

ASTOA Speech Honouring Reggie Baloyi

Date: Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Occasion: Memorial for Reggie Baloyi

Speaker: Makgoka Lekganyane, Chairman, ASTOA Taxi Association

Brothers and Sisters of ASTOA, esteemed guests, community members, and most especially, the beloved family of Reggie Baloyi...

We gather today with hearts heavier than any overloaded taxi. A profound darkness fell upon our association, our community, and our lives on that terrible day, June 11th, 2025, when our dear brother, friend, and long-serving Public Relations Officer, **Reggie Baloyi**, was so cruelly taken from us by an unknown assailant.

Words struggle to capture the shock, the grief, the sheer *wrongness* of this act. Reggie wasn't just a colleague; he was a pillar of ASTOA, a constant presence woven into the very fabric of our association and our neighbourhood. He was a **long-serving** – a testament to his dedication. He was **well-known** – a fixture whose absence leaves a gaping hole you can almost see. And above all, he was known for his **kind smile**. That warm, genuine smile that could disarm tension, build bridges, and make anyone feel welcome. That smile reflected the kindness within his heart.

During his tenure, Reggie wasn't just a friendly face; he was a driving force. His vision and tireless work were instrumental in some of ASTOA's most significant achievements:

1. **The Petrol Depot:** Remember the years of planning, the hurdles, the negotiations? Reggie was there, steadfast. It was under his watch, through his perseverance and collaborative spirit, that we finally saw the **construction of our own ASTOA petrol depot finalized**. This wasn't just concrete and pumps; it was security, efficiency, and a legacy for our members' futures – a testament to Reggie's commitment to our association's growth and stability.
2. **The ASTOA Website:** Reggie understood the need to connect, to inform, to step into the modern age. He championed the **launch of the official ASTOA website**. This digital front door for our association, bringing information, services, and our presence to the wider world, stands as a monument to his forward-thinking approach and his dedication to improving how we serve our members and the public.
3. **Community Heart:** But perhaps what defined Reggie most was his profound connection to the *people* we serve. He didn't just manage our image; he lived our purpose. He spearheaded and passionately supported **countless community outreach programmes and initiatives**. Whether it was supporting local schools, helping families in need, or simply being a familiar, trusted face at community events, Reggie embodied ASTOA's commitment to being more than just a taxi association – to being a vital, caring part of this community. He understood that our strength lies in our roots, in the people who rely on us daily.

That such a man of peace, a builder, a connector, a man whose weapon was his smile and his words, should fall to violence... it defies understanding. It wounds us all deeply. To his family, especially his wife, children, parents, and siblings – please know that your grief is shared by every single member of ASTOA. Reggie was our family too. We stand with you, today and always.

We honour him by **continuing his work**: maintaining and building upon the petrol depot he helped create, using the website he launched to strengthen our voice, and redoubling our efforts in the **community outreach programmes he held so dear**.

Reggie's physical presence is gone, but his spirit, his achievements, and the warmth of his memory remain etched in our hearts and in the foundations of ASTOA. Let his life inspire us to be better, to serve harder, and to build bridges, not walls.

Let us stand together, united in grief, and committed to honouring our brother, Reggie Baloyi, by ensuring that the association he loved so much continues to thrive and reflect his generous spirit.

Rest in peace, dear Reggie. Rest in power. Your ASTOA family will never forget you.