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REF: Bidvest Protea Medal Parade

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Speech by the Director of PSiRA

14 October 2021

### The Medal Parade – Bidvest Protea

The CEO, The Chairperson of the Board, Members of the Executive Team, Staff of Bidvest Protea, Esteemed guest, our aspirant medallists, Good Afternoon to you all.

We have gathered here this afternoon to **recognise** the selfless work that our fellow colleagues displayed when life threw a curve ball at them. We are here to **honour** them, we are here to **encourage** them to do better than their current achievements.

We are here to attach **value to the commitment**, the commitment they carry, every day to work. We are here to **inspire** those who wish to walk on the red-carpet, like **these debonair** men and woman.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are here to **decorate** these deserving esteemed men and woman for **defeating fear**, for **ignoring pain**, for **confronting anarchy** and for **choosing to embrace** security, peace, and justice. I have a message for all the medallist and prospective ones. In this message there are three themes. I wish to invite you to listen to this very simple talk.

Our industry is not for the **faint-hearted** and your presence here attest to that fact. Let me take this opportunity, to share with you, the answer to the question “Why Me”. Everything happens **for a purpose**. If it was not for you, to be there, when the fire started! We would not have saved life’s, and property. If it was not for your **quick action**, who would have lost many life’s. But you were there at the right moment for the right reason. I can give many examples of why it was supposed to be you, and not me or someone else. Life chose you to fulfil that task. Life chose you to **sacrifice** your limp, to **risk** your single and irreplaceable life.

God chose all of you, for that task. Some of our colleagues, whom we are posthumously honouring on this today, were divinely chosen so that some of us could live to attest to this august day. It is a bitter, but sweet moment, but it was **for a purpose**.

God would have never chosen you, if he knew that you will not, be able to fulfil that task. My message is simple! Everything happens for a reason. It is for us to reflect and **to find that reason**, and to ultimately **find our purpose**.

In life, the good things we enjoy, are often the results of **small, good acts**, often huge, but **good sacrifices**. All these deeds reside, in someone **who is very special**. It is often, someone who **pays attention** to small details of things that are about to go wrong, it is often someone who has fore-sight. In the end, we all enjoy the good life, the beautiful horizons around us. It is all because of a good citizen. My message to you, is that **continue** to be a good citizen so that we all leave a good legacy for our next generation.

The reason you are here today, it is because you love your country, you are a **good patron**. When I see all of you, I can only wish, that, **the good spirit**, that besieged you, on that faithful day, continues to be **very potent and infectious**.

Today's event is a perfect one, to honour a **very special person** who is an **exemplary of a good citizen**. And that person is you! You, **the medallist**. As you get back to you homes, and you look once again at the medal you received today. And you are not content with the reason why you deserve it. Just smile at yourself, tell yourself, it is because I was a **good citizen!** It is because, I love South Africa. May that **spirit of patriotism**, infect and affect all of you **till eternity**.

As I draw close to the end of my small talk, I cannot help but to invite you in a journey of reflection. I invite you to look back, I invite you, to ask yourself, how did I make it. What was that special thing, that I did, which landed me here today? Reflection helps us to become **aware of capabilities** that we were perhaps not aware of, until that **Armageddon**.

As we walk back the difficult steps, we took **that victorious day**. We suddenly become aware, how **we defeated fear**, we suddenly find that **weakness** that besieged us all these years. Suddenly, we know, why we **conquered procrastination**. Suddenly we know that the **sky is not the limit**. Suddenly we see, **a beacon of hope**, were there **was despair**. And suddenly we have **developed optimism**, for better things in future, as others say **there is light at the end** of the tunnel.

**Reflection** helps us to reveal of strengths, and suddenly we can see opportunities from **our extraordinary deeds**.

My fellow colleagues, **the cherry on top** is the **artful lessons** we learned through this journey. And those lessons help us to become better persons tomorrow.

The moment we know, how to achieve the **almost impossible**, the better we know how to **perfect our craft**, our craft of **protecting persons and property**, our craft of being **the chosen ones, the patrons of today and tomorrow**. And finally, **the master of ourselves!**

You may have noticed that I did not quote any famous person, as it is done in the usual speeches. The reason for that, is that I have many people to quote today, I have you the medallist. As we reflect in the stelling work you achieved today in your **various courageous acts**, we have **many champions** to draw our lessons from. It is you we are quoting today. It is you our leaving **heroes and heroines**. It is you **our actors on the stage**, it is you, **our protagonists!**

**Congratulations**, once more, we are proud of you. I Thank you.

**Manabela Chauke**  
**CEO of PSiRA**