. They moved away from their old approach of capitalism, which was extractive and adversarial, to a system that is anchored in humanity, which here in South Africa, we call ubuntu and in Rwanda they call ubumuntu. It is an understanding that society is a system, that humanity is interdependent within itself and with nature, that as long as there is harm in one part of the system, it will impact the entire system. I always say, as long as there is injustice somewhere, there can't be sustainable peace anywhere, and therefore this initiative that is looking at memory as healing and

renewal beyond the company itself is the right way to go.

I have spoken to a couple of companies that are involved in mining and other initiatives in rural areas, usually new initiatives. When you start these initiatives and you are not helping the community to find its own sources of work, wealth and wellbeing, what happens is that one developmental site becomes threatened, because everyone wants something from it. So, an approach that looks at the entire ecosystem and helping everyone to find ways of work, wealth and wellbeing is the right way of being, and it is in line with the whole idea of just capital. It is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals about ending poverty by 2030 and breaking the back of structural inequality within the same period. We have a decade to do that, and our National Development Plan wants us to do the same thing. At Thuma, we refer to this whole ecosystem approach as Enterprising Communities. In Israel they call it Start-Up Nation. It is really about helping everyone to leverage whatever they have, including themselves, as a resource, to lift themselves up, to lift their families up to heal their communities and become a healing force in the entire world.

At Stellenbosch University we have something that is called the Mosa-Plan for Social Justice. It has similar elements about all hands on deck to heal our communities from ward level upwards, leveraging our intellectual property, leveraging our physical resources including money to make sure that we lift everyone up, or we help everyone to lift themselves up, so that no one is left behind. Because as I said, when there is weakness somewhere in the system, it threatens everything.

So, what mindset do we need? What mindset has inspired this change in Sibanye-Stillwater, which I hope is the kind of mindset that will permeate the entire mining industry? It is really moving away from an

extractive approach to relationships between capital and labour, between communities and companies, moving to an ubuntu-founded relationship, and within that ubuntu-founded relationship it is about co-creating the future. I looked at the programme and it includes the unions, it includes communities, and I think this promises to be the kind of shift that is going to move the needle not just for yourselves, but for the country as a whole.

But to be able to sustain this you need a growth mindset, not a public relations exercise. You need a mindset that acknowledges past mistakes. You need a mindset that embraces vulnerability, knowing that you will make mistakes, knowing that you have made mistakes, knowing that you will be criticized, but acknowledging wherever there were mistakes and learning from them and moving forward. And, above all, this kind of enterprise requires collaboration. It requires letting go of some of the things that we treasured in the past and building from the ashes.

This country was meant to rise like a phoenix from the ashes of apartheid. Marikana and many of the things that are happening today, including people stealing from the poor, stealing from health professionals who are on the frontline, denying them PPE or giving them faulty PPE just for greed. This is part of the facts that we have failed to remember. We need to remember what went wrong in the past so that we can confront that past, dismantle that past and build afresh. We need to renew, not just the way we do things, but also the way that we think, from thinking extractively to ubuntu thinking, from a polarised engagement with each other to co-creating the communities that we want to live in and the future that we want.

And what kind of leadership is going to help us to have a growth mindset?

At the Thuma Foundation we say that you need leadership that is epic, leadership that is ethical, that you do

the right thing because it's the right thing to do, not because your peers are doing it, not because you are going to be caught doing the wrong thing, and not because you are going to be rewarded if you do the right thing. Just do it, because you are seeing into the future what others don't see. Our next thing in epic leadership is being purpose-driven. As a company, asking what kind of future do you want for yourselves, for your children. I noticed a bank sending statements to its customers enticing its customers to invest outside South Africa, and I said 'oh my God', this is what James Patrick Kinney had in mind when he spoke about the cold within the men and the women that had an opportunity to revive a dying fire on a cold, dark night and all six of them withheld their log because they didn't want somebody in the room to benefit. So if you say you are going to invest elsewhere because this particular flame of democracy, this particular flame of development is flickering, you are short-changing yourself because if you still want your family to live in this country, we are an ecosystem. As long as there is injustice somewhere, there can't be sustainable peace anywhere. You will get the money, but will you get the peace? Therefore, to Sibanye-Stillwater, I applaud you for this initiative.

Impact consciousness is the next theme. You have to think about the implications of what we are doing. To government we say, when you pass a policy, think about how it's going to impact all the persons, peoples with disabilities, rural people, young people, women, townships etc. Don't just have a prism of justice, that is just us. Those of us, like me, who are privileged, because we got the low lying fruits of democracy, make policies that are going to benefit everyone. And another problem with where we are,

is that we abandoned the Equality Act, the promotional part, the advancing equality part of the Equality Act. We abandoned it and went for BEE, and who benefited from BEE? Those who could pick up the low lying fruits, and here we are, 26 years into democracy, and Marikana happened 18 years into democracy. It wasn't just the conditions at that company, which conditions were deplorable of course, but it was the ecosystem as a whole. It wasn't remembering, it wasn't healing, it wasn't renewing. So we need to be impact conscious.

The last theme is commitment to serve. Who are you serving? Often we want to serve those who serve us. Scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. But again, at the end of the day as long as there is injustice somewhere, there can't be sustainable peace anywhere. And, therefore, an approach can say serve everyone, because you are thinking from an ubuntu perspective, but the survival of the components of an entity will determine the strength of that entire entity. That is epic leadership.

So, what change do we need to make this enterprise of Sibanye-Stillwater successful? I have already said that we need to remember. I think that we forgot to heal. We forgot to remember what happened in the past, and how the past influences the present. Justice Edwin Cameron says that the past is not done with us, until we reckon with its claim to justice. This he says in a case called Daniels vs Scribante, which is about the land question. But the past is not done with us in all aspects of our lives, because those extractive relationships, those relationships that put some people on the monopoly board, while others were idle, continue to influence relationships today when we now say everyone can enter and play. But there's no space for the newcomers unless we create space for them.

So, it's about remembering, it's about consciously healing. But we can't heal without remembering, and we can't renew without healing. So going forward there's a possibility that what you are doing could be a model for how we move South Africa forward, by not being ashamed to look back at what happened and also not asking whose fault it was. I know Sibanye-Stillwater is a new player. Sibanye-Stillwater was not there in Marikana August 2012. But that is the attitude, when we are in the same boat and the boat is sinking it is useless to ask whose fault it is. The right question to ask is: how can I help?

People make jokes about 'thuma mina' (send me). The truth is, if every South African who is capable were to say, for every problem that I can solve, 'thuma mina', this country could be turned around. This next decade could be the decade of sustainable development or as we say at the Thuma Foundation, it could be the decade of social justice, the decade when we all grow through inclusiveness. We can do this. Every generation has a unique opportunity and responsibility to identify and decisively address the pressing challenge of its time.

In my humble view, social justice and climate justice-anchored growth is the most pressing challenge of our time. And this initiative of remembering, renewal and rebuilding is just what we need as a nation. But it's the people of Marikana that need it most because as long as those hearts remain unhealed, they are going to affect peace in that community and as long as there is no peace in that community, there will be no peace in this country.

Thank you.