**“We need more people to read books written in their languages,” says Zakes Bantwini**

*Glenmore, Mpumalanga* (06 September) – Addressing an audience at Z.M Mkhwanazi Library in Glenmore, Mpumalanga, National Book Week ambassador Zakes Bantwini said:

“If you walk through any airport in South Africa you’d swear you are not in Africa; you’d think you are in the United States. There is a noticeable scarcity of books in indigenous languages. This is not right at all.

Majority of books in South Africa are published in 49% English and 48% Afrikaans and the rest of us, the major population of this country we are left to split the small piece of the 3% pie. How is this right, my people?” a very concerned Bantwini queried the audience.

MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation, Ms Norah Mahlangu echoed Bantwini’s words by reiterating the importance of preserving our languages. She also said that there should be a strong emphasis in encouraging people to take pride in their home languages.

“In fact, I’m going to challenge Zakes Bantwini right now because I feel inspired. He did his entire talk in isiZulu, with a few English words here and there. But, I’m going to do all of mine in isiZulu, even though it is written in English. How I wish I could do this during our legislature sessions” she quipped.

Over in the Western Cape, the Vredenburg community also celebrated National Book Week with a programme of activities in Weskus Mall.

Day 2 activities of National Book Week concluded with reading sessions, word games and storytelling activities, both in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

South Africa celebrates National Book Week from 5 to 11 September – a campaign of the South African Book Development Council (SABDC), in collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture.

The aim of National Book Week is to get South Africa reading and to encourage support of our local book industry.

A selection of local books has been made available for only R20 at Exclusive Books, Bargain Books and Takealot.com from 01-18 September 2016. Once purchased, you can drop off the book in the National Book Week donation bin located at the check out counter. These books will be used in support of National Book Week supported reading projects.

For the full National Book Week programme, please visit [www.sabookcouncil.co.za](http://www.sabookcouncil.co.za) or visit our Facebook page: National Book Week SA.

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