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PROCEEDINGS AT JOINT SITTING

Members of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces assembled at the Niewmeester Dome 14:01.

The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces took the Chair.

The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation and also in memory of the passing on 8 February 2025 of the former President of Namibia, His Excellency Dr S S D Nujoma.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, order. Mr President, His Excellency the hon Ramaphosa, the Deputy President, the hon Mashatile, the hon Speaker of the National Assembly, the hon Thoko Didiza, the hon Members of Parliament, I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our guests in the

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gallery which includes the former President Mr Zuma.

[Applause.]

Order hon members, order! The Secretary will read the order of the day.

[Interjections.]

Hon members, order! Order, hon members! Can we please take our seats!

Hon members, I have received a copy of the President's address delivered at the joint sitting on 6 February 2025. The speech has been printed in the minutes of the joint sitting.

I now call upon the Chief Whip of the ANC, the hon Ntuli.

[Applause.]

DEBATE ON THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Hon Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, President and the Deputy President of the Republic, the Speaker of the National

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Assembly and hon members, it is surely a great pleasure and privilege to stand before this joint sitting of Parliament convened to debate the state of the nation address delivered by President Cyril Ramaphosa almost seven days ago.

On behalf of our movement the ANC, I wish to convey my gratitude to President Ramaphosa for delivering a forecast and directed state of the nation address. Before engaging on the substance of the state of the nation address, I wish to convey and to join my colleagues, the hon members of the National Assembly, who participated in the debate yesterday and convey my heartfelt condolences to the families, the relatives, friends and comrades of our departed soldiers. In this context I would like to say our country is immensely proud of the heroic contribution, our current and late members of the SA National Defence Force have displayed over the past three decades. On the same vein we also convey and send our prayers to those who sustained injuries during their engagement in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Madam Chairperson, two days ago as the Chairperson of the NCOP has indicated, a great tragedy befell on the people of the Republic of Namibia in the Southern African Development

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Community, SADC, region and the African continent in general following the departure of the outstanding leader of our people, President Sam Nujoma. On this faithful day the outgoing President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency President Nangolo communicated the departure of President Nujoma and said among other things, and I quote:

Our founding father leaved a long and consequential life during which he exceptionally served the people of his beloved country. Our founding father heroically marshalled the Namibian people during the darkest hours of our liberation struggle until the attainment of freedom and independence.

He went on to say:

He provided a maximum leadership to the nation and spared no effort to motivate each and every Namibian to build a country that will stand tall among the nations of the world.

I must also comment Madam Chairperson and quote the statement made by our leader and the former President of the Republic Thabo Mbeki when he said in his remarks, and I quote:

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Sam Nujoma was the last living member of the remarkable generation of the African leaders. In the ranks of Mualime Nyaralo of Tanzania, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Samora Machel of Mozambique and of course Andimba Toivo Latoive of Namibia. President Nujoma fought tirelessly for the freedom, justice and the inalienable right for the African nations to determine their own destiny.

Madam Chairperson, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa in his first state of the nation address, following the formation of the Government of National Unity, I could not help but see in my mind, my mind racing to the day in which this House debated his opening address to Parliament following the historic May 2024 national and provincial elections. On that day some among us particularly from the opposition parties of our Parliament declared that it was just a matter of time before this government collapses. Some even went as far as predicting that within six months, there will be no government. Happily, we have lived to see this day and therefore can state without any equivocation that such a prediction was nothing but a wish being the father to the thought. [Applause.]

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Madam Chairperson, this year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the seminal document of our people the Freedom Charter by the Congress of the People. The evolution of our struggle over decades since the adoption of the Freedom Charter, presented to the world and humanity in general the kind of South Africa we want, for which our forebears were prepared to die. We the representatives of our people as constituted in our sitting today, by all spheres of our government have an obligation to pursue all these objectives which remain central to the kind of society we seek to build.

Last year we celebrated the 30 years of our freedom. In terms of measuring the progress we have made towards the creation of a nonracial, nonsexist, equitable and prosperous society to which we remain committed. We made an observation that indeed we have a long way to go to eradicate the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

Given the important challenges we continue to face, the ANC steadfastly believes that these leadership echelons gathered here and representing all spheres of our government must continue to be driven by a sense of urgency in everything we

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do responding to the plights of our people and black people in general who continue to endure the hardships of the apartheid colonialism.

It is in this context that Comrade President the masses of our people celebrated when among other things you signed into law the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, the National Health Insurance Act as well as the Expropriation Act. These masses respected the fact that the continuing process of social and national emancipation to which we are subjected remains a contested terrain where those who benefitted from the exclusion will be hostile to any step taken towards redressing the imbalances of the past.

Perhaps and with the highest level of humility let me also join to reiterate the point you made during the state of the nation address, Comrade President that in our quest to change the living conditions of our people we will not be bullied.

Madam Chairperson, the national liberation movement understood then and even now that the process of social transformation is a complex undertaking which at times will be marred by major

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contradictions between those who represent change and those who seek to defend the status quo.

The ANC manifesto which constitutes a binding contract between the ANC and the people of South Africa outlines six priorities. Madam Chairperson, I am delighted to see that the state of the nation address delivered by President Ramaphosa has effectively taken on board these and therefore now place them as priorities of the democratic state.

This Parliament will ensure that both the President and his government are accountable to the implementation of these priorities. Of greatest significance in this regard is the fact that the ANC, as the principal leader of the democratic revolution has an absolute and the binding obligation to defend the correctness of the policies, the policy prospective against our detractors both domestically as well as internationally.

Madam Chairperson, almost eight years ago in 2017, commenting on President Donald Trump's election, one Dr Shongwe in KwaZulu-Natal, pointed to what he defined as a culture of nazism.

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The ANC fully supports your decision Comrade President, to have a delegation that will visit not only Washington but other capitals of the world to seek to pursued them into correctness of the position and the perspective of the ANC. And perhaps to qualify this point, let me quote what the President of the ANC, Inkosi Albert Luthuli said:

That if the Charter is examined, it will be seen that freedom means the opening of the opportunities to all South Africans to live full and abundant lives in terms of the country, the community and individuals. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Hon Chairperson of the NCOP, we promised the nation that we will deliver our speech today as an opposition party, and we are about to do just that. We greet the leadership of uMkhonto weSizwe and the leadership and the members of the progressive caucus present here in Parliament. In all honesty, there is no need to dignify the false and empty promises of the President of the so-called Government of National Unity, GNU, because throughout his Presidency, he has made many commitments and promises which were never fulfilled and will never be fulfilled.

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Allow us to greet and pay homage to the President of uMkhonto weSizwe, our commander-general ... [Applause.] ... President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, uNxamalala. During his tenure as President ... [Interjections.]

Mr D M SKOSANA: Hon Chair of the NCOP, can you please take in charge of the House.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Can you be on your feet, hon member?

Mr D M SKOSANA: The speaker is being drowning here.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon member, can you be on your feet? On what point of order are you raising on? On what rule are you raising on?

Mr D M SKOSANA: Chair, the speaker is being drown, please.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Please, take your seat, honourable member. Your order is not sustained. However, honourable member, I understand that there is echo in this House. Please, if we could try our levels best to remain

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silent and allow the speakers to deliver their messages. Thank you very much. Over to you, hon Hlophe.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Thank you very much. During his tenure as President and Head of State, President Zuma never told lies, he never claimed easy victories. President Zuma prioritised the work on the ground and delivered services to our people. We take this opportunity as uMkhonto weSizwe ... [Interjections.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Hlophe, can you please take your seat. Honourable members, can we please allow the speaker on the podium to debate. Order, hon members, can you please allow the speaker. Over to you, hon Hlophe.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): We take this opportunity as uMkhonto weSizwe to state without any fear of doubt or contradictions that by all measures and standards, President Jacob Zuma is the most successful President and Head of State that South Africa has ever had ... [Applause.] ... We are stating this fact not out of emotions or excitement, but through verified statistical data which we will summarise in our input today.

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President Zuma's nine years as Head of State and President of our country was not just nine wasted years but was nine years of progress defined by increasing life expectancy, access to education, and massive infrastructure programmes. When President Zuma assumed office in 2009, South Africa's life expectancy was at 50 years and throughout his leadership of South Africa as Head of State, the life expectancy rose to more than 65 years, and that is a fact. [Applause.]

Furthermore, there is no doubt that the rising life expectancy under President Zuma happened due to clear government interventions which included heightened provision of antiretroviral drugs to those infected with human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, Aids. The number of HIV and Aids related deaths decreased drastically under President Jacob Zuma, and that is a fact. [Applause.]

President Jacob Zuma invested in education and is the only President since 1994, to build new universities in provinces that never had universities before ... [Applause.] ... The University of Mpumalanga and Sol Plaatje University in the Northern Cape happened due to the leadership of President Zuma

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and that is the legacy of nine years of progress we are talking about. [Applause.]

In relation to infrastructure, President Zuma is number one when it comes to driving expenditure of education, health care, roads and transport and basic services of infrastructure than any other Presidency in South Africa ... [Applause.] ... It is a fact that President Zuma built more hospitals, more roads, and more schools than any other Head of State and President in South Africa, that is a fact ... [Applause.] ... It was under President Zuma's Presidency that the social protection net was expanded to reduce the devastating levels of poverty and suffering of our people. President Zuma increased the age categories of social grants recipients because he understood that people don't get richer when they grow older.

As Head of State and the President of South Africa, President Jacob Zuma openly advocated the expropriation of land without compensation ... [Applause.] ... and he was failed by a reactionary and collaborationist parliamentary caucus which frustrated a solid and sound agreement amongst progressive parties to amend section 25 of the Constitution. In response

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to the #FeesMustFall movement, President Jacob Zuma introduced fee-free education at higher education level ... [Applause.] ... This was frustrated, however, and reversed by the administration that took over after his removal from office.

We can draw statistical data on all areas of human development and progress, and we will all come to the same conclusion that the vision held by President Zuma far exceeded the narrow political obsession and persecution which the establishment subjected him to. Because he foresaw and politically knew and understood that South Africa's developmental and growth path cannot and should not depend on the imperialist and neocolonial West, President Zuma built far-reaching and sustainable partnerships with countries that have no colonial and neocolonial aspirations over South Africa and the African continent. [Applause.]

It was President Zuma who got South Africa admitted ... [Interjections.] ... Yes, it was President Zuma who got South Africa admitted into Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, Brics, in 2010 ... [Applause.] ... and many other countries have since then applied for membership of Brics. Brics amounts to 31% of the global gross domestic product,

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GDP, 41% of the global population, and a significant voice in regional and global political economic affairs. The recent bullying tactics of the United States of America are a clarion call that South Africa should deepen the economic relationship with Brics plus countries started by President Zuma.
[Applause.]

We now have in progress Brics family. We have now under the Brics family the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, UAE, the Islamic Republic of Iran, República Argentina, Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who can be sustainable and dependable trading partners and not bullying off takers of goods and services produced and made in South Africa. Those are dependable partners. [Applause.]

While we expect President Donald Trump to end the imperialist war of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Nato, in Russia, and to disassociate from the neocolonial and dishonest so-called green energy transition imposed on the developing world, we do not agree with him and his promotion of white supremacists who claim that they are facing genocide in South Africa. There is no genocide and there is no threat of genocide in South Africa, let's make that clear [Applause.]

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There are, however, legitimate cries of historically and presently oppressed and excluded black majority who demand the return of the land and the wealth ... [Applause.] ... to the ownership and control of the people as a whole and not the privileged few beneficiaries of apartheid and colonialism. That is our demand. [Applause.]

Under the leadership of President Zuma, South Africa has since made significant strides in engaging with Brics partners in an effort to challenge the dominance of the Western countries. Notably, the Brics bloc has shown interest in creating alternative financial mechanisms, including a potential Brics currency and multilateral payment systems.

We have an obligation as South Africa to defend our sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in doing so we should appreciate that our sovereignty as a nation should necessarily include the protection of sovereignty and the territorial integrity of all African countries ... [Applause.] ... As we stated in the matter of urgent debate yesterday, South Africa should never surrender the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC, to the rebels because these rebels are funded by foreign role players including foreign governments and

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business which use rebels as conduits and militia to loot our natural endowments and wealth. [Applause.]

If we run away and surrender the DRC to the rebels, they will gain confidence and cause destabilisation in the whole of East Africa and then proceed to Southern Africa like they have already started in Mozambique. We cannot and should never surrender the Democratic Republic of the Congo to these dogs. We cannot and should never surrender even one inch of Africa's land and wealth to these dogs. [Applause.] We have an elected government in the DRC and those who seek political power should gain it through democratic means and with the support of the people and not through the barrel of the gun. [Applause.]

The year 2030 is five years from now, and according to the National Development Plan, NDP, which claim is the GNU's strategic objective, by the year 2030 you should have achieved the following: One, NDP vision 2030 of the so-called GNU says that by the year 2030, South Africa should have 6% unemployment rate, and currently unemployment rate at an expanded definition to include discouraged work-seekers, it is

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sitting at the moment at 40% of the population. These are people who have the ability to work but cannot find jobs.

Two, the National Development Plan vision of 2030 of the so-called GNU says by the year 2030, South Africa should have no one living under the poverty line, and currently, more than 40% of South Africans are living under the poverty line.

Thirdly, this is part of the vision of the GNU that by 2030, the so-called Government of National Unity says that by the year 2030, South Africa should have reduced the highest levels of inequality, yet our country remains the most unequal society in the world. South Africa remains the most unequal society in the world. We now know that the objectives and goals of the National Development Plan vision 2030, will not be achieved because this so-called Government of National Unity is directionless and does not have a common vision or does not have a vision at all. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY (Ms N B Mhlauli): Madam Chair of the NCOP, I rise on Rule 58 which speaks to relevance and repetition. The speaker on the floor is not debating the

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state of the nation address, which is completely irrelevant to what the topic of discussion today is. Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, once again I want to make this appeal. Can you please avoid drowning the speakers or attempting to make a dialogue when the speaker is on the floor. Can we please be orderly. Hon Mhlauli, your point of order is not sustainable. Can we allow hon Hlophe to continue. [Applause.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Thank you very much, Chairperson of the NCOP. We now know that the objectives and goals of the NDP vision 2030, will not be achieved because this so-called Government of National Unity is directionless and does not have a common vision or does not have a vision at all.

The SA Reserve Bank through the Prudential Authority is in the process of closing down Ithala Bank, which is the only bank in South Africa started by and controlled by black people and has been at the centre of servicing our people. There are available solutions within the state, including through massive investment by the Public Investments Corporation to

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rescue and keep Ithala Bank fully operational and give it a banking licence in terms of the Banks Act ... [Applause.] ... but the DA-ANC alliance government is allowing Ithala to be closed down in order to create space for the white-owned banks, in particular the First National Bank, FNB. [Applause.]

The Prudential Authority of the SA Reserve Bank continue to ignore the many bank violations of Capitec Bank, swept under the carpet the very fact that there is banking conglomeration in the Rand Merchant Bank, RMB, FNB, Discovery and Grindrod Banks which are owned by the same people, yet rushes to close down Ithala Bank. We want to assure the people of KwaZulu-Natal that when we take over the province of KwaZulu-Natal, in particular, we will revive and strengthen Ithala Bank and restore it to its former glory and full operation.

Meaningful economic participation by our people is not part of the NDP 2030 vision of the so-called GNU. Any self-respecting human being knows that South Africa will not achieve even half of the objectives and goals set in the NDP of the GNU, because this GNU is full of self-contradictions and conflicts which will disrupt a clear developmental path to prosperity. The so-called GNU is nothing but a grand coalition of the former

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liberators and historical but present oppressors, and the former liberators have joined the oppressors in the continued oppression of our people. [Applause.]

While they travel in luxurious cars, the majority of the population's reality is one of a catastrophic public transport that is akin to walking barefooted. This contradiction is starker in the light of the following: (a) There is a widening fiscal gap in this country between the rich and the poor. It is now projected to exceed 5,0% of the GDP.

(b) There is a growing national debt, expected to surpass 80% of the GDP by year 2026, a cause for concern. There is rising inflation and increased cost of living, forcing millions into deeper poverty as poor households are faced with a disproportionate 11,3% increase in their food basket, pushing them deeper into poverty. South Africa remains the most unequal country in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 0,63. The inequality gap between the rich and the poor is growing wider every day.

In 2024 alone, over 139 000 more people fell into extreme poverty. Yet, despite previous commitments, the government has

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failed to introduce a basic income grant. The social relief of distress, SRD, grant, which provides critical relief to eight million South Africans, remains uncertain and is likely to be ended in March this year. Informal settlements continue to grow, while state-funded housing projects stall due to budget constraints that exists only on paper. Meanwhile, the rail system, a potential lifeline for working-class South Africans, remains broken, forcing reliance on expensive and unsafe alternatives. Government's failure to spend allocated funds is not just mismanagement, it is an active betrayal of our people [Applause.]

Over 90% of municipalities are financially unsustainable and unable to meet their service delivery obligations. Water shortages and sewage spills have become a daily reality in many, many communities. Load shedding, now called load reduction, continues to cripple small businesses and the households of the poor, making economic recovery impossible. We as uMkhonto weSizwe are fully aware that instead of giving land to our people, the current government is collaborating with the white capitalist establishment to take away the land and natural resources of our people.

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Our Commander-General, President Zuma, has had several engagements with amakhosi from Richards Bay areas in uMhlathuze Municipality in King Cetshwayo District of KwaZulu-Natal province. We are fully aware that the authorities including from the highest office in South Africa and the highest offices in the SA Police Service have been threatening and intimidating amakhosi from the area, intimidating them to accept a deal which will pillage and loot the natural resources and endowments of our people in the area.

We take this opportunity to send a strong warning to the Richards Bay minerals owned by BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto that we as uMkhonto weSizwe, representing the majority of the people in uMhlathuze Municipality, majority in King Cetshwayo District and certainly a decisive majority of the people of KwaZulu-Natal province, we will not allow Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton to pillage and loot our natural resources ...

[Applause.] ... we will not allow that. In the next few weeks, we as members of uMkhonto weSizwe and the KwaZulu-Natal members of the provincial legislature will be visiting the uMhlathuze Municipality in King Cetshwayo District of KwaZulu-Natal province to solidify our programme and campaign against Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton. We will do that. [Applause.]

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We as uMkhonto weSizwe, we stand here on behalf of the people of South Africa, traditional and religious leaders, the unemployed millions of our people, the underpaid and exploited workers, the black professionals who suffer racist treatment in the workplace, the farm workers, and all the people who need a better future for our country and state that uMkhonto weSizwe is the real alternative to the current so-called Government of National Unity ... [Applause.] ... which is nothing but an alliance between the DA and the African National Congress. The so-called Government of National Unity has exposed ... [Applause.] [Time expired.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: House Chairperson, Chairperson of the NCOP, Mr President and hon members, South Africa is in a crisis. For 10 years our population has grown faster than our economy, making us poorer. We have the highest unemployment rate on earth and that has now been the case for decades. Violent crime still destroys the lives and livelihoods of our people at a terrible rate. Seventy of our fellow countrymen and women are murdered every single day. Our education outcomes continue to steal our children's futures and positive progress is slow.

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Eight months ago, the DA entered the government of national unity for two reasons. Firstly, to prevent the MK from getting their hands back on the levers of power where they would be able to loot another R4,9 trillion of our GDP and plunge our country into another nine wasted years where it won't be the school children and it won't be the poor that benefit, but it would be the same old elites that aids out of the trough of the public purse which have led our country to where it sits today. [Applause.] We also joined the government of national unity so that we can play our part in helping to turn South Africa around. To turn ... [Interjections.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Steenhuisen, please take your seat. Hon members, for the last time once again, I am pleading with you don't drown the speaker on the floor.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: We joined the government of nation al unity to turn our country around so that we can finally turn our back on the looting, the corruption and maladministration that typified the nonwasted years under President Jacob Zuma. We also joined to be part of the growth and jobs agenda and to make sure that we confront the crisis it faces. The truth is, we persisted for far too long with

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policies that fail South Africa, state monopolies being bailed out over and over again, excessive regulations that makes it harder for businesses to grow, empowerment policies that benefited the few and not the many under tariff regime that pushes up prices with no benefit even to the companies that those tariffs are meant to protect. Underpinning that is a growing of lack of accountability with those responsible can sit in the gallery of Parliament watching our proceedings instead of behind bars where they belong. [Applause.]

Worse still, in the face of this crisis we have to respond with the urgency and determination to make a clean break of the past and to set forth boldly on a new path of success. And now, having made ourselves weak over those nine wasted years, we confront a new threat – the US tariff barriers, the potential threat of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, Agoa, and possibly even a sanctions by a regime driven by an administration that will put America's interests ahead of ours – and make no mistake about that.

And so, what do we do? When a country faces a crisis, it needs to unite and navigate the threat. That is what we must do now. The government of national unity, GNU, must practice what it

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preaches. That is why in variety of portfolios we have taken a decision to focus like a laser bin on growth and jobs. That was what the President said it out in the Sona. I was in Ceres yesterday to mark the first shipment of South African apples to Thailand in 16 years. [Applause.] It is just one example of how this government is opening up new markets for our agricultural produce. Minister Solly Malatsi is on a mission to get fast and reliable broadband into the hands of millions of people in rural areas. Dr Schreiber is opening South Africa to skills and to tourists. Minister MacPherson is fast forwarding infrastructure projects. Minister Gwarube is focusing on long-term education excellence through a strategic reorientation. Minister George is ensuring regulations to enable sustainable growth.

We need to approach our trading partners now and seek to lower ... [Interjections.]

Mr S GAMA: Will John Steenhuisen take a question?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Steenhuisen, can you take a question?

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The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: No, I wasted nine years listing to this stuff in the House under his previous leader.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: He doesn't want to take your question. Please, sit down, member.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE: We must turbocharge Operation Vulindlela. We must take up the World Bank's offer of a government-wide regulatory review. We must bring down the costs of living for our consumers. We must allow equity alternatives to ownership requirements in every sector. We must make bold decisions that required to get our country moving forward. But there's one more thing we must do. Remember, South Africa cannot succeed unless everybody in South Africa succeed, and I mean everybody with no exceptions. That means that we must redress the wrongs of the past. We must do so in a way that grows employment and grows our economy. It makes no sense, for instance, that 30 years of transformation has occurred alongside a 50% increase in unemployment. We cannot redress the past but compromising the present or sacrificing the future.

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We must ensure that we respect culture and language rights which exists precisely because South Africa is a diverse and divided country.

We must ensure that every single South African feels safe in their homes and their place of work and that includes our farmers and farmworkers. The dismantling of the rural safety units was a catastrophic mistake, and it opened the door to a collapse of rural policing and the targeting of our farmers and farmworkers of all races by violent criminals and syndicates.

Just this weekend I was in Thaba 'Nchu, Ficksburg, and other parts of the Free State with commercial farmers and small-scale black farmers, to listen to their heartbreaking stories of how they fear daily for the lives and they are preyed upon almost monthly by syndicates of stock thieves who destroy their opportunity to grow their businesses. Cases get opened but are never investigated. They know who is responsible but cannot secure arrests or convictions. This situation cannot go unaddressed. As a result, in my capacity as the Minister of Agriculture I am announcing that we are going to work with sector to design a comprehensive plan to combat farm murders,

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stock theft and improve rural safety. [Applause.] I look forward to collaborating with the Minister of Police and the entire Justice and Security cluster to bring an end to this scourge once and for all

Madam Speaker, we live in times of both great hope but also great fear. It is time for us as leaders, the people of this House, to lead by example. We should seek to unite, not divide. We should seek to build, not to break. We should choose to reflect the best of ourselves and banish the worst. We must recognise the moment we find ourselves in for what it is, a moment of great danger for the people of South Africa. For if they fall prey to the historic revisionism that we've just heard from the hon The Leader of the Opposition. They could laud themselves into some complacencies that sound how things were better when those policies and persons were in charge. Nobody took more advantage of the people of South Africa than the leader of the MK. Even using their money to build his own house while people live in poverty. We must reject the revisionism. We heard that the R4,9 trillion was stolen under Mr Zuma. We would have schools that were worming, clinics that were functioning, police and nurses on the streets and South Africa would be a better place. But maybe

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you mind, Mr President, it's up to us now to pick up the button and to take this country forward. But it means that we need to do whatever we can to turn the economy around. The time for a break of the failed policies is now. The time for a new approach is now. [Time expired.] Now is the time. Thank you

Mr J S MALEMA: Chairperson of the NCOP, we want to make it very clear that we should not be confused with a generation of cowards who can be bullied by imperial forces and power-hungry individuals intoxicated by the wealth of apartheid.

The United States of America has bullied nations before, imposed senseless and arbitrary sanctions, and threatened wars. However, we are a different generation. We are the generation of economic freedom fighters, and we will not be bullied.

We agree with you, President, that we should not be bullied.

We stand on the shoulders of giants who confronted the establishment with their very lives, and we are willing to follow in their footsteps. We are not cowards, and they must not try us.

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Chair, President Cyril Ramaphosa stood before a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces on Thursday last week, addressing South Africans and the world, to deliver his eighth state of the nation address. Yet, he spoke as if it were his first ever state of the nation address. There was no sense of accountability, no meaningful reporting, and no acknowledgment of the economic crisis facing our people.

The President did not tell us what happened to the National Development Plan, NDP. He did not say whether it is still the guiding policy of South Africa, nor did he acknowledge that the country has been governed without any clear, practical, and guiding policy. Today, we have the Medium-Term Development Plan, but its direction and impact remain unclear – just another failed NDP.

In reality, the neoliberal right-wing coalition has no credible economic plan. There is no clear strategy to create jobs while more than 12 million people remain unemployed, the economy is stagnant, and these are undeniable facts.

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We are facing a crisis as a nation. The crisis of high food prices, unaffordable transport costs, soaring petrol prices, gender-based violence and femicide, the collapse of the National Gender-Based Violence Command Centre without explanation, water shortages in uMzinyathi, Sekhukhune and parts of Gauteng, inadequate housing in Alexandra, Umlazi, and Khayelitsha and the collapsed municipalities that lack the capacity to deliver basic services. These are the crises the President inherited when he was elected as President of the Republic of South Africa on 15 February 2018.

In 2018, you said you would focus on rebuilding, yet things only got worse for our people. In 2019, you said "Thuma mina" [send me] – the nation sent you, but to this day, we do not know what you went and did after you were sent. [Applause.]

It was in 2019 when you stood before South Africa, after asking us to send you, and promised the nation speed trains and a smart city. You asked us to imagine a country where bullet trains pass through Johannesburg as they travel from here to Mosina and then they stop in Buffalo City on their way from eThekweni back here in Cape Town.

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You said to us the time has arrived to build a new smart city founded on the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. We sent you to fulfil these dreams of yours, and six years later, you have not returned with a speed train, or a smart city and your term of office is slowly nearing an end. [Applause.]

You said 2020 would be the year of tackling state capture and ensuring accountability, yet not a single person has been arrested despite the R1 billion spent on the Zondo Commission report.

You declared 2021 the year of recovery, yet South Africa's economy deteriorated further with economic growth falling below 1%, except for the brief rebound following the reopening after COVID-19, which collapsed almost immediately.

In 2022 you claimed you would address governance failures, yet corruption became one of the biggest issues under your leadership and found its way now into the judiciary. We never had crisis of corruption in the judiciary, it only started with you when you sealed the CR17 documents in court.

[Applause.]

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We listened to you in 2023 when you called on the nation to work together, yet it was your own political party, the former liberation movement, that continued to deploy incompetent comrades to municipalities, boards of state-owned enterprises, provincial departments and national government.

When you tried to tell us the story of Tintswalo in 2024, we told you right there and then that you were talking about a Tintswalo who does not exist. The real Tintswalo was born in a shack, raped at the age of six, dropped out of school before reaching Grade 7, and was murdered while looking for a job. That is a Tintswalo we know. [Applause.]

Now, this year, you tell us that you will not be bullied. We agree with you that we must not be bullied, but you failed to tell us what you are going to do about it. It is not enough to simply say you will not be bullied – you must tell us what action you will take. When you respond on Thursday, we expect you to provide real detailed response to Donal Trump.

We know that the R940 billion infrastructure plan is yet another empty promise. We also know that the R375 billion allocated to state-owned enterprises, SOEs, which still do not

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have a clear reindustrialisation strategy, is a waste of money. We know that the corporate approach and strategy for Transnet, the unbundling of Eskom, and the so-called modernisation of ports and airports are all just privatisation in disguise.

President, we know that blended finance will become another looting scheme when students here at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, CPUT, are sleeping outside at this very moment due to a lack of housing.

As the EFF we have adopted a theme, "Year of Picket Lines." We are going back to the streets and reclaiming our identity, and we want to reunite with our people. We will go to the streets to demand water for our people, speedy allocation of housing, eradication of pit toilets and to fight for service delivery.

We are taking our picket lines to the National Treasury and the Reserve Bank to demand nationalisation and the transformation of the economy. We will picket outside correctional facilities to demand an end to overcrowding and syndicates within prison that control crime in the outside world, and we will demand the expulsion of private companies

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such as G4S which has links to Israel and runs a prison in Mangaung. [Applause.]

We continue to stand with the people of Palestine, who remain under siege. We agreed, as the National Assembly, that the Israeli embassy must be closed, yet their flag continues to fly in our country while Palestinians are threatened with mass deportations to foreign lands.

We support the government's case in the International Court of Justice, ICJ, and we must remain resolute in the face of sanctions and sponsored attacks, and importantly, we must oppose the colonisation of Gaza by the USA. Justice and freedom for Palestine. One day the people of Palestine will know the true meaning of freedom.

Mr President, we are not being attacked by Trump's administration because you did anything wrong, they are attacking us because of our stance on Israel and because of the action the government has taken to ICJ. We are saying to you, do not be misled by people who are saying you are under siege because of expropriation, which is a meaningless Act. That Act does not say anything, and they all understand that

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language. They are using it to fight our case against Israel, and when you say they cannot bully us you must start by removing the Israeli embassy to show them that we will not be bullied. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. Order!

Hon the Minister of Small Business Development?

Order, hon members! Hon members of the EFF can you please take your seats? [Interjections.]

Order, hon members. Order! We do appreciate that members, for whatever reason, would like to applaud their speakers and leaders. However, we need to be considerate when a speaker has been called on the podium so that in future, we do not find ourselves having to raise points of order when others do the same. I really appeal that we desist from doing so henceforth. Minister?

The MINISTER OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Hon Speaker, last week President Ramaphosa stressed that our most urgent task is to grow the economy above 3% so that we can build a dynamic

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and thriving economy that creates opportunities for the historically marginalised and generates new jobs.

The national democratic societies that were envisioned must be founded on a dynamic and inclusive economy that reflects the country's natural endowment and the innovation of its people. It must harness cutting-edge technology, labour-absorbing industrial development, thriving small businesses and corporate sector, and efficient production and management systems to promote national prosperity. This requires unlocking the full potential of all citizens dismantling racial and gender-based barriers to ownership and ensuring equitable access to economic opportunities.

Mr President, I would like to say upfront that the issues of economic transformation in a comprehensive sense should be at the heart of the national dialogue, which government will convince soon. There is no way we can achieve the national consensus with an economy that excludes the majority. The social contract that we want to craft should contribute towards reconstructing our economy to achieve more growth, jobs, and inclusion. This is more urgent for communities in the townships and rural areas, especially for youth and women.

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Our G20 theme of fostering solidarity, equality, and sustainable development is in line with our goals of achieving inclusive and sustainable development. It also reflects our deepest values to promote international co-operation, interdependence, and collaboration, something we need desperately in the times we live in. We have cultivated these values domestically in how we govern, how we forge consensus with varied stakeholders, and how we work together to meet difficult socioeconomic challenges. With our leadership at the G20, the future looks more promising, hon members.

I would like to remind all of us of the Freedom Charter, which envisioned a country of brothers and sisters, black and white, living in a world where they all thrive economically and live in peace.

Hon Speaker, the President outlined five main ways to get to our 3% growth challenges that we have set for the nation through the Sona. There are several ways to get significantly more people economically active through the industrial policy that is being finalised by Minister Tau will enhance our efforts to support employment intensive industrialization and public employment initiatives, especially those with pathways

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to upskilling and sustainable livelihoods. We are placing Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises, SMMEs, at the centre.

We draw valuable lessons from the experience of other developing countries across the world. We welcome the announcement that over the next three years, this administration will spend R940 billion on infrastructure projects. We eagerly await the finalisation of the regulations under the Public Procurement Act that will drive transformation, foster the emergence of new players in our economy, and enable effective participation of small enterprises.

To ensure increased access to funding, President announced the Innovation Fund and the Transformation Fund, which are worth R20 billion a year, over the next five years. These funds will act as a catalyst to attract other funds and disburse more funding support to SMMEs. In the Sixth Administration, we disbursed over R4,1 billion on business development support and over R9,4 billion on financial support. The National Employment Fund, NEF, has dispersed over R10 billion. To support innovation, we have dispersed over R1 billion through the Department of Science and Innovation. We are convinced

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that working with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC, through the Transformation Fund, we will double these efforts in the coming financial year.

Our partnership with the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, JSE, is reaping results with 15 high potential Small Enterprise Development Agency, Seda-supported SMMEs that have increased their revenue by 22% and an additional R122 million that they pocketed. We continue to provide a range of instruments on wholesale finance, direct loans, blended finance, working capital, and grants to various categories of the SMMEs and co-operatives. Some of those that we offer, we do so in partnership with financial institutions like the banks, where our credit guarantee and supplier guarantee products are working very well, leveraging R6,25 in financing for every rand that we guarantee.

Our efforts on digitalising systems at Small Enterprise Finance Agency, Sefa, will accelerate turnaround times and improve accountability to applicants. Our Township and Rural Enterprise Programme applications will now be processed within seven days and the purchase order financing in four days. Through the small enterprise ecosystem, we have agreed on a

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stretch target of creating one million new SMMEs by 2030 and this will give us a total of 3,7 million jobs that our country so needs.

We are currently undertaking industry engagements across various sectors to better understand trade and market demand pathways. Accordingly, we have engaged the automotive, wine, and fishing industries while in the coming weeks we will be extending these engagements to the agricultural sector, the build industry, energy, petroleum and oil, sport, and arts industries, among others. We have accordingly looked at the skills gaps within the SMMEs ecosystem and to this end we will be engaging the Deans of Commerce across the country to ensure that their curriculum respond effectively. This will give a clearer indication of the sectors and industries where there is more potential for SMMEs growth.

Hon members, our people in their rural and townships have been complaining about being excluded in their economy. We are finalising the Township Economy and Rural Development Plan, which will be presented to Cabinet, and in it, we will be ensuring that we build infrastructure for businesses in the townships. For us, land redistribution is the fundamental

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pillar of this transformation about which we are talking. Sustainable land reform must be supported by policies that equip small-scale and emerging farmers with the resources and skills needed for success. Economic transformation also requires a competitive and efficient market, free from the monopolistic constraints of colonial capitalism.

For these goals to be achieved, the state must play a strategic role, including through directing resources towards boosting the township and rural economies. It is in line with this argument that we support the signed Land Expropriation Act and the Transformation Fund that the President has announced.

Hon Speaker, we will ensure that we defend the gains of our freedom and democracy that works for the majority of South Africans and therefore deliver on the aspirations of the Freedom Charter, as detailed in our strategy and tactics. I thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS: His Excellency, the President, hon members and hon Speaker, the IFP entered the 2024 elections on a mission to

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rebuild South Africa. We knew that 2024 elections would be the most crucial elections since the dawn of democracy. We entered the 2024 elections determined to put South Africa first and to bring integrity back to government and at the heart of this vision is the government that works for its people.

The Government of National Unity, GNU, must therefore be applauded for it is committed to building a capable, ethical and developmental state comprising of ethical, skilled and properly qualified public servants. Hon President, I agree with you. Municipalities must work. Basic services must be delivered and delivered efficiently. At the heart of the crisis is the resources constraint of many municipalities. The current funding model for local government is unsustainable and perpetuates inequality between the rich and the poor.

The new funding model is a must. It is the one that considers each municipality's unique needs and challenges and provide a more equitable distribution of resources. Hon President, you called for an updated White Paper on Local Government. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is already leading the reform of the 1998 White Paper. Indeed, the White Paper Political Oversight Committee is already

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meeting next week. This presents an opportunity to rethink the funding model for municipalities.

In March 2026, we will table in Cabinet an updated White Paper on local government that will be responsive to the real challenges and propose solutions to make the local government work. Hon President, the GNU will ensure that the commitments you made to the nation do not become empty promises but a lived reality. We are encouraged that during Sona, you acknowledged the constructive and important role that traditional leaders can play in improving services to our people for decades.

The IFP has been proclaiming the critical role of traditional leaders in promoting development and stability in our communities. Hey, there is something which is disturbing here. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: I am sorry. Can the service officers just check what's disturbing the Minister?

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL

AFFAIRS: Yes, and I have removed it, hon Speaker. We know the

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importance of partnering with traditional leaders to deliver services and promote development. Therefore, hon President, the traditional leaders must be properly supported and capacitated. The focus on new infrastructure development is also welcome, but it must be accompanied by maintaining and upgrading the existing infrastructure.

To rebuild South Africa, we need to rebuild our education system, rebuild our health care system, and rebuild our economy. The IFP fully supports the principle of universal access to health care. Our concern, hon President, is the feasibility and affordability of the National Health Insurance, NHI, in its current form. The government, therefore, must prioritise strengthening the existing public health care system, which is plagued by inefficiencies and shortages of equipment and medical personnel.

The IFP proposes a more incremental approach to implementing the NHI, prioritising strengthening the existing health care system and piloting new models of care. We also emphasise the need for greater transparency and accountability in managing NHI funds to arrest corruption and ensure that resources are

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properly used. We welcome the government's commitment to creating jobs and stimulating economic growth.

We look forward to the implementation of the Medium-Term Development Plan, particularly in relation to the three strategic priorities of driving inclusive growth and job creation, reducing poverty, and tackling the high cost of living. The unfolding drama and the international diplomatic fallout around the expropriation act is deeply concerning. We condemn those who spread misinformation and work against our collective national interest to rebuild South Africa.

Together with the nation, I honour our fallen soldiers who bravely fought for peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their selfless sacrifice will never be forgotten. The IFP supports initiatives to restore peace across the continent, knowing that peace and stability are essential for economic development, social justice, and human dignity. Abrupt withdrawal will not be in the interest of the continent. South Africa's presidency of the G20 is a significant milestone for Africa. As a nation, we must showcase our talents, abilities, and potential to unlock the economic opportunities that will enable us to address pressing domestic challenges.

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Let me reiterate the IFP's resolute support of the GNU and the governments of provincial unity, GPUs, and their vision of healing wounds of the past while working for a brighter future for all of us. Hon President, on behalf of the IFP, I want to applaud and urge your continued support, together with the Minister of Finance, to the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, hon Thami Ntuli, in the fight against the liquidation of Ithala Bank. Ithala Bank remains the legacy of the late Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the economic backbone and pride of the African people, individuals, and businesspeople.

February 24 will be a day of great march in KwaZulu-Natal as we will take the fight to the street to fight against the liquidation of Ithala Bank. Hon President, the IFP will be counted amongst the nation builders, not the breakers, the doers, not just the dreamers, the workers, not just the armchair critics. We stand ready to rebuild South Africa. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The PREMIER OF THE NORTH WEST (Mr L K Mokgosi) : Hon Speaker, hon Chairperson of NCOP, his Excellency, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, members of the National Assembly and permanent members to the NCOP ...

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Setswana:

... багаetsho dumelang.

English:

Hon Speaker, allow me to take this opportunity to pass my sincere condolences to the family of Lance Bomdardier Itumeleng Macdonald Moreo of Dibate village in Mahikeng, who is amongst the 14 members of the SA National Defence Force, SANDF, who were killed in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC.

We join the cries of many of our people in the country and the rest of the continent to demand that the African Union, AU, not relent in the 2063 commitment to silence the guns on our beloved continent.

Hon members, as we mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter we need to remind ourselves of the objectives we set ourselves in the National Development Plan, NDP.

We said we want to build a more prosperous country that is progressively eradicating poverty and inequality, over time.

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We also said we want to eliminate the effects of apartheid and colonial discrimination that have scarred our society, in order to lay the basis for greater social cohesion, unity and opportunity. [Applause.]

Hon President, the North West is arguably the richest province in South Africa yet has the highest unemployment rate in the country. Experts and academics call it the paradox of the plenty. Therefore, something drastic needs to be done to turn the tide against this socioeconomic conundrum.

Hon President, we welcome the process to review the White Paper on Local Government. The North West Executive Council is the first to be consulted and will be submitting our proposals in due course.

It is our wish that this process, President, not to be rushed but to allow for a broad and extensive relook into our governance model and design. This will enable us to learn from the mistakes of local government since its inception.

The North West province supports the position adopted by SA Local Government Association, SALGA, that the funding model of

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local government be prioritized and run parallel with the White Paper review process. [Applause.]

We are also of the view, President, that a broader conversation is needed to include overall public sector funding review which includes equitable funding to provinces.

A holistic funding review process should, in our view, include an in-depth scrutiny of the Division of Revenue Model to determine whether its current form is assisting poor provinces to address the socioeconomic needs of the people. [Applause.]

The North West is of the firm view that the current equitable share allocation model should be centred on addressing developmental challenges confronting provinces based on their needs and developmental agenda, and not the population.

This should be done, President, however, without compromising the unitary nature of our fiscal framework.

Hon Speaker, we are, however, hard at work to improve the functionality and the service delivery performance of our

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local municipalities through the Local Government Turnaround Strategy, LGTAS.

We are collaborating with the National Treasury through mandatory interventions to assist municipalities with financial recovery plans, governance and skills audit.

There is progress but still a lot has to be done. During the state of local government in the North West Province we agreed that as we do our analysis, we still have to improve the manner in which we do our intervention.

Hon Speaker, we have increased the tempo in the province, of what is called Accelerated Service Delivery Programme, we call it Thuntsha Lerole, now Reloaded. [Applause.] We are prioritising our rural communities.

This has given us the chance to strengthen and solidify our relations with our traditional leaders by prioritising water, sanitation and road infrastructure projects in those rural communities.

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Close to R150 million has been set aside to implement water and sanitation projects in villages like Bodibe, Ramosadi, Signal Hill, Dinokana and Lobatla among others.

We also put aside R485 million committed to do a construction of a pipeline from the Bloemhof Dam to Mamusa Local Municipality. This project is due to be completed in June this year and will alleviate a water provision challenges in Schweizer-Reneke and surrounding areas. [Applause.]

In November last year we handed over R96 million bulk water and reticulation plant at Rekgaratlhile near Stella in the Naledi Local Municipality.

Several more projects of a similar kind are being implemented in various parts of the province.

Hon Speaker, the North West is on the move. We have laid the foundation for most of the ambitious plans for the future of the province.

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We have recently completed the provincial growth and developmental strategy, and it will be implemented in full swing in the 2025-26 financial year.

The strategy is beginning to yield results, in that in December last year we opened a newly refurbished R200 million Gold Processing Plant in Orkney in the City of Matlosana Local Municipality. [Applause.]

This forms part of a R2 billion investment by China Africa Precious Metals which created about four thousand jobs in that municipality.

Furthermore, we recently met with the newly appointed Group Chief Executive Officer of Harmony Gold, Mr Beyers Nel, and his Group Executive on the sidelines of Africa Mining Indaba.

The mining company has invested over R7 billion at its operations in the City of Matlosana Local Municipality, preserving over six thousand jobs and extending the lifespan of the mine by more than 15 years.

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Several more investment projects are in the pipeline following our investment conferences we held last year, including our visit to China in the province of Henan and South Korea.

Madam Speaker, agriculture remains an important sector in helping the province to drive its developmental agenda. We have set aside R36 million to support the Red Meat Production Programme, targeted at over seven thousand beneficiaries in the province.

We will be working with Agri-North West to support us in terms of mentorship programmes to assist, in particular, emerging African farmers.

Hon President, in the past two weeks I handed over two newly built house to a 70-year-old Sara Kgagodi as one of the beneficiaries in the Mamusa Local Municipality. This forms part of our 3 000 housing units planned for the financial year, with a total of 2 000 units delivered to beneficiaries in the third quarter.

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Madam Speaker, we also constructed four strategic road projects ... [Time expired.] Thank you very much, we are done. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: I noted that there are a lot of members who have made a passen to the local government sphere, and as he was speaking about local government strategy, on both sides of the House, I saw people nodding or listening carefully. Thank you very much, hon member. [Applause.]

Ms M L MATHOPA (Maiden Speech): Hon President, hon members and fellow South Africans, I would like to convey my condolences to the families of the 14 fallen heroes in the DRC.

IsiZulu:

Sithi: Phephi, akwehlanga lungehlanga!

English:

I want to thank the President for the well-constructed Sona Speech. Mr President, millions of South Africans eagerly watched. Now there's a great expectation on the delivery of your address. One of the promises is the R200 billion awarded to the Transformation Fund to support small and predominantly

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black businesses. It is my heartfelt wish that the black-owned businesses include coloureds and Indian South Africans as well, because history have learned that these groups were marginalised and had very little or no sharing in benefiting from funds such as this.

Mr President, thank you for sharing that 60% of South Africans are getting social or government support. However, it is concerning because this is an indication that unemployment is high and proper job creation opportunities for all South Africans are in high demand, irrespective of their race. Hon President, it is really encouraging to hear that government prioritised R940 billion for infrastructure development, of which R375 billion will be awarded to state-owned enterprises for upgrading of their infrastructure. Can we please guard against corruption to prevent another state capture saga.

Head of State, I am very glad to hear that Prasa will extend its network, but can you please address those who manage our public transport, not to neglect our assets and leave it in ruins? It is an eyesore to drive every day past the Cape Town Station and to see so many train compartments in ruin. We will

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hold you to account on the promise to bring rail, roads and ports to international standards.

Mr President, you mentioned that you want South Africa to be a global leader in commercial cultivation of hemp and cannabis. Can I ask, on the land you intend to expropriate, that you consider using this land to accommodate these commodities and upskill unemployed youth and women to proudly manage these projects?

Sesotho:

Hlokomela setjhaba sa heso Monghadi Mopresidente!

English:

Mr President, I clearly heard you say that we will not be bullied, and we all know that you were ... [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Afrikaans:

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Die MINISTER VAN KORREKTIEWE DIENSTE: Speaker, die slagspreuk van die VF Plus verlede jaar was, "Kom ons herstel en bou."

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English:

Let us restore and rebuild South Africa. The Preamble of the Constitution determines that we respect those who worked to build and develop our country, and we believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity. The ANC's Freedom Charter goes even further, saying it belongs to all who live in it, black and white. Now, hon Speaker, I want to put it very clearly that the Afrikaner is part of that diversity, and we want to build South Africa.

Afrikaans:

Laat ons met mekaar eerlik wees: President Trump het die kollig geplaas op die Afrikaner in Suid-Afrika. Ek sê vir hom dankie, want ons is deel van Suid-Afrika. Ja, as daar mense is wat die land wil verlaat, dis hulle vrye keuse. Die VF Plus sal nie voorskriftelik wees nie, maar, agb President, ek is hier om te bly.

English:

We are here to restore and rebuild. If we want to solve the problems of South Africa, we must also look into the inconvenient truth of what is happening in South Africa. Part of that is land reform. In my limited time, I will focus on

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that, and it brings me to the Expropriation Act. I want to put it very clearly that it is not true that expropriation without compensation will solve the land issue. What are the facts?

If you go and look at the annual reports of the department, and if you look at the restitution, there were about 80 000 claims in terms of the restitution to address the injustice of the 1913 Land Act. Of those claimants, 94% - it's in the annual report - didn't want the land, but they wanted the compensation. If we go to land redistribution, it is in the annual reports that 80% of the projects were failures. So, to say that expropriation without compensation will solve the land issue and land reform is just not true.

However, what is happening in South Africa? If I give you these examples of what is happening, we must remember one thing with social media, that everything you put, whether it's on X or Facebook or whatever platform, it is for the world to see. I want to refer specifically to the illegal - can I say - invasion and occupation of land? Olievenhoutbosch was one example where people just illegally invade the land.

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I want to give you another example. There is a farmer farming near Wepener. There came another farmer with his cattle. He cut the fences, and he is occupying that land. He went to the police. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Hon Groenewald, can you take your seat? Hon members, we can converse without drowning out the speaker. We can heckle again without drowning out the speaker or using our hands to make our statements. I would really appeal that we allow the speaker to present his statement. Hon Groenewald, you can proceed.

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: He went to the police asking for protection, but they refused. As we speak now, there is illegal land occupation at Stilfontein. There's a court order instructing the police to prevent it, but they do nothing. That's the problem. If the police do not act, and you are part of the executive, then it can be said that you are complicit to this illegal land evasion and occupation.

Therefore, hon President, if we talk and we say we want to solve the problems, these issues must be addressed. The Afrikaner always contributed, whether you like it or not. They

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were part of those we say we respect, who worked to build and develop our country. We can only succeed to ensure that we are successful if we address our problems, we look each other in the eye and put the inconvenient truth on the table.

We must ensure that we make South Africa so prosperous that people don't want to leave South Africa to go to other countries. However, ...

Afrikaans:

... ons moet dan vir mekaar sê: Erken die regte van die Afrikaner. Ons wil hard werk om 'n toekoms te skep vir onself, vir ons kinders, en vir almal in Suid-Afrika.

English:

[Time expired.] I thank you.

Ms T M CHAUKE: Hon Speaker, members of this august House and fellow South Africans. Today we are gathered here as we debate on the state of the nation address that was presented by our President, Comrade hon Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, the President of the Republic of South Africa. We reflect on the history and

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the participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in the dispensation of our democracy.

We look at how we seek to achieve economic inclusion and transformation. We seek to achieve an equitable and more just society for all. As we observe 70 years of the Freedom Charter, it says: "The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth." The wealth cannot be equally distributed and shared without the empowerment of the most marginalised.

There are policies, legislations that seek to empower young people, women and persons with disabilities, but yet systematic barriers still persist. President, in your presidential speech you indicated that you would then be strategically deploying various representatives and officials across the globe, representing South Africa for best practices and also to find investment that would be injected into South Africa.

We are saying, as part of those deployments ...

IsiZulu

... sithi: Thuma thina!

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English:

Do not forget persons with disabilities. Do not forget women in these deployments. Do not forget young people who are the future of this country.

We look and observe at the legislations and policies that we have adopted in this very House, that seek to empower the most vulnerable and the most marginalised. We've got the BBBEE and yet, there are still systematic disparities that persist. We want to ensure that those who are previously disadvantaged and who were marginalised from participating in the economy of this country are included, integrated and are able to effectively contribute towards the development and the growth of the economy.

We've got the Public Procurement Act of 2024 that seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities, women, youth have a fair opportunity to become part of the procurement ecosystem, but yet systematic barriers persist. President and fellow members, it is important for us to ensure that these legislations do not just exist in paper and in writing, but they must realise their full potential. We must ensure that when we speak about the Employment Equity Act of 1998 that

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seeks to ensure that women, youth and persons with disabilities previously disadvantaged and excluded, must have employment. There must be adequate treatment.

This must be realised through adequate funding. Policies can no longer be developed without adequate funding that is set aside to ensure the successful implementation of these policies. If we do not do this, we fear and we will face failure going forward and we will continue with the same cycle.

President, we know that South Africa is recognised and known for developing the most progressive and inclusive policies and legislative frameworks. Our biggest challenge which we are aware of as South Africans and members of this august House, is the implementation of them, the lack of funding around them.

It is our time now as South Africa. We have claimed political power. We are liberated now. Now, we seek economic liberation and empowerment for all South Africans. [Applause.] It can no longer be that we've got people with disabilities who are reliant on the social grant. It cannot be that we've got young

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people, young graduates who are unable to find employment. The public sector along with the private sector, needs to play an integral and impartial role in ensuring that young people, persons with disabilities, women are able to participate and have equal access. [Applause.]

It cannot be that we are not fast-tracking the implementation of the basic income grant, Big that seeks to leverage those who have previously disadvantaged households. It cannot be that we are delaying with the implementation of the Bill on the rights of persons with disabilities, that seeks to enforce the laws that protect and promote the lives of persons with disabilities.

We've got the Gender-Based Violence Commission that seeks empowerment, funding and support. It must be very clear that gender-based violence will not only be solved through commissions, through councils, but would require each and every single citizen to fully participate in this effort. But as government and private sector we all have a role.

Fellow members of this House, I repeat again the important role that is played by the private sector. We can no longer

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let the private sector get away with murder. We can no longer let the private sector not participate in the contribution of this economy and ensuring opportunities for the most vulnerable. We must ensure that even us at the government level, we are meeting the requirements, there is consequence management and accountability. Transparency for us to regain the trust of our people, to restore the dignity of our South African people.

We must ensure that we are relevant and are leading on the global stage. We must ensure that we stand in solidarity in ensuring that we are able to trade with our African brothers and sisters. We cannot do it alone, but in solidarity, it is possible. Economic empowerment is not just a luxury, it's a basic necessity and a human right. Every single South African deserves and shall be economically liberated and empowered. This can only be done through reinforcing our policies, our legislation and having an adequate oversight over those ...

The SPEAKER: Order hon member, your time is up.

Ms T M CHAUKE: Thank you very much, Speaker. [Applause.]

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Mr R A P TROLLIP: Hon Speaker, hon President, it's time for South Africans to be South African and to honour and respect the preamble of the Constitution and the Constitution itself. This is no time for ethnic and cultural individuality. No time for racial polarisation or talk of cessation. We cannot afford a race war, and we cannot allow those who ferment this here and abroad to incite us.

You said, we won't be bullied. Thereafter, President Trump issued an ill-informed executive order fuelled by divisive narratives designed to fracture us. This should have reminded us all that we do not live in splendid global isolation. The backpedalling in the face of Trump's executive order and the looming threat of African Growth and Opportunity Act, Agoa's revocation has been remarkable. It reminds me of the popular acronym FAFO. Be careful of what you wish for.

The truth is for years we have been bullied. Our Brics partners dictate who may or may not visit our country such as the Dalai Lama, and who we can and cannot engage with such as the Taiwanese government. You have chosen friends that are pariah nations, that are neither democratic nor uphold human

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rights, nations at war with their own people, through repressive regimes.

Conversely, we treat democratic nations, our major trading partners, with disdain and insult. Let it be known that the racists rhetoric so freely bandied about in this Parliament and in party rally stages by the likes of the ANC, the EFF and MK Party have great consequences for us as a nation. Your ANC sins are catching up with you. You have prostituted yourselves to the highest bidders who grease your party wheels with no regard of the consequences.

The New World Order sees which side you have picked, and now the chickens are coming home to roost. Javier Milei was unambiguous about this at Davos. Mr President, your lip service to fighting corruption while promoting and protecting cadres who have failed at local government level, who've been implicated and convicted of egregious corruption and tender fraud, undermines our international reputation. This severely limits our ability to attract foreign direct investment to grow our anaemic. economy. We have a new government, in words, not in deeds.

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There's an interesting article about the changing of the guard in the United States' entitled overrides. It focuses on the dismantling of an entrenched and manifestly corrupt order. It is clear that there's been no override or dismantling of our entrenched corrupt order, as your state of the nation address speech was as delusional, out of touch and fanciful as ever. Mr President, you displayed dystopian disconnection. I'm not surprised, because your Ministers do it every day.

Minister Mantashe said ...

IsiXhosa:

... siza kubakhupha ...

English:

... when we asked him when are you going to deal with the Lily Mine victims. It's now been nine years. We hear that Vantage Goldfields is going to open the mine, not a word about the Lily Mine victims. Your Minister of Police informs you that every police station has a victim friendly service centre. They don't. Just ask every single gender-based violence, GBV victim who has to go to a police centre to report a rape what it feels like.

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Your Minister of Home Affairs claims to be eradicating backlogs, yet his department cannot resolve the case that I've referred to him of two South Africans awaiting passports abroad for more than a year. It's easier for illegal immigrants to infiltrate Home Affairs and bribe their way to obtaining documents that give them access to South African social security and other citizenship privileges that our citizens don't have. No, Sir, the situation is actually dystopian.

Apart from watching some Government of National Unity, GNU parties clapping like seals during your address and listening to their valiant attempts at endorsing your commentary, the rest of the country is not convinced. [Time expired.]

Ms M G MODISE: Madame Speaker of the National Assembly, His Excellency the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, His Excellency the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Paul Mashatile, hon members, people of South Africa ...

IsiZulu:

... sanibonani.

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English:

Chairperson of the session, I have said it before and hopefully I am saying this for the last time, that if you take a clown and put it in a kingdom, the clown doesn't become the king, but the kingdom becomes a circus. What we have been subjected to for the last 24 minutes by the hon Judge Hlophe was below par. They should have given them to member Mngxitama, he would have done something with that debate. Now I understand why Judge Hlophe would have said, ...

IsiZulu:

... "Sesithembele kini madoda."

English:

Because clearly there is nothing there. As a way of introduction let me first pay my respect to the following women, who had a profound impact on my political career. Unfortunately, all of them have passed away. I am referring to Theresa Ramashamole, Bavelile Hlongwa, Thembi Mnguni, Khumo Ndlovu, Sandra Baloyi, Lindi Lasindwa, Elizabeth Letanta, Alinah Rantsolase, Tlou Mojela, Phumla Stokwe, Nonozi Mdlalose and Thuli Nkabinde-Khawe.

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The ANC welcomes and supports the state of the nation address, as tabled last week. We particularly welcome the elevation of the water and sanitation sector as a key pillar for service delivery and economic development for the ANC-led Government of National Unity, GNU.

Commitments to the Freedom Charter and the Constitution have driven the ANC government's efforts to ensure universal access to safe, clean drinking water and proper sanitation services. Over the past couple of years, we have seen the ANC's continued commitment manifesting itself through significant investments in water infrastructure.

In his maiden state of the nation address in 2018, President Ramaphosa announced the establishment of the Infrastructure Fund, which was subsequently established in August 2020 to drive infrastructure development across the country. As you mentioned President, R23 billion has been secured for seven large water infrastructure projects through the Infrastructure Fund. This financial support is critical for ensuring the long-term sustainability of projects.

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Bishop David Ramela, of St Paul African Apostolic Church in Moletsane and CEO of DDK Merchandising in Rosebank shared with me his views on the Sona and many things he said:

President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered a more detailed-than-usual state of the nation address, tackling some of the country's most pressing challenges. His speech focused on the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, emphasising that low economic growth remains a significant barrier to meaningful change.

The government, under the leadership of the ANC, has made significant strides in increasing access and resolving water challenges in the country. Amongst the recent key achievements is the Giyani Water Project in Limpopo, where the Department of Water and Sanitation has managed to complete the first phase of the project, which comprised the reticulation of water to 24 villages under the Mopani District Municipality, improving the lives of thousands of citizens. In Hammanskraal, Gauteng, the Department of Water and Sanitation, working with Magalies Water and the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, has restored the water supply, and today, residents now have safe drinking water in their taps. This is after the successful

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completion of Phase 1 of the Hammanskraal Water Project. We agree with President Ramaphosa that the water sector needs to be reformed to ensure reliable and sustainable water provision. In this regard, the ANC-led government has prioritised fixing the functionality of water service authorities to deliver on their mandate and provide proper funding for water infrastructure maintenance.

The ANC supports the Ministry for Water and Sanitation's plan to encourage water boards to take a more active role. This means they will provide technical support to local governments and manage water projects, ensuring that water service authorities can deliver water and sanitation services effectively. Furthermore, the ANC welcomes President Ramaphosa's announcement committing his government to work with municipalities to establish a professionally managed, well-financed, modern and fit-for-purpose local government system that is capable of delivering on its mandate, among others, the provision of safe, clean drinking water and proper sanitation services.

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Mrs Lindiwe Kangayi, founder of Onshelf and Beyond, a black female-owned company said about the state of the nation address:

I was truly encouraged by President Ramaphosa's speech and his reaffirmation of the government's commitment to economic transformation. We are ready to collaborate to help shape and execute solutions that will transform lives and uplift communities.

The water and sanitation sectors are ready to play their part in addressing the lack of technical skills within most of the water service authorities. For instance, Rand Water is currently expanding the scope of the Rand Water Academy, which was established in 2012, to now develop the technical skills needed to address South Africa's water challenges.

The ANC-led GNU is committed to ensuring much-needed attention and increased investment in sanitation, not only in ending sewage spillages but, most importantly, in protecting the dignity of the vulnerable in our society. Already, the Department of Water and Sanitation has issued for public comment proposed amendments to the National Water Act and the

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National Water Service Act, where it said that the bucket system should be outlawed and that there should be no municipality allowed to ever provide the bucket system as a temporary measure even in informal settlements. Provisions already exist to increase investment in sanitation, through the Green Fund by the Department of Environmental Affairs, administered by the Development Bank of Southern Africa. As I conclude, please allow me to express my gratitude to the ANC-led government's commitment to resolving the issue of inadequate water financing, which has currently hindered the provision of water and sanitation services to communities.

President Ramaphosa has asserted during the state of the nation address that his government is committed to developing innovative ways of funding infrastructure. Among the innovative ways, the ANC proposes ring-fencing of traditional funding, the use of traditional grants, blended finance, private sector partnerships and encouraging departments and local municipalities to access blue and green bonds.

If it's a coincidence, then it's a bad coincidence. This chair is known to have played a key role in the collapse of the Venda Building Society, otherwise known as VBS, and in August

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of 2024, he moved to KwaZulu-Natal and suddenly Ithala Bank is experiencing problems. I do not know if this is a coincidence. As the ANC, we are convinced that all the above measures will enhance the national government's support for water authorities, and by implementing innovative financing mechanisms to address water challenges, we can ensure access and efficient provision of water and sanitation. Therefore, we call on municipalities, water boards and communities to work together, in advancing water security in the country. As President Ramaphosa had said, we South Africans need to work together to confront our country's challenges and build a nation that works for all its people. I thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members! Hon members, the Whips of all the parties have consulted amongst themselves and agreed that we will now take a comfort break for 30 minutes. The reason for that is we do not have enough ablution facilities and that is the reason we are giving all of you 30 minutes. The bells will be rung at 16:30 to allow all of us to come back. The House is adjourned.

BUSINESS SUSPENDED AT 16:01 AND RESUMED AT 16:35.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, we will now proceed with the debate. Please take your seats. Could we have order? I now invite the hon Kwankwa.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Deputy Speaker, reflecting on the impact of what I prefer to call the populist ultranationalist policies of the United States of America during President Trump's first term in office, *The Economist* magazine posed a fundamental question in April 2017 as to whether China was challenging the US for global leadership. They put it as follows:

They are looking in opposite directions: America away from shouldering global responsibilities, China towards it. And they are reappraising their positions in very different ways. Hare-like, the Trump administration is dashing from one policy to the next, sometimes contradicting itself and willing to box any rival it sees ...

... whether perceived or real, I might add.

The Economist continues:

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China, tortoise-like, is extending its head cautiously beyond its carapace, taking slow, painstaking steps.

The statement, as you know, President, is as true today as it was when made seven years ago. President Trump's recent executive actions, predicated as they are on misinformation and unfounded rumours, require us to assess our position in the world, to deepen political and trade relationships with countries that endeavour to shoulder more global responsibilities. To this end, we should reorient our trade priorities towards Brics countries that constitute approximately 50% of the global population and the African Continental Free Trade Area. We should also use the upcoming G20 summit to advance Africa's interest in global trade and the development of an equitable global order.

In this regard, President, I appeal to you to conduct sober and holistic appraisals of our involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC, and other continental implications. Whilst talking about the DRC, I must hasten to add that I found the warmongering that took place in the debate here yesterday deeply repulsive. It is easy for politicians to irresponsibly call for war from the comfort of

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their fancy offices in Parliament when, in fact, the consequences of war are too ghastly to contemplate.

Borrowing again the metaphor of the tortoise, President, we should continue, despite pressure from the US, to extend our heads cautiously beyond our carapace, taking slow and considered steps in support of the struggle of the people of Palestine in their effort to disentangle themselves from a comprehensive web of oppressive entanglement.

As you indicated in your speech, the empowerment of women, youth, and people with disabilities is of paramount importance. It is therefore unpardonable that, 30 years into our democracy, coming from one of these vulnerable groups serves as a fixed impediment to individual success. In fact, for many of these vulnerable groups, rising above one station is an enterprise for only those most courageous and ambitious. The commendable opening of new ports in other provinces, together with the focus of the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area on guided trade initiatives for businesses of women, youth, and people with disabilities, will help us to create access to markets for businesses from the marginalised groups.

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In addition, the proposed change in the funding model for municipalities presents an opportunity for rural municipalities that currently have no revenue-raising capacity to use the increased budget allocation to resuscitate their failing economies and to support businesses from these marginalised groups. However, strict measures should be taken to ensure that the restructuring of the funding model for municipalities does not end up in an exercise where we rob Peter to pay Paul.

Whilst we accept the importance of social grants ... I thank you.

Ms H S BOSHOF: Deputy Speaker, hon Chairperson of the NCOP, Mr President, and members of the House, we meet today in the wake of the President's state of the nation address, an occasion intended to offer direction and hope. Yet how can we speak of hope when the President again proposes a questionable policy that undermines economic growth, discourages investment, and exacerbates already high levels of unemployment?

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Minister Tau's unilateral announcement of the R100 billion transformation fund is not just a bad policy. It creates significant concern for democratic processes, an attack on our economy, and a direct threat to fairness, accountability, and the rule of law. This fund was never approved by Cabinet. It was never debated within the Government of National Unity, GNU. It was never subjected to the due processes that govern major financial policy decisions. Instead, it was unilaterally declared as though the ANC still governs alone. Let me make it abundantly clear: They do not. This government is a GNU and not an ANC dictatorship. The days of steamrolling over South Africa's economy and institutions for the benefit of a few elected elite are over.

Years of poor economic policies, crippling corruption, and rampant crime have resulted in a stagnating economy, and, gradually, over the last three decades, the voters took away 20% of their support. Despite this, the ANC went ahead and pushed through the National Health Insurance Bill, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill, and the Expropriation Bill under the guise of caring. In effect, all three Acts do nothing for economic growth or creating jobs, and each of them limits individual freedom. [Interjections.] I am speaking to

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you, sir. Read the headlines, ANC. Your policies are not working. [Interjections.] That is why the voters are rejecting you. The ANC did not give us the GNU. The voters did. They rejected ANC policy. [Applause.] They rejected race-based legislation.

I must however stress the need for transformation is not up for debate. It is a necessity. This means the means by which we achieve it, must be ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please take your seat. I recognise the Chief Whip of the DA.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Deputy Speaker, my apologies for doing this to our member, but the member is being drowned out from here where we sit.

[Interjections.] Can you please ask that the members afford her the necessary respect? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, we made the request earlier this afternoon as well. Please keep down the comments and the heckling so that everyone, even at the back, can hear the speaker. Hon Boshoff, please proceed.

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Ms H S BOSHOFF: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. However, the means by which we achieve it must be legally sound, economically viable, and transparent. This fund in its current form fails on all three counts. We have seen this exact playbook before at Eskom, at the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, in personal protective equipment scandals, and the billions looted during state capture.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Boshoff, please take your seat. Hon Dugmore? Please try another microphone.

Mr C M DUGMORE: Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask if the hon member is prepared to take a question and explain is she in Zille's caucus or in John Steenhuisen's caucus.

[Interjections.] Will she take that question?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Boshoff, are you prepared to take a question?

Ms H S BOSHOFF: I do not entertain silly questions.

[Interjections.] South African businesses are already struggling due to unreliable power supply and unreliable water supply, a failing infrastructure, a punishing tax regime, and

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policy uncertainty, all of which is driving investors away. This fund will only worsen it.

The National Empowerment Fund, NEF, which is expected to administer this fund, has faced ongoing scrutiny for governance inefficiencies and financial mismanagement. Without strong oversight mechanisms in place, R100 billion in public and private sector contributions could easily become a bottomless pit, failing to deliver meaningful economic transformation, whilst again enriching a select few. We advocate for transparent governance that ensures all public funds are managed through National Treasury and not the questionable NEF.

The DA has exposed the full extent of this disaster. My colleague Toby Chance has done hard work in Parliament to reveal the fund's lack of consultation, financial irregularities, and unconstitutional design.

Afrikaans:

Agb President, daar is klinkklare bewyse dat ekonomiese beleide wat rasgebaseerde kriteria nastreef daargestel is om net die elite te bevoordeel. Dit moet onmiddellik geskrap word

en vervang word met meriete-gebaseerde, behoefte-gedrewe bemagtiging – finish en klaar.

English:

Across every sector, from small business owners to major corporations and foreign investors, there is widespread rejection of this plan.

Afrikaans:

Die publiek, agb President, sien regdeur julle. Na jare van korrupsie, van staatskaping tot die plundering van die COVID-19 hulp, weet Suid-Afrikaners presies wat gaan gebeur as die ANC hul hande op die R100 miljard gaan kry. Dit gaan nie na transformasie lei nie. Dit gaan in die sakke van die politiegekoppeldes beland. Ons sal nie toelaat dat transformasie as verskoning vir plundering gebruik word nie.

English:

Hon members, there is an alternative to this slush fund – the DA's economic justice policy. Go and read it. This offers a transformation model that is transparent, accountable, and driven by economic growth. This policy speaks to enterprise-driven transformation, empowering small and medium businesses

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through incentives, investment-friendly policies, and skills development, not forced racial quotas. The reason for a GNU is to find the best policies from each member party and implement them well.

In conclusion, hon President, if you believe in fairness, accountability, and economic growth, I say this: Reconsider this brewing mistake. Fight for real transformation and economic growth for all South Africans, not only the politically connected few. Scupper this impending disaster of a fund and listen to South Africans. Jobs and growth are what they need, not repackaged policy failures. We are committed to ensuring that this policy does not proceed in its current form. I thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon President, hon Deputy President, hon members, good afternoon. Thank you very much for the opportunity, Deputy Speaker, to partake in this important debate following a historic and a groundbreaking state of the nation address.

Hon President, today's debate coincides with the 35 years release of Madiba from prison. President, you provided like a

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stateman - a true stateman - a formulaic and succinct speech befitting of who you are. It's a pity that some heard very little of it. We accept even that the ANC gains of governance are now personalised today. In some of the years they belonged to one person alone.

Hon Boshoff, transformation cannot only be determined by you. We will determine it jointly and the transformation fund will go on. If there's something that you hate more, its transformation, and you don't want to see it. Hon Trump, wherever he sits, has invited you to come and be with him.

IsiXhosa:

Nihleli apha, niyamoyika.

English:

Go! Thats the country that does not need transformation. We need transformation. Hon Trollip, delusional is you. The President is not delusional. You remain out of the Action SA, out of the Government of National Unity, GNU, because your friends put you into a meanshot ...

IsiZulu

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... bakushiye ulele, uphemile.

English:

Hon Groenewald, I was born in Bethal, the only farming town. The only thing we do in Bethal until today is farming. It went to an extent of killing people and putting them underground. The reason why farmers survive before cusp and are still surviving today is because of the funds that they were getting annually. Black people and black farmers are successful. Maybe what you should be suggesting is that we need to give them more money annually for all those restitution programmes to succeed. They are not failures.

Hon Malema, you read part of what President Cyril Ramaphosa said. Let me remind you one thing he said. For example, in the 2024 state of the nation address, he said he will introduce the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme which was known as Flisp at the time. Today we call it First Home Finances. As we speak, families that earn between R3500 and R22 000, 5082 of them are first time homeowners assisted by the government of Cyril Ramaphosa after they have been neglected by commercial banks.

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In the year 2024-25, hon President, we are intending to upgrade that programme and touch the lives of black people to 140 000. We are partnering with all the ... [Inaudible.] ... corporation. We are now taking this programme to rural areas. We would like to thank the National House of Traditional leaders. eThekweni, Inanda, Ndwedwe local municipality, Umlamula are already giving us traditional land where we will finance our black people in rural areas to be first time homeowners. You spoke about distribution of land here. We are participating in student accommodation. Here in the City of Cape Town our kids were toyi-toying yesterday ...

IsiZulu:

... izolo uma ngabe senikhohliwe.

English:

But we have already approved two settlements of ensuring that student accommodation happens, one in Belhar and one in Parow, about 927. Now let me remind you, DA, you only build when there's a Constitutional Court outcome. I will give you the statistics of how correctly and quickly you are failing to provide human services.

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Mr V PAMBO: On a point of order.

IsiXhosa:

UMPHATHISWA WEZOKUHLALISWA KOLUNTU: Bendiyilindele ke leyo.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member at the podium, please take your seat.

Mr V PAMBO: Deputy Speaker, this person is speaking like she's in a coffee shop. We are not in a coffee shop here, please. Whatever she drank, she can't bring it here. I can smell it from here, please.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please withdraw that.

Mr V PAMBO: We are not in a shebeen here, please man.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member at the podium, please proceed.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon Pambo, try better ...

IsiZulu:

... usengumfana omncane kakhulu ...

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English:

... practice politics ...

IsiZulu:

... uzokuza ngonyaka ozayo.

English:

They will give you the stage next year, not now. You don't have a podium.

IsiZulu:

Uyingane encane.

English:

So, listen to me as I deal with how the DA is failing to demarcate land. The Bromwell court outcome at the Constitutional Court just two weeks ago shows who you are. Forced evictions, taking people out of the community settlements in town throwing them 30 kilometres away. Is that the first court outcome? No, the Commando outcome housing, also Constitutional Court.

IsiZulu:

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Hambani ke niyise i-transformation fund kwiNkantolo
yoMthethosisekelo. Nizawusithola.

English:

Because the Constitution can only be determined by you. Yes,
I'm about to conclude. I would like to round off how you do
not spend. In 2023-24, Western Cape is number ...

IsiXhosa:

... msila.

English:

We took back R250 million which you couldn't spend and you
should have built houses ...

IsiXhosa:

... eDunoon ukuze kungatshi amatyotyombe qho ngoDecember.

English:

In our Housing Development Grant as we speak, you're at 41%.
You are likely to lose over R300 million. Go and house people
correctly. In the Informal Settlement Grant, you are at 20%.
Again, you are going to send money back. Where are other

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provinces? Limpopo, 64%. KwaZulu-Natal, 86%. A national refund where you took back R222 million still screams at you. There's no time to waste. South Africans wants us to fundamentally change, and we will never be dictated by those who think change can only be determined by them. Yes, I had a coffee shop because Ramaphosa had no finance in there ...

IsiXhosa:

... ndiza kuyenzela isicelo ngoku, ndiyiphinde.

[Kwaqhwywa.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I have already called the next speaker. Order! Hon Zibi ...

Mr S S ZIBI: Madam Deputy Speaker, I wanted to talk about domestic issues given the importance of the issues we have to deal with domestically. But we are living in strange times. The US Embassy in South Africa has issued a statement that they are closely monitoring land and farm seizures in South Africa and remain committed to fair and just resolutions. This is obviously untrue. It's a lie, as are many statements the second Trump administration makes about other countries and

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agencies of the US government itself such as US Agency for International Development, USAID.

These untruths have led to decisions affecting 17% of our HIV/Aids funding and 15 000 jobs in the related sector. So these are not for casual observation, but deadly serious for us and other developing nations. This is an administration that engages in acts of bullying such as the use of tariffs and other punishment our international partners like Canada, Mexico and China have had to endure just in the last two weeks alone. We are not exempt from this new dystopian world. The US is one of our largest trading partners, and so this affects the state of our nation in the immediate future.

In 2024, we exported R157 billion ready in goods and services to the US while importing just over R120 billion. Mineral product and chemical imports from the US into South Africa amounted to R35 billion, while we exported over R20 billion the same. Exports of vehicles, aircraft and the like amounted to R35 billion. There are tens of thousands of jobs involved and many more livelihoods. We are joined at the hip, but this deep relationship is about to undergo serious strain with

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potentially devastating consequences for South Africa's economy and jobs.

Mr President, we must not be caught napping. It is only a matter of time before we are removed from the African Growth and Opportunity Act, Agoa, arrangement and God knows what are the consequences. Now is the time to build export and foreign exchange earning streams and to guard jealously trade and other relationships we already have elsewhere in the world. We must act with urgency and speed while being calm and consider how we respond to a clearly irrational administration across the Atlantic. After all, it is this new government rather than the American people in general, that want to break apart an enduring relationship built over the decades.

Mr President, we must also consider what is going on in this proper context. There is a concerted effort to undermine democracy, democratic accountability, and an inclusive equitable world. Social media platforms are being used by that former South African and others to undermine democracy internationally by spreading dangerous misinformation. The truth and accuracy of information are fundamental blocks of democracy, and they are being taken apart daily here, in the

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US, and elsewhere. These tech companies no longer do any fact checking with dangerous consequences. National consensus on key policy matters is not possible when millions exist in an imaginary universe such as they are creating. We must use statute and regulation to force them to do fact checking here or stay out of our country.

I am sorry that these previously unimportant matters are coming to the floor on an occasion like this, but complacency is too expensive. What we see unfolding in the US is proof of that. We must act now to protect our economic interest, internal stability and democracy in general.

I also wish to say to those who want to use the opportunity presented by a racist right-wing government in the US to create further problems for us here in South Africa, these are the people who do not care about you. They only care about their domestic agenda. We must focus on fixing our own country and building the society that we all deserve. I thank you.

[Applause.]

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Madam Speaker, digital transformation provides our country with a once-in-a-

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generation opportunity to leapfrog into the future. While countries like Brazil, India and Estonia have long embraced digitalisation to overcome problems, South Africa has continued to use manual, paper-based systems dating from the previous century, and allowed digital platforms that do exist, to decay.

The DA therefore welcomes the President's embrace of digital transformation in his state of the nation address. But this must include urgent regulatory reform to the monopoly held by the State Information Technology Agency, which suffocates technological innovation. If this can be achieved, then the President's announcement creates an opportunity for our country to not only to leapfrog into the digital age, but also to harness digital transformation to achieve the apex priority of the Government of National Unity, which is to grow the economy and create jobs.

This is our opportunity to re-engineer government itself, where all the paperwork, all the queues, and all the fraud is replaced by secure online systems, available "at a touch" – as the President aptly put it. At the heart of achieving this, sits Home Affairs.

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The key to digitalising government is the creation of a user-friendly digital identity system that is biometrically secured against fraud. Hon members, just think about the possibilities. A secure digital ID for every person can eliminate fraudulent payments of social grants and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, funding, make identity theft a thing of the past, create a secure digital wallet for IDs, passports, drivers' licences, educational certificates and other official documents, and enhance the power of the South African passport. These changes will not happen overnight. But we are working flat-out to enable all of this through our vision to deliver Home Affairs @ home.

In terms of this vision and in addition to building the first components for digital ID, over the next 12 months the Department of Home Affairs, the Border Management Authority and Government Printing Works will collectively pursue the following priority reforms. Firstly, and for the first time, we will introduce the option to have IDs and passports securely delivered to the doorsteps of our clients, in the same way that banks already deliver debit and credit cards. Secondly, we will engage with banks and retailers to dramatically expand the successful pilot project that delivers

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Home Affairs services in some bank branches. This project works, but it has been limited to only 30 branches for the past decade.

I now want to expand it to hundreds or even a thousand bank branches, to enhance access and inclusion and ensure that South Africans in both urban and rural areas can visit their local bank branch to get a new ID or passport. Thirdly, also as part of expanding access and inclusion, we are working to ensure that every person who is legally entitled to a ID smart card is able to get one, by fixing the IT block that currently still forces naturalised citizens and permanent residents to use the less secure green ID books. Finally, as the President announced, we want to introduce an electronic travel authorisation system to begin automating the visa process through Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence, AI.

At the heart of these reforms is a mindset shift that recognises that data is the currency of the future – and that it is the individual that owns their own data. After all, it is your ID, your passport, and your child's birth certificate. This means the job of government is not to act as a centralised gatekeeper. Instead, just like the job of a bank

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is to secure your savings while still granting you access to your own money, Home Affairs is the custodian of data, and our job is to ensure decentralised, secure and efficient access for our clients to their own data.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that South Africans are tired of empty promises. That is why I conclude my remarks today with an announcement that shows how Home Affairs under the Government of National Unity, GNU, is turning words into action. Bright and early tomorrow morning at 8am, our brand-new digital portal for the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, TTOS, will go live. Through this portal, vetted tour operators will immediately be able to submit group visa applications to bring many more tourists from India and China to visit beautiful South Africa.

The process has been digitalised from beginning to end, and tourists will no longer fill out a single form, or stand in a single queue. To illustrate the scale of this change, before TTOS was created, there were only two South African missions in China, and only two missions in India to cater to the needs of the 2,8 billion people living in those two countries, many of whom wanted to come to South Africa as tourists.

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Going forward, tour operators will submit an online group application and receive the outcome of their application digitally within just three days. Importantly, this system was built in-house, by harnessing the talent of the young people on Home Affairs' own software development team.

I hope that, within a matter of weeks, Minister Patricia de Lille and I will be able to welcome the first airplane full of tourists who would otherwise not have come to spend their money in South Africa. This is Home Affairs demonstrating the power of digital transformation to create jobs. Our commitment is to deliver dignity for all, both by giving people access to services, and by driving job creation through visa reform - because nothing on earth delivers dignity like a job. [Time expired.] Thank you.

The PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA (Mr M Ndlovu): Hon Deputy Speaker, Speaker of the National Assembly, hon Thoko Didiza, Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Refiloe Mtsweni Tsipane, His Excellency Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, Deputy President hon Mashatile, all members of the National Assembly and the NCOP, it is an honour for me to participate in this very important state of the nation, Sona, debate.

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I speak on behalf of the approximately four million children who are raised by their grandparents in South Africa. Most of them qualify for child support grants, of which Mpumalanga has one million two hundred ten thousand. These children receive free basic health care. They are enrolled in 1 487 no fee schools. One million learners in Mpumalanga benefit from the National School Nutrition Programme, 73 723 learners are ferried to 353 schools daily through the Scholar Transport Programme, and it does not end there.

Madam Speaker, this government also pays the teacher education through National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS. We thank you, and your government, hon President for producing all these initiatives that aim to better the lives of our children in South Africa. Comrade President, you promised to enact the Basic Education Laws Amendment, BELA, Act, Expropriation Act and the national Health Insurance, NHI, and you have done it. We have no doubt that the basic income grant will be implemented.

Madam Speaker, we concur with His Excellency President Ramaphosa's most urgent task to grow our economy so that we can create jobs, reduce poverty, and improve the lives of all

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South Africans. In Mpumalanga we have since funded 238 youth-owned enterprises at a tune of R258 million through the Premier's Youth Development Fund, an initiative aimed at empowering the youth, women, and people living with disabilities.

The province plans to launch the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market by April 2025. We are engaging with international partners, including Oman and China, to build trading relations and explore markets for agricultural products. On operationalisation, 156 jobs will be created on the market floor. A total of 150 000 subsistence farmers and small-scale farmers will have access to trade their products.

We are also expecting to create an additional 105 000 jobs at the farm level. A total of 1 600 Small and Medium Enterprises, SMEs, four per ward, will be supported to start their own businesses that will trade their products with the market. We aim to increase the tourism industry's contribution to our gross domestic product, GDP, from 5,8% to 8%. The province plan to increase public and private infrastructure investment through key tourism infrastructure programmes like the development of a cable car in Mariepskop Mountain, Hazyview

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Waves, the Barberton Makhonjwa Heritage sites, and many others.

The introduction of this new product in the market will increase our market value from 21,6% to over 25% and become the lead province on international arrivals. Twenty-three percent of Mpumalanga's gross domestic product, GDP, comes from mining, in the main, coal mining. Mpumalanga depends heavily on coal as a source of economic value, employment and energy. Coal is critical in our strategy to drive both economic growth and development in our province, and to achieve our economic growth of 3% as announced by the President in his Sona,

We support just energy transitions, and there are several projects that are implemented in the province, like the Seriti Green investment on Ummbila Emoyeni Wind Farm energy, which will create six hundred new permanent jobs. We also support research on carbon capture, which is being explored in its viability towards mitigating carbon emissions in the region. We invite mining companies that stand to benefit from this research to assist in funding this initiative in the spirit of the District Development Model, DDM, in Mpumalanga.

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Siswati:

Kubhunya lutfuli, Make Somlomo.

English:

The infrastructure development is linked to human development and job creation. We have a date with the President to open the state-of-the-art Middleburg Hospital. We are building the Mapulaneng Hospital, the Rob Ferreira Radiation Oncology Centre, which will enable the province to fully treat cancer patients instead of relying on Gauteng. The province is making progress in the successful implementation of the NHI scheme. And 287 out of 292 clinics have achieved ideal clinic status, meeting the national standards for healthcare delivery. And 160 clinics fulfil all required health regulations and are fully certified by office of the health client and compliant.

We are the third best province in the country whose students have entered Grade 10 and completed Grade 12 in record time. We have now completed the construction of seven boarding schools where 6 438 students from agricultural schools in our three district municipalities are enrolled. We have completed the planning of the school for the deaf and construction will start in the next financial year. Our goal is for at least 75%

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of our road network to reach the minimum classification of good by 2031. Former President Gloom and despondency have never defeated adversity. Trying times need courage and resilience. Our strength as a people is not tested during the best of times.

We support you, Mr President, and appreciate your commitment to our nation. We have confidence in your leadership, particularly when you stated that South Africa is committed to ending poverty, malnutrition, and hunger in line with our National Development Plan, NDP. Under your guidance, we believe that our generation can be the one to eradicate poverty. Hon President, you are entrusted and a dependable ally that one can go into war with.

As a former member of this House, Dr Ndlozi finally agrees with the view that the ANC deploys competent leaders with integrity like you my President it is good that a scholar can confirm that you have the best interest of the people of South Africa.

Siswati:

Nginyabonga [Lihlombe!]

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Mr M A MAIMANE: Madam Deputy Speaker, President and Deputy President, hon members of this House...

Setswana:

... багаetsho dumelang.

English:

Mr President, I think today marks 35 years since the release of President Nelson Mandela, an emblem that reminds all of us of hope, courage and justice. It is these features that we must remind ourselves of in times such as this one, as we confront massive geopolitical threats. Mr. President, your injunction for us not to be bullied, is an important one. I want to urge, Mr President, there are times such as this one, we must remind ourselves to remain united as a nation. When others at this moment, when another murder takes place, both in the farms and in the streets, we must remain united.

When others say to all of us, that the demand for justice as espoused in our Constitution is put on the table, we must remain united. When, ultimately, Mr President, there are those who seek narrow interests and find voices from elsewhere, we must remain united and ultimately, Mr President, when the

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hopes of one become the fears of another race, Mr President, let us build one South Africa, for we must remain united.

Ultimately, Mr President, I listened with great caution to your speech. It was filled with much promise, but, Mr President, I think we need to use Thursday as an opportunity to move from state of the nation to state of performance. There is a biblical injunction that says, a house built on sand cannot stand. Our foundations are in trouble, Mr President.

In all reality, when you look at the Medium-Term Strategic Framework, MTSF that was tabled, 25% indicates the achievement of the last MTSF. Yet, Mr President, we cannot pass at 30%. We need a better performance on the next MTSF. Mr President, our economy has been growing at one percent and social spending now consumes 60%. I want to urge that our debt is at R5,2 trillion, that is 74% of GDP. If we are going to show that we are serious, our foundations in building must remain strong.

Mr President, you highlighted education as a success. I do not disagree with you on the path of the class of 2024, but I also

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want to remind you, Mr President, that where we were to pass our young people at 50%, 29% of matriculants who passed mathematics at 50%, only 30% past physical science at 50% or more. This is an indicator of the fact that we are going to run short of the skills of the future.

So, Mr President, here is where I want to offer serious partnerships. On the first instance, if you really want to see growth, let us cut waste. Let us ensure that we half the Cabinet and if we want 4000 more police detectives, I say reduce the Cabinet and fund the police. On the second instance, let us improve our transport infrastructure. On the third, if we are serious about fighting corruption, Mr President, the Special Investigating Unit, SIU and the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA are performing at 48% capacity. Let us bring this up to 100% and remove the corrupt elements from either Cabinet or also at local government.

Lastly, Mr President, where there are institutions that are not performing, let us merge them so that we create state-owned enterprises, SOEs that can deliver for all South Africans. If this is the year of anything, it must be a year of action, and, Mr President, I implore you, if we are going

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to be serious, let us build and let us build one South Africa together. I thank you very much.

Mr V ZUNGULA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker...

IsiXhosa:

... mandikubulise Mongameli, ndibulise...

English:

... the Progressive Caucus...

IsiXhosa:

... ndibulise namaLungu ePalamente.

English:

It is clear that unemployment, poverty and inequality are deliberately engineered to ensure majority of the people live from hand to mouth, because when the majority of the citizens live from hand to mouth, their immediate occupation is getting their next meal and not fight for the commanding heights of the economy to be owned by the people. The labour department enforcing labour laws on all companies, whether it is in the

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hospitality, construction and farming industries would significantly reduce unemployment.

The Public Investment Corporation, PIC must fund manufacturing-driven initiatives. There can never be economic growth and job creation in a consumerism driven economy. There are factories all around the country, Mr President but they are lying idle. There are people who are eager to work, and there is a market for the goods. Why are we importing goods that we can produce in South Africa?

Mr President, our communities cannot be defined by alcohol and drug abuse. We have young kids drinking their future away because they have got nothing to do. There must be a heavy investment in sports and arts infrastructure in the townships and villages. We cannot accept that a black child is more likely to be exposed to drugs and alcohol than schools and sports facilities in the townships. The alcohol culture is stealing our future and the government must act. Enyobeni and countless incidents of alcohol underage drinking are great examples of this. The government must take unpopular decisions and save the future of this country rather than being popular in a country with no future. There must be harsh penalties on

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anything that kills our children, who are the future of the country.

It is an embarrassment that our kids died of food poisoning, yet foreign spaza shop owners were just requested to register. Mr President, the spazas selling fake and expired foods will not be solved by registration. The solution lies in strict enforcement of immigration laws and mass employment of environmental health practitioners.

Lastly, all progressives need to unite. We are unable to change the material conditions of the people because of our inability to unite. We may have ambitions for ourselves and our parties, but now is the time to centre our politics on the interests of the black child. The Boers and the British united in 1902 to oppress the natives and created laws that up until this day, benefit them. No matter how much they hated each other and how many people died in the Anglo Boer War, they found it in them to unite so they can create a better life for their people.

In these 30 years of democracy, it is evident that we cannot undo the over 400 years of colonisation and oppression without

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us uniting. Let us unite to expropriate the land our ancestors were forcefully removed from. The majority must own the mineral wealth and we must transform the economy to ensure the majority, the African majority, enjoy a good quality of life. [Applause.] Generations after us, must remember us as a generation that put the interest of the black child ahead of our own.

IsiXhosa:

Masimanyane mzi ontsundu, siguqule impilo zabantu ukuze singaphathwa ngoondlebe zikhanya ilanga. Eli lizwe lelokhokho bethu, lelabantu abamnyama. [Kwaqhwatywa.]

English:

Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

Presiding officers, President and Deputy President, hon members of this House, nearly five years ago, on the 15th of October 2020, Mr President, you stood in front of this House and presented to Parliament the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan as a response to sluggish economic growth impacted by the deadly COVID-19.

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At that time, Mr President, you characterised infrastructure development as a flywheel on which our country should rebuild its economy due to its multiplier effect. Subsequently, Infrastructure SA, ISA, was established under Minister De Lille and Dr Ramokgopa. Since then, ISA has been championing infrastructure delivery as a single point of entry for infrastructure planning, management and delivery.

This was followed by the establishment of the Infrastructure Fund as an added instrument to provide blended finance. Under the sixth administration, 268 individual projects were gazetted, and 82 of these projects are already under construction with an approximate value of R437 billion. The latest 12 projects that are ready for implementation, which the President referred to in the Sona, were packaged and included in the construction book that we launched in March 2024 under the sixth administration.

Factually, this demystifies the myth that things are happening only now because there are new parties in government, nevermind that these parties boarded a train already rolling and delivering tangible results.

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Like hon Steenhuisen, they all speak as if everything is new. They are not in the habit of giving credit where it is due. It is not in their nature to acknowledge work done by others simply because they are obsessed to claim easy victories out of a desperation to woo South African voters.

Mr F ADAMS: Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member at the podium, please take your seat. Hon Adams, please proceed.

Mr F ADAMS: I was just inquiring if the Deputy Minister is referring to the apples that went to Thailand.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order and it is not allowed. Hon members, also do not make spurious points. It will be ruled out of order. Hon Deputy Minister, please proceed.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: They do not give accolades where it is due, not because of anything but hypocrisy and disrespect to the process of knowledge development. They do not value knowledge development. They

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have no appreciation that plagiarism is frowned upon among the knowledge community and scholars. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Hon members on both sides of the House. Hon members! Hon Deputy Minister, please take your seat.

Hon members on both sides, we will sit until you decide that the hon Deputy Minister has an audience that he can speak to, and that he is not drowned out. You have been warned a number of times. So, please settle down and keep any of your comments at a pace and at a tempo and at a volume that does not disrupt the speaker. Hon Deputy Minister, please proceed.

[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: They do not ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, please act orderly. Please allow the Deputy Minister to speak. We have allowed all the speakers to speak without interruption. Deputy Minister, please proceed.

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The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

Anyway, plagiarism and data integrity are not taught at a basic education level, yet ... [Interjections.] [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members! Hon members! [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: ... there are ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Deputy Minister, please take your seat. Hon members, and I'm speaking specifically to the members of the EFF and the members of the ANC. Your behaviour is unacceptable. Hon members, I can, however, also ask you to leave should it be necessary, but it is not at this point. I do trust ...

Hon members! Hon members, can we please proceed with the necessary decorum of this House, because at this point there is no decorum on your side? Hon Deputy Minister, please proceed.

Mr S LONZI: Order, Deputy Speaker.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Deputy Minister, please take your seat. Yes, hon member, please state the point and the rule that you are rising on.

Mr S LONZI: You can't single out the EFF because the whole House, except the DA, is clapping. So, you can't say it's the EFF that is being disruptive. Everyone is welcoming the comments by the Minister. It's only the DA that is not clapping.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please take your seat. You were making such a noise that you did not hear what I said. I said the members of the EFF and members of the ANC. But, you didn't hear it because you are too loud. Deputy Minister, please proceed.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Our country and the world has been bombarded with propaganda and deliberate misinformation about the Expropriation Act recently assented to by the President. The Act empowers the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure to expropriate land and assets only in the public interest.

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In our country we have the Office of the Valuer-General. However, on the implementation of the Act, firstly, we need to ensure that ... the expropriation, the one who owns the property is engaged and that there are negotiations. Secondly, there is a valuer who assesses the property. All of these four guarantees ensures security of tenure and property rights in South Africa.

The misinformation about land grabs and all other falsehoods are rather unfortunate. Worse, when a Minister publicly says the Act will not be implemented when he is still in the office. Ministers take an oath of office, committing that they will obey and uphold the Constitution and all other laws of the Republic, and that they will uphold their offices conscientiously.

Therefore, such a response is not only unfortunate but bears the need for self-development. I must say, there are many Ministers who would have not been comfortable with other Acts but upon taking office they implement them.

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Well, we are seeing what was perfectly described by the late Dumisani Makhaye some time ago. Shombela said, "When racism is combined with ignorance, they produce arrogance." [Applause.]

Expropriation is not only implemented in South Africa. It is implemented throughout the world. In the USA, they call it eminent domain. In Singapore and India, they call it land acquisition. In New Zealand, Ireland and the UK, they call it compulsory purchase. In Russia, Canada and Brazil, they call it expropriation.

The main issue here is that the ANC cares more than anyone in this House. We want to achieve land reform while ensuring investor confidence to grow the economy and create jobs.

Hon Chair, the least said about the debate of the hon Dr Hlophe, the better. We were left confused as to whether it was a debate on Sona or praise singing. However, he demonstrated perfectly that their organisation is only hellbent on personality cults, and it's an entity solely owned by one person whom they pray to on a daily basis as their semigod.

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As a developmental state, our approach to infrastructure development covers all areas. As we talk today, we have delivered 40 Welisizwe bridges in six provinces. Before the end of the month of March, we will open or we will hand over six completed bridges in the North West alone. This government is a government of all the people of South Africa. Let us unite to address all social ills.

Former President Mbeki, addressing the SA National Editors' Forum said, "Report Africa to Africans and report Africa as South Africans." Let us report South Africa to ourselves and the world, but report South Africa as South Africans. I thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Madam Deputy Speaker, His Excellency President Ramaphosa, Deputy President Paul Mashatile, presiding officers, and hon members, this year, we celebrate 70 years since black people were forcefully removed from their homes in Sophiatown to be resettled in Meadowlands, Soweto, where I was born. It also marks 30 years since the inception of the Constitutional Court whose current building at Constitution Hill, was partly

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constructed using bricks from the demolished awaiting-trial wing of the former Number Four Prison.

Hon members, this is a stark reminder especially to those who now have selective amnesia that the South Africa we live in today, its challenges were born out of apartheid regime's forceful displacements, deliberate impoverishment, and oppression of black people. Hon members, it is important for us to acknowledge that having to deal with the future, we must acknowledge the past.

Since the dawn of democracy, South Africans have been striving to live together in harmony despite our deeply painful past and wide economic disparities. What brings us together is a genuine belief that South Africa belongs to all who live in it united in our diversity and that the only sustainable centripetal force for our unity is the creation of the conditions for the wealth of this country to be shared amongst all its people. We should not allow forces of destruction, internally, or externally, to instigate racial divisions and distract us from building a united, democratic, and prosperous country. That's why we will urge the Afriforum, like they did

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previously, taking selfies when they went to US, to get the first flight out and sort out the mess that they have created.

Hon members, left unattended, corruption deprives South Africans of resources which are meant for their development and wellbeing. It is therefore our patriotic duty to increase the efforts to rid ourselves of all corrupt practices so that we can create a truly ethical and capable developmental state. It requires us to fight corruption working together and ensuring that we eliminate corrupt practices that necessitates and kills our institutions and their capacity. We have seen in the era of state capture where institutions that were meant to fight corruptions and individuals who were meant to fight corruption turning into becoming enablers of corruption.

To strengthen these institutions and avoid the recurrence of state capture, the department will lead efforts on the review of the anti-corruption architecture, this review is meant to eradicate duplication of mandates and ensure that resource allocation are optimised, but we will also ensure that we build as we have committed a world-class digital forensics lab so that when the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, send

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cases to court, they are not withdrawn but they are prosecuted and successfully so.

Hon Maimane, to close the gap regarding capacity within the NPA, I can confirm that this year, January, we have developed and approved guidelines for section 38 appointments of prosecutors. Through these guidelines the appointments will be effective, efficient and more importantly, avoid subjectivity. The turnaround time for these appointments will be quicker so that we can have men and foot on the ground so that we can be able to conclude the cases.

As part of the rebuilding efforts of our institutions, all employees within the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and all the institutions that fall under it, will be subjected to undergo lifestyle audits as per the directive of the President. The first phase will include all those categorised as senior management service, SMS, in the department, state attorney's offices, prosecutors, investigators in the Special Investigating Unit, SIU, the officials in the sheriff offices and in the Master's Office. We will then go further to subject all employees who deal with appointments of liquidators and admitted Guardian Fund to full

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vetting irrespective of their position, like those in supply chain management that we are doing. This is to ensure that those who lead the fight against corruption and malfeasance in our society are not themselves implicated in wrongdoing that compromises and weakens institutions in which they discharge their responsibilities.

Our fight against corruption has already started to yield results. Through its effective investigations, speedy litigation, and recovery processes, the SIU saved the South African government almost R8 billion in the 2023-24 financial year. The amounts that have been recovered regarding prevention that they have been able to do is R2,28 billion in actual cash. In terms of prevention of state loses, where they have been able to stop contracts that were illegally done, or not properly done, it is to the tune of a further R2,13 billion. This is setting aside contracts that are not properly awarded. We will further ensure that the SIU is capacitated. I have written to all Ministers, premiers and mayors who owe the SIU to be able to pay outstanding monies so that the SIU can have the resources to be able to conclude their investigations within time. [Applause.]

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Ladies and gentlemen, there has been an outcry in the country about the framework for the protection of whistle-blowers. A benchmark exercise was conducted on best practice on whistle-blower protection. In response to this, the department is finalising the whistle-blower protection framework that addresses the current weaknesses. We will come to the House to present the Whistle-Blower Protection Bill that will ensure that whistle-blowers are protected as they are the important part of ensuring that we can fight corruption in our country.

Ladies and gentlemen, the fight against gender-based violence and femicide remains critical. We must continue our work to ensure that women, persons with disabilities, and children feel protected within our society. It is within this call that we have called for the release of the National Register for Sexual Offenders to be made public. [Applause.] We will do this in phased approach. There has been those who are saying that we must continue to put it secret, but we believe this is important for us to release to the public. This is to protect children who are in schools and to protect children in the ECD to ensure that those, as per the Children's Act, that are exposed to children are not found wanting. We will do this

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responsibly and ensure that we do not violate any law. We will amend the clause that talks to confidentiality in this regard.

We are increasing our work around Thuthuzela Care Centres to be able to empower women but also those who work so that we can be able to see successful convictions. We are currently sitting at 72,5% where the NPA managed successful convictions.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I conclude, I want to raise the following that if we do not work together to ensure that we build a better country, we will not have the future to talk about. It is our responsibility to be able to stand and do what is best in fighting gender-based violence and femicide and in fighting corruption in our country.

Let me conclude by quoting the Emperor Selassie of Ethiopia ... [Time expired.]

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Deputy Chairperson, millions of children in South Africa, education is the bridge between poverty and opportunity. It is the ticket out of their current circumstances, into a better a future. And that is why the chronic underfunding in this sector has had devastating effects.

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Not just to the education sector but to the future of South Africa's greatest asset - its young people.

Prolonged underfunding due to poor policy decision-making over the years has undermined the delivery of frontline services. Currently, we are unable to meet the demand for the teachers that we need. Classes are overcrowded...

IsiXhosa:

... kwiilali nasemaphandleni kusekho izikolo ezikumgangatho ongancomekiyo, ezibangela ubungozi ebantwaneni.

English:

And in many cities, parents are struggling to find places for their children in schools. And all of these realities, members, make it difficult for quality learning and teaching to take place. And it is for this reason that we need to move with urgency to turn the situation around.

Our reforms must be clear, they must be swift and indeed, Minister of Finance, there must be funded.

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In just seven months, the Department of Basic Education has worked tirelessly to address long-standing challenges that our schooling system is facing.

We have started to reorientate the system towards improving quality early learning.

Research has shown that investment in early child learning will yield powerful dividends later in life. And indeed, for our economic prospects. This is key to ensuring that our children have strong learning foundations that will unlock opportunities for them to excel in school and to participate in our economy. And so, to achieve this, we are focusing on the following: Expanding Early Childhood Development, ECD access for children; Ensuring that the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme prioritises students pursuing Foundation Phase teaching; Reviewing the Post Provisioning Norms to reduce large class sizes and improve learning outcomes in the Foundation Phase; Updating the National Catalogue of Learning and Teaching Support Materials to improve curriculum delivery and protecting teaching and learning time.

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Deputy Chair, the quality of teaching and learning cannot take place in a learning environment that lack dignity and are unsafe. And this is why, we remain resolute in eradicating all pit toilets that were identified in 2018 by March 2025.

[Applause.] And while this is proving to be incredibly challenging, it is a moral imperative that we dare not give up on.

IsiXhosa:

Ngapha koko, kukhona iwaka lezikolo ebelingenazindlu zangasese ezithe zabonelelwa, zakhelwa.

English:

To improve accountability at a provincial level for the roll out of school infrastructure, we will review the Regulations that speaks to Norms and Standards of Public-School Infrastructure.

The government must be held accountable by the citizens and the recipients of these services. And South Africans must know that in us, they have a responsible and a responsive government. To improve safety on school infrastructure, with the help of our corporate partner, Vodacom, we have launched

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the Safe Schools application - a digital platform that empowers communities to report issues of unsafe toilets and monitor school infrastructure in real time.

And to combat crime in schools, we are fast-tracking the vetting of educators against the National Register for Sex Offenders. And that's why we welcome making this public, Minister of Constitutional Development. [Applause.]

Deputy Chairperson, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, Bela Act, implementation continues. [Applause.] As indicated by the President in the state of the nation address, we are busy finalizing regulations that will go out for public comment and input. Ultimately, these guidelines and regulations must be implemented in a manner that protects the learner, that protects the teacher and that protects our schools.

I will not tolerate the politicization of this Act in a way that affects our children and distracts them from teaching and learning. [Applause.]

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As part of efforts to improve quality outcomes in the education sector, we are convening the National Education and Training Council. This advisory body, members, will be composed of experts from across the education sector, that will provide guidance for us on how we strengthen the funding model for public schools; How do we improve literacy and numeracy across phases; How do we integrate early child learning into the schooling system and how do we review the pass rate requirements across all phases; including at a matric level.

Mr. President, the DA has taken its role in the Government of National Unity, GNU, very seriously.

We remain committed ensuring that learners have access to quality teachers, safe school environments, and that they have the necessary resources they need to succeed.

If this GNU moves with the required urgency and conviction, it will mean greater stability, economic growth and opportunity for all South Africans.

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While some opposition parties in this House, would rather see the country collapse under the weight of populism and economic ruin, we stand firm ...

IsiXhosa:

... ukusebenzela abantu bethu. Kaloku Mongameli, sithunyiwe ngabantu ababephelelwe lithemba kwaye asokuze sibadanise ngoku.

English:

The future of South Africa depends on the education we provide today. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Deputy Chair, I remember that when His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa gave us a state of the national address in the City Hall, I gave him 10 out of 10. [Applause.] And I also said that behind every President, there's a first lady. In this state of the nation address, Your Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa, you did much better. [Applause.] I also want to refer to the class of 2024 and we all stood up and gave the class of 2024 a standing ovation.

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President, the reason I say you are doing better is because the class of 2025 will be even better. [Applause.] You know, President, that social beneficiaries will have the biggest slice of the budget to eradicate food poverty in the Medium-Term Development Plan and also highlighted in your state of the nation address a whopping R200 billion plus.

President, we must be ready to cheer the class of 2025. There will be 800 000 learners writing the Grade 12 examination, 600 000 are social grant beneficiaries, 81% of the class of 2025 will make up those who are successful, 300 000 of social grant beneficiaries will automatically qualify for National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, bursaries, nearly 50%. This indicates that the investment government is making in the lives of the poor and vulnerable children is yielding positive impacts in breaking intergenerational poverty.

In the Mid-Term Development Plan, provision is made for best practice in terms of the Bela Act to give Grade R learners world class foundational education. The plan also provides for government to look after children for the first 1 000 days of their lives. We also addressed the needs of unborn babies in

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teenagers. So, we turned around the stunting catastrophe we have in South Africa.

It cannot be that 20% of children are doomed to be stunted. We celebrated New Year's Day and 27% of those children were stunted.

Deputy Chair, please don't rule me out of order. About 27% of hon members in this House are also stunted, according to the statistics. [Laughter.] We cannot have a situation where 20% of the population of South Africa are stunted. Addressing the challenges of poverty and equality is implementing a robust and focus pro-poor policy. One of the states of the nation address promises is to reduce the high cost of living, government social welfare beneficiaries by R200 billion of groceries from Shoprite, Pick n Pay, Woolworths and Spar. They need to put back some of their profits into social development. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr F ADAMS: Chairperson, hon President, hon Deputy President, Madam Speaker, colleagues - the progressive caucus [Applause.] Mr President, there are two things that I took from your speech; one, was that the whole of South Africa should mourn

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the loss of our boys in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC. It is a sad moment for our country. However, Mr President, it was countered by the fact that we can send our boys to go and guard the minerals in another country but we can't deal with the zamazamas at home.

Secondly, Mr President, I want to laud you for this, was congratulations for telling Donald Trump to sit down because this is South Africa. This is not a colony of the USA. Well done, Mr President. I want to commend you for your stance on the Palestinian issue in defiance of those people whom you call your Government of National Unity, GNU, partners.

Nevertheless, Mr President, I want to ask you a question. In September 2024, was David Barnea the head of Israel Mossad in this country? Did you meet with him? The country needs to know. Mr President, I want to address our hon Minister of Agriculture, who comes up here and speak all types of dribble. He should go home and listen to his recording because he speaks of nine wasted years. Let me give you a man of colours perspectives: Under Jacob Zuma, if you had HIV it was nine sweet years because he saved lives. [Applause.] Under Jacob Zuma, if you were a construction worker like me, there was a

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lots of work and lots of growth. It was a good time to be a construction worker. [Applause.] Under Jacob Zuma, a bread costed my mother R10. Today it cost R21. [Applause.]

I noted, hon Minister of Agriculture, that you took credit of sending apples to Thailand. Tell us the truth, whose work was it really. I just heard the hon Deputy Minister of Public Works come on this stage and say things about the GNU. That makes me want to welcome the EFF in the crossover to become government! I think it is necessary and it is time. I want to say to you, Mr President, you can correct your mistakes. There is time.

I heard a man stand here wanting to engage the Minister of Police about cattle theft, but my boys are dying 10 at a time at the Cape Flats per day. He does not speak to the SA Police Service to that. A white man's sheep is more important than Coloured lives to hon John Steenhuisen. [Applause.] He has the temerity to come and stand here and talk to us about education yet his government cut our schools by 2 400 teachers and to care to protect white public schools from the loses.

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Mr President, you need to encourage the Minister that it is okay to be stupid, it is okay to be a hypocrite, it is okay to be a racist, but to be a combination of the three it is not okay. Not even here. [Applause.] Mr President, I want to say that there are like-minded people seated on the left. Lean to the left and the answers are on the left. [Applause.] Mr President, these people will never see eye to eye with us because they are not like us.

There are many white people who are willing to make contributions, good and skilled white people like Cameron Dugmore. Why the DA insist on giving us that? We will never know. However, Mr President, I understand they cannot feel our pain because they are not like us. They cannot speak to our hunger because they are not like us! We want our land back! Helen Zille is fighting Land Expropriation on the grounds that it is a crime against humanity. We were evicted, we were evicted, President ... [Time expired.] ... Are we not human? Are they admitting that they don't see us as human? Thank you. [Applause.]

IsiXhosa:

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Mnu M M PETER: Mandibulise - ndicela ukukhuselwa, Sekela Sihlalo.

English:

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Order, hon members. Allow the hon member on the platform to speak. Thank you.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu M M PETER: Mandibulise kuwe Sekela Sihlalo weBhunga lamaPhondo leSizwe, ndibulise kubantu baseMzantsi Afrika kwaye ndicele iindlebe zokundimamela ukuba ndiza kuthini ndiyiUDM. Mongameli ohloniphekileyo weli lizwe, sime kulo mzi namhlanje sisizwe esithokombise iintloko. Mongameli, izikhalo zabemi beli lizwe zivakala mbambozone. Abemi bajonge enkalweni, igazi liphallala umhla nezolo. Mongameli, asikhange siluve ukhuseleko lwakho kwintetha yakho. Izolo ubume apha kule Ndlu uvuma ukuba uza kuba khusela abemi beli lizwe kwaye uza kuba sisicaka sabo, ubakhonze.

KwiNcwadi yeziKumkani II:19:

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Mhle lo mzi, kodwa amanzi awo amuncu, nomhlaba wawo awunikisi nto.

Mongameli, ubuhle bethu apha, asilolutho kubantu abasivoteleyo kuba bayafa mihla nezolo kodwa akukhonto uyithethileyo ngezo zehlo. SiyiUDM, sintlimpinika nabantu belizwe, sikubongoza ngelithi, yhini na, Mongameli. Kutheni na kwanje? Sesantoni na isijwili esingaka ezindlebeni zethu? Ngoobani na aba ubakhuseleyo xa ingengabo abemi beli lizwe? Sihlaba ikhwelo ke Mongameli, sisithi ngenelela abantu bayaphela sijongile.

SiyiUDM, siyabaxhasa oomasipala nenkqubo entsha abaza kusebenza ngayo neziseko ezisinika ithemba lokuba ziya kuzisa iinguqu. Siyamxhasa urhulumente xa esinika i-Inshorensi yezeMpilo kaZwelonke, kodwa sifuna ukuyazi ukuba iza kusebenza njani kuba izibhedlele neeklinikhi zethu zikwimeko emaxongo. Yona le inshorensi siyayixhasa nangona sinesijwili. Sicela, kananjalo, urhulumente akwazi ukujongana nemingeni ejongene nezibhedlele zethu.

Sihlalo, eli lizwe lisebugxwayibeni ngokude sizibuze ukuba urhulumente uyakwazi kusini na ukuzifezekisa izithembiso zakhe ngezigidigidi zeeRandi athe uMongameli wazikhankanya kwintetho

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ngobume besizwe kwiveki ephelileyo kuba uqoqosho lungamanga kakuhle. Umzekelo, ukhankanye ikhulu lezigididigidi (R100 billion) eza kuncedisa abantu baseMzantsi Afrika. Isinika umdla ke loo nto ukuba le mali ingangena kwezoqoqosho ukuze kuxhamle nala mafama omz'ontsundu, angajongelwangantweni. Abantu ezilalini abakwazi ukulima, iintsimi zilele kwaye neenkosi azinamandla okuguqula impilo zabantu.

Iluhlazo yona kakhulu into yokuthenga umgubo wombona kumazwe angaphandle, lo ekumele ukuba siwulima apha eMzantsi Afrika. Siyafuna icace into yokuba ezi zindululo asizixhasi kuba sikuRhulumente woBumbano kaZwelonke, koko sizixhasa kuba sifuna uMzantsi Afrika uphuhle kwaye ubheke phambili. Asizelanga ukuza kugxeka uMongameli kuphela ngaphandle kokuba sibona ukuba ilizwe lethu neziseko zalo ziyatshabalala. Phakama ke Mongameli, usimele. Enkosi.

The MINISTER OF LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chairperson, President and Deputy President, the PAC of Azania welcomes the state of the nation address. President, you made an undertaking that the government will invest in digital public infrastructure, to give South Africans access to

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government services. You further stated that this will transform the relationship between citizens and government.

To this effect, the Department of Land Reform has embarked on the digital transformation of the deeds registry process that will improve security of tenure, increase access to registry services and improve service efficiencies. The phase of the electronic lodgment of deeds through the electronic deeds registry system will go online from 1 April 2025. Once all phases of it are fully completed, we envisage to link the system with other stakeholder systems such as SARS, the financial sector, municipalities, the Department of Justice and the Master's Office.

On spatial planning, in addressing spatial planning, the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development has been working with traditional leaders and communities and have achieved notable milestones in finalising area plans for the following areas: City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng, Nquthu Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, Joe Morolong Local Municipality in the Northern Cape and Maluti-a-Phofung Municipality Local Municipality in the Free State. This will ensure transparency, accountability and alignment

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with the priorities of the National Spatial Development Framework and assist in driving co-ordinated action towards spatial justice.

On rural infrastructure, rural development has not received due attention in the past. Rural infrastructure development remains a significant contributor to social inclusion through connecting remote areas to the rest of the country. In partnership with Ntabankulu Local Municipality and the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the Department is assisting in constructing the Dikidikini Bridge and access road.

The bridge will facilitate mobility and access over the Mzintlava River, crossing between the Ntabankulu and the Ingquza Hill Local Municipality. The bridge will enable connectivity to access essential services for communities of both O R Tambo and Alfred Nzo municipalities, such as schools, healthcare and essential services. Mr President, the school children, women and the elderly have been using drums to cross the river. The construction is expected to be completed by the end of November 2025.

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On rural youth development, in 2023-24, a total of 2 842 youth from rural areas were trained through the National Rural Youth Service, Narysec, programme in our quest to address youth development skills. In 2025-26, 570 youth from high poverty and socially vulnerable deep rural wards were identified, based on information from Statistics SA.

The youth are currently completing their vocational artisan training in various colleges and are facilitated into committed exit opportunities, namely jobs and running their own businesses. This programme is implemented in partnership with several other departments to be cost-effective.

On land restitution, this financial year, in our commitment to addressing land restitution, we have settled a total of 79 claims. The settlement of these claims has resulted in awarding 1 562 hectares of land and at a cost of R23 960 000. [Time expired.]

IsiXhosa:

Niphosiwe ke, bendisaqhuba. [Kwaphela ixesha.]

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Mr O J MOKAE: Hon Chairperson, hon Chairperson of the NCOP, Mr President, members of the House and fellow South Africans, let me start my debate with the famous quote by Benjamin Franklin about crime prevention: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." In this quote he emphasises that preventing crime is easier than dealing with the consequences of criminality. It is important that we strive to prevent criminal activities before they even occur. Crime prevention is a shared responsibility, which includes community building activities that strengthen the sense of community, such as support groups and community safety forums, police forums neighbourhood watches.

Early intervention is also important. We must intervene early in a person's life to prevent them from becoming involved in crime. Lastly, public education and raising awareness about crime and the attitudes towards it is important. Visible policing plays a huge role in ensuring that communities feel and are safe, through various operations such as stop, search and seizure patrols, and detecting and deterring criminal activities.

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This is severely compromised, if there are no sufficient and operational vehicles. It becomes difficult to enforce visible policing, when your fleet is crippled, as a result of a flawed centralised procurement system.

The DA is especially concerned about stations located in rural and remote areas, such as in the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga, amongst others. Vehicles are either standing on bricks at the stations or have been in the SAPS garage for more than 30 days, awaiting parts, maintenance, or repairs that can only be done once the service provider in Pretoria sends down the necessary parts.

Stations such as Roodepan in the Northern Cape - the province I proudly represent in the NCOP - are currently only utilising nine SAPS vehicles, while 20 are awaiting repairs and maintenance. The Kimberley station is no different, with 23 vehicles awaiting services and repairs. The Cape Town Flying Squad here in the Western Cape has close to half of its fleet in the SAPS garage.

At the Postmasburg SAPS station, there are only four out of eight vehicles currently mobile. Staff at the station have

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also expressed their frustration at the lengthy turnaround time of supply chain management processes that continue to negatively hamper their fight against crime. Compounded by lengthy administrative processes and the completion of multiple forms just to procure a single vehicle part, residents will continue to bear the brunt of delayed response times to crime and emergencies by SAPS in the province.

While we welcome the recent handover of new police vehicles to police stations across the province, the new vehicles should bolster the shortage of operational police vehicles, to enhance policing in the province, and at each station!

This situation is untenable. The centralisation of procurement to Pretoria must be urgently addressed to allow provinces and particularly police stations to procure parts and repair their vehicles in the shortest of time and to their earliest convenience. The lengthy administrative processes to procure just a single part for a SAPS vehicle is more threatening to the safety of residents than it is to follow due protocol.

To this end, I have already written to the Minister of Police to review this inefficient process that hampers and frustrates

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our women and men in blue to carry out their responsibilities. [Applause.] Securing parts for vehicles needs to be a swift and seamless process, to ensure all vehicles are up and running within 30 days, whereby they are returned to SAPS stations, so that policing can commence unhindered and without delays.

We know that our SAPS officers across the country are under-resourced, overstretched and lack the necessary resources to carry out their responsibilities. Let us adequately resource our officers.

As I conclude.

Afrikaans:

Mnr President, dit is presies hoekom die DA aanhou aandring op die devolusie van polisiebevoegdhede na bevoegde provinsies. Die Wes-Kaap het bewys, dat wanneer provinsies self verantwoordelikheid neem vir misdaadbekamping, daar werklike resultate is. [Applous.]

Die Law Enforcement Advancement Programme het meer polisiëring op die grond geplaas, dwelmaanhoudings verdubbel en

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teruggedruk teen bendegegeweld. Met die nasionale model was daar lang prosesse, om misdaad in Suid-Afrika te veg.

As ons ernstig is oor misdadbekamping, kan ons nie vasklou aan 'n mislukte, eenvormige nasionale model nie. Provinsies moet die mag hê om hul eie mense te beskerm, en ons in die DA sal nie ophou veg voordat dit 'n werklikheid word nie.

Setswana:

Re dira boikuelo go wena Moporesitente le Tona ya Sepodisi go tokafatsa seemo le serodumo sa Tirelo ya Sepodisi ya Aforika Borwa.

A re direng ka natla gore baagi botlhe ba naga ya rona ba nne ba babalesegile ka dinako tsotlhe. Pabalasego ya baagi ba rona e botlhoka thata. Ke a leboga.

English:

I thank you!

Afrikaans:

Baie dankie. [Applous.]

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Mr M J CUTHBERT: Thank you, House Chairperson during the ANC's anniversary celebration last month, President Ramaphosa informed party supporters that establishing the Government of National Unity, GNU, was a strategic decision to advance the National Democratic Revolution in light of last year's electoral setback. President Ramaphosa correctly pointed out that the ANC's electoral setback forced it to work with other parties. However, he mistakenly suggested that the GNU should be the vehicle to advance the NDR. It is precisely the policies and laws associated with the NDR that led voters to abandon the ANC, thereby paving the way for a multiparty government to enter the Union Buildings to deliver on the promise of growth and jobs.

If we are being brutally honest, all partners in the GNU recognised that the policy direction taken by the government over the past 30 years did not work and that it was time for something new. Over the past seven months, we have begun to see the benefits of working together in the interest of all South Africans. Investor confidence has risen, our currency has strengthened, and our growth outlook has improved. Most importantly, for the first time in many years, South Africans

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have a tangible sense of hope, a fact that we should not take for granted.

We must capitalise on this opportunity to implement a comprehensive set of reforms. These reforms include: pursuing an aggressive debt reduction strategy to ensure that we live within our means and restore macroeconomic stability; expediting the private sector's involvement in energy generation and transmission within 12 months to create a truly competitive energy; finalising ports and rail concession agreements with private partners by the end of the year to enhance competitiveness and position ourselves as an export oriented economy; reviewing existing duties and tariffs which hinder trade and make goods more expensive for South African consumers; and lastly removing the extension of Collective Bargaining Council Wage Agreements for SMME's, which obstructs hiring and contributes towards our unemployment crisis.

However, these reforms will be futile if the ANC continues to pursue its destructive NDR laws and policies, such as the National Health Insurance Act, the NHI, the Expropriation Act and the Transformation Fund. [Applause.] Whilst we welcome the removal of the NHI targets from the Medium-Term Development

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Plan, it is only the first step in ensuring that private health care is protected, and universal health care coverage is realised.

The NHI Act requires substantive legislative amendments to achieve universal health care coverage and prevent our fiscus from collapsing. The only way to realise universal health care coverage is by improving the governance of the public health care system and making it easier and more affordable for individuals to access private medical aid.

Furthermore, the recent enactment of the Expropriation Act has wrought havoc both domestically and abroad. It has created significant uncertainty for both domestic and international investors, undermined property rights and triggered a backlash from our long-standing and value trading partner, the United States of America. This comes at a critical time and our continued participation in the America Growth and Opportunity Act and critical aid funding are under review.

Understanding the grave risks this poses to the South African economy, the DA invoked clause 19,3 of the Statement of Intent and will soon challenge the Expropriation Act in court to

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ensure that property rights as enshrined in Section 25 of the Constitution are protected. [Applause.]

The most recent manifestation of the ANC's relentless approach to race-based legislation is the R100 billion transformation fund, despite empirical evidence suggesting that these race-based policies have failed to uplift the vast majority of South Africans while only benefiting a politically connected elite. Instead, South Africa needs means-based redress that targets poverty as a proxy for disadvantage as opposed to race. This ensures that we address the historical injustices of the past while encouraging investment and job creation.

Mr President, the DA will not be a party to laws and policies which seek to entrench the NDR at the expense of growth and jobs. [Interjections.] Make no mistake, we will use our position in government and in Parliament to block laws and policies that seek to destroy the South African economy and wreck our citizens' livelihoods. [Applause.]

Mr President, we joined the GNU to drive growth up and unemployment numbers down. However, we can only achieve this

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by implementing a fresh policy reform agenda at greater depth and greater speed. House Chair, I thank you. [Applause.]

The PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN CAPE (Dr Z Saul): Chairperson, let me pass my greetings to the Chair of the NCOP, His Excellency the President of South Africa, His Excellency the Deputy President, hon members of the NA and the NCOP, ...

Afrikaans:

... dames en here, groete vanaf die Noord-Kaap se mense.

English:

Let me commend His Excellency the President, Cyril Ramaphosa, for delivering a forthright and forward-looking state of the nation address. The Sona laid out a clear vision, accompanied by pragmatic responses to grow the economy, create the much-needed job opportunities, reindustrialise the country, invest massively in infrastructure, and to expand our social wage wallet, to cushion the poor and the working class.

There is a vision and a plan. That is leadership and not terrible, charged, cheap populism by motor mouthed Trump equivalence in here, who never disappoint.

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After the 2024 elections, the ANC played a pivotal and pioneering role in the establishment of the GNU. Since, I have attended three meetings of the GNU, and as the province, we hosted four Ministers, six Deputy Ministers. All these activities left me with an emblematic impression that despite the enormous challenges in the operational aspects of the GNU, it will run its full term. It is not going to collapse. This is good for political stability in the country. We need to thank the participating parties in the GNU for their ability to shun politics of brinkmanship.

A first-year student in Geopolitics will tell you that the US is very nervous, since the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, because there is a real strategic contender on the horizon for global leadership, which is China? What frustrates the North is that this contender is coming from the South - a former Third World country, which is now a developing economy. Bolstered by the Brics outfit, this strategic contender is surging and not pulling back an inch.

So, we are trapped in a battle of giants. In this, we support the President in his brave assertion that we will not be bullied by a rogue superpower. I firmly believe that, with our

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collective resolve and determination, as a people, we can handle anything thrown on us, even by this fading captain of imperialism.

This ill-conceived White House executive orders are certainly going to spark and fuel racial tension in the country that still resides in vivid memories of racial oppression, economic exploitation of blacks. Black poverty and economic marginalisation are a systemic function of the penetrative impact of apartheid colonialism in South Africa. A very big section of the white population in the country is disgusted and enraged by these executive orders.

Just yesterday, at the airport, I met a very enraged white middle-aged lady, called Magdalena. Magdalena and her husband own 16 farms, and the hectarage of those farms combined is bigger than Kimberley. And she understands the need for expropriation of land.

She enquired whether I was flying out to attend a Sona debate.

Afrikaans:

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Sy het my baie mooi gevra om die boodskap aan al die lede van die Parlement te gee. Sy sê, Trump se moer. Ook hulle, wie Big Daddy Trump in ons land betrokke maak, se moer!

English:

That's the message from Magdalena, who is a white middle-aged lady, who owns about 16 farms in the country.

The year 2024 marked the last lap of the sixth administration and was a good year for the Northern Cape. In the first quarter of 2024, the Northern Cape economy created 27 000 new jobs. And that put the Northern Cape in the second spot as the province with the lowest unemployment. This morning, as we are gathered here, 331 000 people clocked in at employment places in the Northern Cape. It is the highest figure of employment ever in the history of the province.

Our GDP per region in 2024 was R152 billion, which marked a R35 billion increase from the R117 billion in 2019. The major contributing factors to this growth were mining, renewable energy, and government spending in infrastructure. Last year, we recorded a five-year cumulative expenditure of about R25 billion investment in infrastructure.

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This accounts for 19 modern state-of-the-art schools that we built, 11 clinics, road, libraries, water, and eradication of bucket projects. The Namaqua Special Economic Zone was designated by Minister Ibrahim Patel. I would love this House to give the Minister in his absence here a nice round of applause. [Applause.]

We launched our fifth phase R1 billion housing project and contractors are on site building houses for the people of the Northern Cape. In 2024, Sanral commenced with the implementation of the R14 billion road maintenance project. I am certain those of you who are using our roads can bear testimony that there is significant and visible improvement in the quality of the roads in the Northern Cape.

With former Minister Mchunu, we launched a completed R1,7 billion first phase of the Vaal Gamagara water project in the John Taolo Gaetsewe region. Comrade President, with the massive infrastructure investment, we must include the R10 billion second phase of this project. That will see more than 200 villages having improved access to clean water.

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In 2024, the R2,5 billion BFI-funded project commenced in Sol Plaatje Local Municipality aimed at repairs to bulk water supply infrastructure. We also recorded a decrease in 15 of the 17 priority crimes. Northern Cape is now the safest province in the country. [Applause.]

In 2024, we had eight clean audits, which marked the highest ever in the history of the Northern Cape administration. The pass rate for 2024 has considerably increased with 8,4%, which is the best improved province in the country, from 75,8% to 84,19%. Over the past five years, we have seen a steady growth of our matric pass rate from 66% to 84,9%. This represents an 18% increase.

To build on this momentum, we are in the process of finalising the provincial infrastructure plan 2040 and provincial job creation strategy 2030. It is in this breath that we welcome the President's announcement of the national government's commitment to Boegoebaai port and rail infrastructure project and government's intended R940 billion investment in infrastructure. Implementation of the Boegoebaai port and rail infrastructure will alleviate the port gridlock that we are currently confronted with as a country.

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And it will also change the socioeconomic landscape in the province. [Time expired.] Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon President, Deputy President and members of the House. Premier Saul ...

Afrikaans:

...sê vir tannie Magda ek stem saam met haar. Sy ma se ...
dankie.

English:

Mr President, a lot has been said about America today. I am not going to waste my time because Trump only deserves the middle finger. It is his constitutional right to be stupid. Let me turn to serious business.

Mr President, we welcome your commitment to the founding principles contained in the Government of National Unity and the statement of intent to reduce poverty, reduce the cost of living and address the indignity in which many of our people live.

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However, we must acknowledge that regardless of all the noise, both locally and internationally, South Africa has constitutional and moral obligations to transform society, narrow inequality and create a nation in which all citizens have a stake.

Section 27 of our Constitution guarantees the right to access to basic needs, including healthcare, food, water, and social security. It also places the onus on the state to take reasonable steps to ensure that these rights are met. We already have the Grootboom Constitutional Court judgment to this effect.

The Social Relief of Distress grant has played a critical role in keeping millions afloat, but it remains insufficient to lift our people out of extreme poverty. The Government of National Unity, GNU needs to implement the safety net we all agreed to, to reduce poverty in the statement of intent and implement a Basic Income Grant.

A properly structured Basic Income Grant would not just be a welfare measure, it would be an economic stimulus, increasing

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consumer spending, supporting small businesses, and creating demand-driven job opportunities.

Hon Deputy Speaker, on the tourism front, we have made great strides in the past year and a key success has been our work with Operation Vulindlela in the Presidency, the State Security Agency and the Department of Home Affairs on the visa regime.

As stated by the President in the Sona, we will continue to enhance our visa system to make it easier for skilled people to invest in our country and to grow tourism. The Department of Tourism will use the visa enablers, the Electronic Travel Authorisation, the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme and the Digital Nomad to grow tourism, targeting India and China.

As the tourism sector, I want to commend and thank the Minister of Home Affairs and his team for the impressive gains made on the visa regime front. The tourism sector in India and China are very excited about this new initiative and we cannot wait to reap the rewards of this progress in the coming months.

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As stated by the President in the Sona, that the diversity, energy and talent of the South African people is our greatest asset. I must take this time to thank each and every person in the tourism sector for all their hard work and contributions to our growing sector and I wish to thank them in advance for the work we will continue to do.

Another key development is that on 4 December 2024, Cabinet approved the Route Development Marketing Strategy to be implemented from 1 April 2025. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

Nk N N CHIRWA: Mabandla kamjokwane kaNdaba, sizwe sikaMthaniya ...

English:

... commander in chief Julius Sello Malema, all the officials, commissars, selfless activists of the EFF and all the progressive forces who stood up and spoke out when President Malema was once again under attack by Western imperialists who are provoked by our resolve to attain economic freedom in our lifetime, revolutionary greetings.

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President Cyril Ramaphosa, we stand here today, to respond to your state of the nation address that didn't address the state of our nation. We respond to you on behalf of the women who have been waiting for parental justice in our maintenance courts for many years, and received no justice because they didn't have enough in their pockets to bribe their way to justice.

We respond to you on behalf of thousands and thousands of young men and women who recently completed their matric but are faced with the tormenting reality that their lives, like those before them, will amount to nothingness because their bachelor's degrees passes did not guarantee them a table in university.

We respond on behalf of Khanyisile, who is a victim of bullying at Sutherland High School, because she is black girl in South Africa. She and many other young black women are forced to learn that under your leadership, they are second class citizens. Your presidency does nothing for us, Mr President. It doesn't protect us, nor does it give us justice.

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Receive this response on behalf of 17-year-old Amahle, diagnosed at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital in 2017 to being on the spectrum with special needs, and has still not received her right to specialised vocational education to date. Her and thousands other children with disabilities and special needs are cursed with having you as the government of the day as what is standing between them and their right to education is a government that abandoned the responsibility of defending the most vulnerable in society.

Mam Rebecca Molefe, who has a common reality to that of my great grandmother uNomncwalisa Ncokazi. These black women and the majority of black people in this country had their land stripped away from them by white supremacists. Mam Molefe's case is even more catastrophic as her land was stolen from her 20 years into democracy after you became President.

The petrol attendants, widows and orphans of Marikana, millions of unemployed youth who are bed rotting and giving in to depression, grandmothers who are abused by their nyaope and crystal addicted grandsons and daughters, teachers who are threatened daily at their places of work by children who are victims of dysfunctional communities, business people who have

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to pay thugs protection fees or risk being killed, farm workers in Tweerivier in Eastern Cape who are paid a carton of milk and a box of cigarettes for a week's worth of labour, the coloured *tannies* in the Cape Flats who pray at night whilst we sleep, hoping to end the violence with spiritual intervention waiting for Godot because government has failed, and black people in this country who are dispossessed of their land.

As much as you say that you will not be bullied, and we agree with you that you must not be bullied. But the reality Mr President is that you are being bullied. If you were not being bullied, you would have supported the amendment of section 25 of our Constitution that was to see the justified expropriation of land without compensation not the watered-down Expropriation Act that uses the language of revolution but yet far away from true justice.

The state, including Parliament, the executive and the judiciary, carry the obligation to redress imbalances of the past through enactment of laws that will achieve redress and equitably redistribute all resources.

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If you were not being bullied, the South African government would pass legislation that all the food bought by government for public facilities should be sourced from small-scale food producers. This in itself will create sustainable economic activity and inspire many unemployed young people to go into food production because there will be income and financial benefits to boost other economic activities out of it.

We would increase state capacity and stop rendering the development of this nation to the greed of tenderpreneurs. We will always need cleaners, Mr President, truck drivers, security guards, surveyors, healthcare workers and engineers.

There is no tangible reason to subject our nation to the mercy of the private sector through tenders for basic functions of the state. Build the capacity of the state you are in charge of. Do the actual work.

IsiZulu:

Imbila yaswela umsila ngokuyalezela.

English:

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Don't just talk about industrialisation. Do it. We import almost everything in this country and your government oversees the compromise of industries we used to dominate. What is the reason for us to export ...

IsiZulu:

... ivasilaphu yokugeza.

English:

... when we were once a nation that boasted dominance in the textile industry? It is because you are bullied!

Initiate the establishment of a state-owned mining company, housing construction company, a state roads company, a state cementing company because we can longer tolerate what the party of convicts is doing in Johannesburg with money that is meant to build our roads.

Introduce vocational education in earlier grades. Decolonise the education curriculum. We want you to be exhausted of creating matriculants who have zero skills to show after 12 years being in the education system. This, while children as young as nine years old are being taught robotics in China.

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You have been President for 7 years now. May this be the very last state of the nation address where you hide the shame of your incompetency behind a vision board that never comes to fruition.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Chirwa, could you please take your seat. Hon member, on what point of order are you rising on?

Mr G J SKOSANA: Hon Chair, I'm rising on Rule 53 of the Joint Rules of Parliament. The hon member is making personal reflections on the integrity of the President.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much hon member. We are looking into that.

Mrs N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: Mr President, you chose to lead with people who want to maintain the status quo because you are bullied. You chose to lead with those who write letters to America and tell on you like you are a little child that requires supervision because you are bullied. You chose the people who don't have a history of ever choosing your own

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people because you are bullied. And so long as that is the hill you are willing to build your legacy on ...

IsiZulu:

Ngeke nilibuse lobuswa izinkonjane zezulu eziphaceka ngodaka!

English:

The EFF can claim to not being bullied because despite your collaboration with Pravin Gordhan, Jacob Zuma and the establishment to silence the generation of president Julius Malema, we continued to rally behind the radical call for expropriation of South Africa's land without compensation for equal redistribution in use, nationalisation of mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy without compensation, building state and government capacity, which will lead to the abolishment of tenders, free quality education, healthcare, housing and sanitation, massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs, including the introduction of minimum wages in order to close the wage gap between the rich and poor, close the apartheid wage gap and promote rapid career paths for Africans in the workplace, massive development of the African economy and advocating for a move from reconciliation

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to justice in the entire continent, open accountable, corrupt-free government and society without fear of victimisation by the state defence force, police and other agencies. We continue to call for economic freedom in our lifetime! Economic freedom in our lifetime! Economic freedom in our lifetime!

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I will premise this debate by reflecting on what democratic and autocratic regimes contextualised education. My position is underpinned by Priority 4 of the ANC Manifesto which calls for investing in our people, linked with the priorities ...
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Minister, could you please speak into the microphone so that you can be clearer. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION: I will premise this debate by reflecting on what democratic and autocratic regimes contextualised education. My position is underpinned by Priority 4 of the ANC Manifesto which calls for investing in our people, linked with the priorities of the Government of

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National Unity, GNU, a capable, ethical and developmental state. In the 1950s, Verwoerd said, I quote.

There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live.

That's why today we have a challenge of maths and science in our students in terms of performance, it's because of the white people in the 1950s. On the contrary, Nelson Mandela said, "it is not beyond our power to create a world in which all children have access to a good education. Those who do not believe this have small imaginations." We remember his words today, hence it marks 35th anniversary of his release from prison.

IsiZulu:

Ekuseni ngo 4 o'clock, sakhulula uMandela.

English:

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In response to these divergent views, one of the leaders of the progressive liberation movement, the ANC, the latter, and the colonial ruler, the former, 70 years ago, a profound promise was made in the Freedom Charter, a declaration that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened. This year, we rise in our collective spirit to stand against bullies as President Ramaphosa declared, "we will not be bullied." We will not be bullied as we dismantle the structural barriers of inequality, we will not be bullied as we move decisively to implement the National Health Insurance, NHI, the Basic Education Laws Amendment, BELA, Bill, and the Expropriation Act, ensuring that power, resources, and opportunities serve the people, not the privileged elite.

What we need to understand is that education can put us in a trajectory to rapidly respond to the economy of the future through cutting-edge research capabilities, empower our nation's people to claim their democratic freedoms and build a more prosperous and just society. Today, we reaffirm this noble vision to our people, we understand the aspirations of the society, envisioning an integrated approach of the government focus on all round improvement in education system as a whole. An education system that has a consolidated

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programmatic vision, an education value chain with a focus on Early Childhood Development, ECD, basic education and Post-School Education and Training, PSET, which is then going to transition into the world of work, thereby addressing access and success.

During Sona, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa said, "matric class of 2024 achieved the highest pass rate in our country's history for the first time in history of our country." Nearly half of these learners achieved a bachelor pass. Hon Deputy Chair, through years of patience, deliberate interventions and policy reforms by the ANC led government in the previous administrations, the sector is maturing and demonstrating incremental performance which has resulted in the 87,3% matric pass rate in 2024. Hon Deputy Chair, we are now as the ANC, reaping the fruits of these reforms introduced by the democratic government led by the ANC together with measures implemented to drive support during COVID-19 period. Ultimately, in 2024, these measures proved to be effective as we witnessed a significant increase in matric results due to progressive decisions made to support the class of 2024 by the Sixth administration.

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The recent reform that has been introduced in the Sixth administration in the Bela Bill, which was signed into law, is a pivotal Act for ensuring that education is accessible, inclusive and it does not leave anyone behind. We will continue paying attention to the socioeconomic relevance of these efforts by restructuring and reimagining National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, as well as Sector Education and Training Authorities, SETAs, to drive education and skills revolution as a catalyst for all round socioeconomic transformation. Hon members, the President has responded to the financial barriers, introducing the Comprehensive Student Funding Model as a revised NSFAS model which seeks to bridge the funding gap, particularly, amongst those from middle-income families.

Today, millions of young South Africans have access to the Post-School Education and Training, PSET, system, without the overwhelming burden of financial exclusion. Hon members, Technical and Vocational Educational and Training, Tvet, colleges, are central to the ANC policy position and this government's effort to develop the skills pipeline essential for economic growth. To address youth unemployment, we are promoting centers of specialisation across Tvet colleges. By

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2030, South Africa must achieve the National Development Plan, NDP, targeting of producing 30 000 artisans annually, a crucial goal. Additional trade test centers have been established to certify artisans who can contribute to the construction, automotive, and manufacturing industries, ensuring a future-oriented workforce.

Education is a catalyst for economic growth. Skills development is essential in our fight against poverty and inequality. The partnership between Department of Higher Education and Training and Allan Gray empowers Tvet artisanal entrepreneurs by implementing student-focused entrepreneurship development programmes in all our 50 Tvet colleges in South Africa. Hon Deputy Chair, we commend the ANC, the leader of government, for steering a united GNU, where diversity thrives, ideological difference is embraced, and nation-building takes center stage. Meanwhile, outside the GNU, it's colder than a Cape Town winter. The so-called progressive caucus collapsed faster than the EFF, switches from a red overall in Parliament to designer clothes after the Parliament. You will see them today. The camouflage toy soldiers march in circles, lost in a family legacy party where leadership is inherited, maybe a GNU bootcamp is needed, so

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that they can learn how essentially unity is. Hon members, when we speak of transformation today, we do so with the understanding that it is not merely an option but a necessity.

We cannot accelerate growth, tackle inequality, or reduce unemployment without fundamentally empowering our youth. South Africa and the entire continent must acknowledge that their biggest asset is not just their natural resources but also their youthful population. Utilising this young population is crucial ... [Interjections.] Thank you. [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Mr G MICHALAKIS: Deputy Chairperson, the President gloated in his speech on Thursday that more than 28 million unemployed and vulnerable people receive social grants, and although it is commendable that the state is supporting the poor and vulnerable, as it should, this is half our population that cannot even buy a bread without relying on the state for help, and then you send here from the Northern Cape a premier who in 2024 said people in his province should make more babies so that he can get a bigger slice of the budget. You, hon premier, should make more jobs of fewer ludicrous statements. South Africans do not want to be groveling and begging at the

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feet of government, and they certainly, do not want to be told what to do by government. On that topic, Deputy Chairperson, the NHI, although the Minister of Health has not spoken today, I think he has said more than enough to last us all our lifetime, but the President did touch on this in his speech.

I want to say this to the Minister, the pioneer of the National Health Service, NHS, in Britain, was a Labour Party Minister, called Nye Bevan. Minister, you think you are another Nye Bevan, but you are only half way there, because this whole idea is half-baked. This is why you lost 4% in the polls directly after signing it into law. South Africans want to be free to choose, free from government interference, Mr President, yes, they want a basic standard of living, and the DA wants this to happen, but South Africans do not want to pay for it with their freedom, to become forever at the mercy of a big government. As far as Deputy Minister Zikalala is concerned, you tried so hard, but you came out short.

Demotions to the ranks of deputy are always painful, but it's been six months, get over it, man, and see it as a learning curve. If you watch carefully what Minister Macpherson is doing, you might one day be a good Minister of Public Works yourself. If I then turn to the Opposition, Deputy

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Chairperson, let me quote hon. Malema, and I can't believe I'm being reduced to quoting hon Malema, but strange things have happened in this House.

A quote from December 2024, hon Malema said, "to work with President Zuma is to stab yourself in the back because he is not honest." In this rare moment of enlightenment, the hon member has stated clearly what we have been saying for years, because listening to the MK speakers, I should think that it was hardly possible to state the opposite of the truth with more precision. Puppeteered by the very man who benefitted from the arms deal and saw the initial decline of our defense force and presided over its gradual further decline. How hypocritical is it that you then come and pretend to be on the side of our soldiers? The same man oversaw state capture and then appointed the first ever impeached judge with his history of poor judgments in law, to come and preach justice for all. Irony is supposed to be funny, this is just vulgar hypocrisy.

Mr V G REDDY: Order! Order!

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon member, could you please rise so I can see who it is. On what rule are you standing, hon member?

Mr V G REDDY: Hon Chairperson, I rise on a point of order in terms of Rule 85 in the Joint Rules. Hon Zikalala made some improper, inflammatory statements against President Jacob Zuma, alleging the outcome of an arms deal ...
[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon member, Rule 85 is a wrong rule that you're standing on. Please take your seat, it's a wrong rule. Thank you. Continue, hon member.

Mr V G REDDY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, which rule book are you looking at?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Rule 85.

Mr V G REDDY: From which rule book?

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): The Joint Rules.

Mr V G REDDY: I'm just wanting. I'm referring to the National Assembly book.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No, this is the Joint Rules that will apply, the Joint Rules. Please take your seat.

Mr V G REDDY: Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you. Hon Michalakis, you may continue.

Mr G MICHALAKIS: Finally, we have the small parties who one by one came to tell us in few minutes each how to govern, when the most they have done up to now is to destabilise every government they have ever been a part of, with not a single leadership election between the lot of them. Precious democracy there. Mr President, we need to create jobs and growth. The DA Ministers have begun creating exactly this. That's why you could brag about, mostly, their achievements,

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on Thursday, and it's good for you. Now, the rest of the Cabinet must come on board and urgently, so the entire government can take this country forward. I thank you.

Ms S M MOKOENA: Madam Speaker, Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, greetings to all South Africans, I would like to acknowledge the incomparable and charismatic president of the MKP, the bold and decisive leader of our era, His Excellency J G Zuma, as well as our esteemed party leader, Dr M J Hlophe, a figure of resilience, distinction, tried and tested through times, who proudly holds the highest accolades in this Seventh Parliament. I would like to remind some of the previous speakers who seemingly did not get the memo of why we are here.

We are here to debate the Sona, not to debate the MKP president. Thanks to some of you, because of your devious and conniving actions, he is simply an esteemed guest today. Hon Steenhuisen, you need to heal. I mean, it's been years now. Your continued obsession with President Zuma is now laughable. It has reached a sad level, and it hasn't changed the fact that you have joined this government out of desperation.

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IsiZulu:

ILUNGU ELIHLONIPHEKILE: Khuluma nge-Sona ...

English:

... please.

Ms S M MOKOENA: Someone needs to tell the DA to focus their energy on the embarrassing City of Tshwane exclusion.

Concentrate rather on begging Hon Panyaza, to finally give you a table at his seat. The MKP should be the last of your worries. Deputy Minister Zikalala, you are not a tall man, and your debate was also vertically challenged. [Interjections.] You missed the point. [Applause.] Your main problem is your less qualified Minister who completely undermines you and bullies you, not us.

Hon Modise, the less I say about you, the better. Your speech was unfortunately not even worth the paper that it's written on. I am not sure if you're working towards a promotion, but the petty cheap shots won't get you far up the ladder. Mr Ramaphosa, what we witnessed at the state of the nation address was nothing more than a calculated attempt to distract the nation from the shocking failures of your government.

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Failures that have frankly crippled the lives of millions of South Africans, crippled our health systems, our education system and infrastructure and even the safety of our citizens. The false progress and transformation you so boldly represent were misleading, for lack of a better word. Nothing more than a mask covering the festering wounds of corruption, mismanagement and neglect. It is no secret that your government has failed to deliver, yet you continue to spin the tale of progress while our people suffer. Instead, we see cadre deployment.

IsiZulu:

Lesi sifo sakwagogo ekuthiwa i- ...

English:

... cadre deployment has manifested in other Government of National Unity, GNU, parties, and its heavily bloated Cabinet. The MKP, whether you like it or not, are a government in waiting. [Applause.] We stand committed, we stand committed to exposing the truth, and we stand committed to ensuring that the harsh realities of our people are not swept under the rug by your empty promises and your well-crafted speech.

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Today we represent the truth, the truth that your government has failed. Failed our provinces, failed our people, you failed our future and this country. This is the harsh reality of our provinces. Let us start with the Eastern Cape, a province that has become a symbol of systematic failure, a province where financial mismanagement has reached staggering heights. Over R1 billion unauthorised spending. This can't be a minor mistake; it's a failure of governance. Out of the 39 municipalities in that province, nearly half of them are on the brink of collapse, with only a handful managing to achieve even the most basic standards of accountability. Take the tragic loss of 281 lives on the roads of Eastern Cape in 2024, due to the horrible state of the provincial roads. Roads that were never maintained, roads that were left to decay while politicians turned a blind eye.

Then we move to KwaZulu-Natal, our beautiful province of KwaZulu-Natal, a province betrayed by this very GNU, a province that stole the votes of the people. We all know that the MKP won KwaZulu-Natal fair and square. [Applause] But through the manipulation by the GNU, your government has abandoned its duty to protect its citizens. Unemployment in this province has soared to a high of 42%. This is not

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economic success at all. But it doesn't stop there. A thousand lives have no access to clean water. Sanitation projects that were promised remained unfinished.

Free state, this promised land reform has proven to be nothing but empty words. Farmers, both new and old, are being abandoned. In Gauteng, let us turn our heads to Gauteng, where over 300 000 families remain on housing waiting lists.

Meanwhile, informal settlements continue to mushroom. The streets of Johannesburg used to be beautiful, once a shining example of Africa's potential but are now littered and neglected through the GNU. Mpumalanga, the centre of South Africa's coal, is not just suffering from economic stagnation, but suffocating from environmental decline. Despite your promises, sir, power outages are still a daily routine, a daily reality in Mpumalanga. But that's not the only crisis. Mining activities have poisoned the rivers and water resources, leaving the communities to live with Acid mine drainage.

Limpopo, the future of our children is being sacrificed. Over 40% of three-year-olds are not enrolled in any early childhood development programmes and nearly 13% of four-year-olds have

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no access to education at all. And you call that progress. Let us get to the province of North West. Municipalities continue to fail to deliver basic services. Funds meant for service delivery are mismanaged every day. Then it's the Western Cape, where the DA carries on with a loud hailer boasting about economic growth. But the reality is far different. We see you. The progress they talk of only benefits the privileged few. You only need to land at Cape Town Airport to see the grim reality of what our people are facing. The housing backlog in the province exceeds 300 000.

We as the MKP are led by a fearless and visionary leader whose strength and decisiveness define this era. We have been entrusted with a mandate by the people, who refuse to accept a future dictated by lies and empty promises. The failures of the government of the GNU are not just an embarrassment, they are a betrayal, a betrayal of the people who put you in their trust. The time for real change is now.

IsiZulu:

Sebekhathele abantu yini, maxoki.

English:

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And to those who cling to hate, division, and racism in disguise, we see you. We urge you to take advantage of the opportunity created by Trump. The gates of America are open for you. You will not be missed. Thank you.

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: Chairperson and the collective of the presiding officers, the President of the Republic, Deputy President and the collective of the executive and hon members ...

Setswana:

... le baagi ba rona botlhe, re a dumedisa.

English:

Hon members, just before his blood and soul was about to be brutally extracted from his youthful and healthy body by the evil and forever thirsty apartheid vampires for black blood, Solomon Mahlangu, said the following: "Tell my people that I love them, and they must continue the fight. My blood will nourish the tree that will water the tree of freedom."

[Applause.]

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President Ramaphosa, your state of the nation address is in the context of what Solomon Mahlangu was saying because in that state of the nation address you demonstrated love for the people of South Africa. [Applause.] This, you demonstrated by ensuring that the message is very clear to our people and the world that as South Africa, because we love peace and friendship, we are part of all the United Nations' institutions of governance and all its other ancillary bodies.

You indicated in your speech that the reason why we love our people that is why we are part of multilateralism. You indicated in your speech that it's important for us not to allow imperialism to be unleashed on the people of South Africa.

You indicated that the reason why we must continue to work with the African continent is because we are part of Africa and we must ensure that Africa succeeds in its quest to make sure that the economy grows and to make sure that we create jobs for the people of Africa.

You said, President, in your speech that you are continuing to engage both Russia and Ukraine to make sure that there is

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peace and friendship as the Freedom Charter has said. This, you were doing because you love our people.

I just want to make an example of this love which flows from your organization, the ANC. There will be a lot of brouhaha to you if you are a leader at that level. But we know, President, that empirical evidence has demonstrated that here in South Africa our foreign exchange reserves are hovering around R1,6 trillion.

These foreign exchange reserves that we have are not happening because they fell like manna from heaven, it's happening because there's a deliberate programme in the leadership that you are leading in government, by the ANC, to make sure that we invest in other nations and other nations also invest in South Africa.

It has happened because the necessary investment conditions are created and continue to be strengthened to ensure that people and companies are able to come to South Africa to invest so that we can deal with poverty, inequality and unemployment.

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Hon Groenewald, I think you are being hypocritical and disingenuous. You take advantage of the prevailing circumstances because of voices that are coming from the United States, US. You want to impress them by conflating the matters of expropriation of land with matters of common criminality. Because a matter of somebody who invades a farm illegally, that is criminality and therefore, you can't conflate it with an Act that has been signed by the President. [Applause.]

But I'm not surprised because we will know that here in South Africa there was a man who was from the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging, AWB. That man is Eugène Terre'Blanche. And one of the things he did as a shock roach towards the first democratic elections in 1994, he called upon right wing Afrikaners to store nonperishable foods because there was going to be instability in South Africa. Terre'Blanche is no more and the food substances that were stored, ran out of their shelf life. And he didn't have the opportunity to say to them that 'I misled you'.

I'm saying this because the right wingers in the form of solidarity and AfriForum are doing exactly the same thing. If

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you say that and you mislead people. If you say that in South Africa there are land grabs that are taking place, when you know the truth that there are no land grabs taking place in South Africa, there's a Constitution that we are respecting, you are behaving exactly like Eugène Terre'Blanche behaved before the 1994 elections. [Applause.]

Hon Steenhuisen, I thought that there's a dilution of Steenhuinism because you are now part of the Government of National Unity, GNU. [Laughter.] Now, please make sure that you go and study the Constitution of the country very well. You don't have Ministers that you have appointed. In terms of the Constitution of the Republic the Ministers are appointed by the President. [Applause.] Now, you cannot come here and claim ownership over Ministers that you did not appoint. You are actually breaking the law because the Ministers, as I say, are appointed by the President. There's no one else who can appoint the Ministers.

President, we want to commend you for ensuring that you did not respond openly to President Kagame in as far as the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC, is concerned. Because what you were doing is to

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respect the channel of diplomacy that are established as a leader. [Applause.] And what you were doing, you knew that he's your brother, he's your African brother and an opportunity to engage with him will come, like it happened over the weekend. [Applause.]

Setswana:

Ko bofelong, Moporesitente, nko ya kgomo mogala tshwara thata, e se re o utlwa sebody wa kgaoga. Ke a leboga. [Legofi.]

English:

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, there was one point of order that was raised during the sitting. That point will be considered and a pronouncement will be made at the sitting tomorrow.

That brings us to the end of the list of speakers for today. The debate will resume tomorrow. I will ask all hon members to please remain standing until the procession leaves the chamber. That concludes the business of the day and the joint sitting is adjourned. Thank you, hon members.

Debate concluded.

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The Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces
adjourned the Joint Sitting at 19:21.

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