



Reopening Sedimosang

Ivorypark
9 februari 2008

Dear Josephine, Ladies and gentlemen,

Today for me is very special. Actually it was already special from the moment I met Josefine and saw what she was doing and under which circumstances she did that. If it was raining, 20 buckets were placed to catch the water. If it was cold, inside it could not get warm and vice versa. The cardboard building offered space to Josefine and her teachers to work with their heart and soul on the future of these kids. Priority was to work with faith, strength, courage, believe and optimism. The bad conditions were accepted as they were.

I thought 'this is not possible, these children deserve better'. So I started talking to people within and outside the community. I brought visitors along and among others, Karel and Ans, present here today, were the once who kept the fire burning. And so, in December 2006 we started renovating the old garage. The next fire was lighted by Mariska Werlich, the daughter of the chairman of the foundation Tshwaranang Nederland, and we started making a new building.

Besides these lighted fires which gave us the opportunity to build and renovate, also unity arose between all people close to Josefine. The building team became a firm team and we deliberately chose to purchase all the materials within the community. It concerns a project for the community, not something to enrich Josefine. Many hands made it possible that there is now a nice, clean and friendly environment for children and their caregivers. This environment makes it

possible to prepare all kids for their first steps into the real world.

Involvement started growing and donations and materials followed via many people in The Netherlands and South Africa. I think on Step by Step, Cucu, DPD, Tshwaranang, the parish of father Karel, Rietpluim School and I have special thoughts and feelings for my sister in law Ank, and many other Sedimosang supporters.

It is almost a biblical picture. A picture of backgrounds and colours of people. Where jealousy and envy were turned around into strength of unity. Where the lion, the giraffe and the cow lay next to each other in peace. The effect of a growing cooperation, respect for each others background and the sharing, makes me a very happy person.

It was not always easy and it remains an assignment for me to keep learning from each other. In my vision, if South Africa wants to have a good future, constant effort needs to be put in integration and cooperation. Many more projects need to be realised in which black, coloured and white people cooperate and integrate. Children have the future and the question is what we want our children to know.... Keep judging each other on race, colour and background? Or that values and standards do not have colour, race or a 'beursie'.

Children have the right to protection, education and development, security and healthcare. They should be able to trust us, adults. We have to stand up for vulnerable children, for children who are being abused. We have to stand up for

children who are harshly confronted with problems and worries, who often on a young age do not have any parents left and become adults way to early. We have to stand up for granny's, families and children who are facing difficult times because of Hiv/Aids.

To secure kids is a responsibility for all of us.

It is their right, they are the future, and we should help them getting there.

As a symbol today, we throw a little rock into the water and we see a small wave getting bigger and bigger.

Waves of hope, so it will work.

Waves of believe in our own strength.

And waves of love, which will unite it all.

I would like to thank Josefine for all her patience, her courage, her optimism and her unconditional friendship. Sister; I hug you.

I would like to thank all who worked along, walked along, offered us thoughts and meaning and lots of involvement. And I invite all of you to through many, many little rocks into the water.

I would like to end my part with a saying, which I found in a book called 'I give you heaven on earth':

We think that what we do is just a drop in the ocean.

But if the drop was not in the ocean,

I think the ocean was less big because of that 1 missing drop.