

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:02

The Chairperson took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, let me take this opportunity and welcome you to today's sitting, and today we are graced by the presence of the Premier of Western Cape, hon Winde, we are equally having. special delegates who have joined through the platform, delegates from Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West and Western Cape. The Northern Cape is the only province that doesn't have special delegates. We equally want to take this opportunity and welcome the chairperson of Portfolio Committees for Co-operative Governance as well as the MECs who have joined in. We have MEC

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Mamabolo, MEC Makamu as well as MEC Molapisi. We also have the chairperson, Mr Oliphant, who is also on the platform; we also have chairperson, Mr Sipuru who's also on the virtual platform, and all the Members of the Provincial Legislature on the virtual platform. You are welcome. Oh, Minister for Co-operative Governance, my sincere apology, I didn't see you. You are way more than welcome in the House today, it's always good to have you with us.

Having said that, may I remind the delegates that Rule 21, 22 and 23 of Rule 103 shall apply in today's setting. That goes with the delegates who have joined in through the virtual platform. Before we proceed with the proceedings of the day, I want to indicate to the delegates that there will be an opportunity for the for delegates to give Notices of Motions for about 20 minutes, that is the time that has been allocated for that. I also received the list of those delegates who have indicated that they would like to move Notices of Motions and Motions without Notice. I will then start with the Notices of Motions and also indicate to delegates that you have one and a half minutes for you to make your presentation on motions; anything beyond that, you will have to make a submission in writing. So, I will then start off by Notices of Motion. The

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first speaker is, hon Mmoiemang, the Chief Whip of the Council.
Over to you, Chief Whip.

Setswana:

SEMESEGOLO SA NCOP (Rre K M Mmoiemang): Modulasetilo wa Ntlo ya Bosetšhaba ya Kgaolo ya Diporofense, maloko a Ntlo e ka kakaretso, le baagi ba naga ya rona.

English:

I hereby give notice that on the next sitting day of the Council I shall move on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council -

- (1) notes in debate the 30th anniversary of its Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which was adopted on 8 May 1996, and signed into law by President Nelson Mandela on December 10, 1996, to foster democracy and human rights;
- (2) further notes that the 2026 commemorations of the country's Constitution, which is held as one of the most progressive in the world and celebrated under the theme:

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Thirty years of Constitutional Democracy: One
Constitution, One Nation - Reflect, Renew and Recommit.

Setswana:

Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo wa Ntlo ya Bosetšhaba ya Kgaolo ya
Diporofense.

Ms D W FIENIES: Hon Chairperson, I hereby give notice that on
the next sitting day of the Council I shall move on behalf of
the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) debates the high levels of malnutrition in South Africa,
with many young children experiencing hunger;
- (2) notes that for many children, school is where they get
their only meal for the day; and
- (3) recognises that through the National School Nutrition
Program, the government is giving 4 to 10 million kids
every school day.

Ms T I LEGWASE: Hon Chairperson, I hereby give notice that on the next sitting day of the Council I shall move on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) debates the mental health awareness as many of the people go through challenging periods in this fast-paced world we live in;
- (2) notes that the various stakeholders work together to empower the public with information to dispel misconception; and
- (3) recognises that they work together to promote a deeper understanding of mental health issues to help reduce stigma with discrimination.

POSTBANK REGISTERS AS LICENSED FINANCIAL SERVICES PROVIDER

(Draft Resolution)

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Setswana:

SEMESEGOLO SA NCOP (Rre K M Mmoiemang): Ke boe gape ke go dumedise Modulasetilo wa Ntlo ya Bosetšhaba ya Kgaolo ya Diporofense, le maloko go ya ka ditilo tsa bona tse di farologaneng.

English:

Hon Chairperson, I rise on behalf of the ANC to hereby move without notice:

That the Council-

- (1) notes and welcomes the registration of Postbank as a licensed Financial Services Provider with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority;
- (2) further notes that the corporatisation of Postbank, its legal separation from the South African Post Office, the transfer of shareholding to the government, and the establishment of a Bank Controlling Company are deliberate steps aimed at deepening financial inclusion and transforming the banking sector in South Africa during a year when the ANC declared it, "The Year of Decisive

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Action to Transform the Economy and Fix Local Government," which translates into institutional progress; and

- (3) acknowledges that this milestone provides practical effect to the ANC 55th National Conference resolution to accelerate the establishment of a fully-fledged state bank and to deepen economic transformation in our country.

Setswana:

Ke a go leboga, Modulasetilo.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

WORLD OBSERVES TUBERCULOSIS DAY ON 24 MARCH 2026

(Draft Resolution)

Ms D W FIENIES: I rise on behalf of the ANC to hereby move without notice:

That the Council-

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- (1) notes that today, 24 March 2026, is World Tuberculosis Day;
- (2) further notes that World TB Day, observed annually on March 24, raises awareness about the devastating health, social, and economic impact of tuberculosis, TB;
- (3) acknowledges that this date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease; and
- (4) finally, recognises that this year's official country theme for World TB Day is, "Yes! You and I Can End TB", a clarion call for leaders to champion TB efforts in their respective constituencies, as well as to encourage individual action from all South Africans to contribute to the national effort against TB.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

VANDALISM OF SOBUKWE GRAVESITE IN GRAAFF-REINET

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(Draft Resolution)

Mr P A PHALA: Chair, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with a sense of disgust and outrage at the vandalism of the gravesite of the late freedom fighter Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe in the town formerly known as Graaff-Reinet;
- (2) further notes that this act of barbarism occurred in the wake of the historic renaming of the town to Robert Sobukwe Town;
- (3) acknowledges that this act must not merely be viewed as vandalism, but a deliberate attempt to undermine South Africa's transformation and reconciliation efforts; and
- (4) calls on the police to work closely with the community to bring the perpetrators to book.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA PRESENTS TITLE DEEDS TO LAND CLAIMANTS AT

UMZIMKHULU

(Draft Resolution)

IsiZulu:

Mnu T M KAUNDA: Siyabonga Sihlalo wethu esimthandayo.

English:

I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes that, on 20 March 2026, President Cyril Ramaphosa presided over the presentation of Title Deeds to claimant groups previously dispossessed of their land rights;
- (2) further notes that the handover ceremony, which represented the reinstatement of the affected communities' rights in terms of the Restitution of Land

Rights Act, took place at uMzimkhulu in the Harry Gwala District Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal;

- (3) acknowledges that the handover marked a significant milestone in the government's ongoing efforts to redress historical land dispossession and restore land rights to rightful beneficiaries; and
- (4) finally, recognises that the event was also an acknowledgement of the progress made in resolving land claims and transferring land ownership to beneficiary communities.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

**GAUTENG PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES GAUTENG FOOD DISTRIBUTION
CENTRE**

(Draft Resolution)

Ms T I LEGWASE: I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes that the Gauteng Provincial Government, the Gauteng Department of Social Development has successfully launched a Gauteng Food Distribution Centre;
- (2) further notes that this initiative marks a significant milestone in the province's ongoing efforts to combat hunger, improve food security and contribute towards building the capacity of the state to deliver services;
- (3) further acknowledges that the launch held on Sunday 22 March 2026 forms part of the Fetsa Tlala Intergrated Food Production Initiative, often referred to as Fetsa Tlala-Living No One Behind Programme, which is aimed at addressing poverty, reducing food insecurity and supporting vulnerable communities across Gauteng; and
- (4) takes this opportunity to congratulate the provincial government for its commitment to building a caring and inclusive society through responsive and impactful social interventions.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

UNISA ACQUIRES 20-HECTARE LAND TO CONSTRUCT AIRPORT

(Draft Resolution)

Mr M P SIBANDE: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with appreciation the bold, courageous and innovative initiative by the University of South Africa to acquire 20-hectare space of land for the construction of an airport;
- (2) further notes that, according to the University of South Africa, this airport marks a shift towards practical, skills-based education in Africa's fast-evolving aviation and engineering economy to provide practical training and skills in aviation, drone technology and advanced digital systems, which are critical for

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Africa's growth in the evolving global knowledge economy;

- (3) acknowledges that this will be the first digital technological hub of its kind in Africa, with huge potential for accelerating Africa's economic growth;
- (4) calls upon this august House to express its appreciation to the leadership of the University of South Africa for this innovative initiative; and
- (5) further calls upon the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation to explore innovative partnerships with Unisa to sustain and make this initiative a success.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

**PERSISTENT VANDALISM AND THEFT OF THE CRITICAL PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE**

(Draft Resolution)

Sesotho:

Mong P NOE: Re a leboha Modulasetulo wa rona eo re mo ratang.

English:

I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with concern the persistence of vandalism and theft of the critical public infrastructure in the areas of electricity, water and sanitation, and public roads;
- (2) further notes that whilst noting the successful efforts by the law enforcement agencies in combating this scourge, the poor resources of the SA Police Service and other critical security sector departments in effectively dealing with this organised crime continue to be a concern; and
- (3) takes this opportunity to call on the Ministers in the security cluster to urgently develop and adopt an integrated digital security master plan as a response to this crime and other related crimes.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

**PERSISTENT VANDALISM AND THEFT OF THE CRITICAL PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE**

(Draft Resolution)

IsiXhosa:

Mnu M FENI: Sihlalo wam endimthandayo ...

USIHLALO WENCOP: Hayi yimini yothando (Valentne's Day) namhlanje.

Mnu M FENI: Siyakuthanda Sihlalo.

USIHLALO WENCOP: Ndiyabulela kuni nonke. Nam ndiyanithanda nonke.

Mnu M FENI: Siyabulela Sihlalo.

English:

Mr M FENI: I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with concern the persistence of vandalism and theft of the critical public infrastructure, which continue to rob our communities of basic services;
- (2) acknowledges that this is driven by the existence of lucrative markets internally and globally, on the one hand, and the existence of organised criminal syndicates, on the other hand;
- (3) further acknowledges that the effective disruption and destruction of the illicit markets for stolen critical infrastructure components can go a long way towards defeating this crime; and
- (4) takes his opportunity to call upon the security cluster to conduct an integrated national diagnosis of the illicit markets for stolen critical infrastructure as a basis for an integrated national strategy.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

CONCERNS OVER SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF FOREIGN NATIONALS IN HIGHER
INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING IN SOUTH AFRICA

(Draft Resolution)

Ms S NDHLOVU: I hereby moved without notice on behalf of the
ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with concern, the preliminary report by the Portfolio Committee of Higher Education of the National Assembly about the significant number of foreign nationals in the higher institutions of learning in South Africa;
- (2) further notes that some of these foreign nationals are employed in positions where readily available skills are abundant in South Africa;
- (3) acknowledges that South Africans should be prioritised in terms of employment, and foreign nationals can only be appointed to fill critical scarce skills; and

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- (4) takes this opportunity to call upon this august House to call on the Minister of Labour and Employment to initiate a process of comprehensive review of the national policy on critical scarce skills.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

NCOP CONVEYS CONDOLENCES TO MALEMA FAMILY

(Draft Resolution)

IsiXhosa:

Nksz M MAKESINI: Sihlalo wendlu, mandibulele ngethuba ondiphe lona. Kuthiwa umhle namhlanje ...

English:

... so, happy Valentine's Day.

I hereby move without notice on behalf of the EFF:

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That the Council convey condolences on the passing on of Mme Martha Malema and we call on strength to the president of the EFF and the family.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Condolences to the Malema family on behalf of the NCOP at large.

RUSTENBURG MUNICIPALITY GRANTS 30-YEAR NOTORIAL LEASE OVER 40

HECTARES OF MUNICIPAL LAND TO VIZIRAMA PTY LTD

(Draft Resolution)

Setswana:

Rre M MONTWEDI: Modulasetilo yo o ratiwang.

English:

I rise on behalf of the EFF to move without notice:

That this Council-

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- (1) notes that the Rustenburg Local Municipality convened a Special Council Meeting on 5 February 2026 where Item 107 proposed the granting of a 30-year notarial lease over approximately 40 hectares of municipal land being portion of the remainder of Rustenburg Townlands 272 JQ to Vizirama Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of China Minmetals;
- (2) further note that the land in question contains critical bulk municipal infrastructure, including 450-500mm water pipelines, 350-600mm sewer pipelines and industrial water lines, and lies adjacent to the municipal waterworks and aerodrome, which requires strict buffer protection;
- (3) acknowledge that the municipality intends to proceed with the lease despite incomplete technical assessment, including the absence of hydrological study, a traffic impact study, a method study on protecting bulk infrastructure and environmental authorisation under the National Environmental Management Act, and without confirmation that the land is not required for future municipal service expansion;

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- (4) resolves that the NCOP calls on National Treasury and Provincial Treasury to review the valuation, economic impact and compliance with the Municipal Finance Management Act's section 14, MTR Regulation 5, 7, 34 and 35;
- (5) recognises that the proposed lease amount to R53 000 per month for 40 hectares on mining intended land raises serious concerns regarding undervaluation, economic prejudice and non-compliance; and
- (6) directs the Department of Water and Sanitation to assess the potential risk to bulk water sanitation infrastructure.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

RESIDENTS IRATE OVER COLLAPSE OF WATER PROVISION IN THABA CHWEU

LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

(Draft Resolution)

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Ms H S BOSHOFF: Chair, on behalf of the DA, I hereby move without notice:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with outrage the ongoing collapse of water provision in the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, where the residents of Lydenburg, Sabie and the Northern Villages in particular, many of whom are paying customers in good standing, are being left high and dry, often for days, even weeks on end;
- (2) further notes that this is not a crisis of scarcity, but a crisis of governance. Infrastructure is failing, maintenance is neglected, and basic operational management has all but collapsed. Pumps either stand idle or burst repeatedly, and residents are met with silence from a municipality that seems incapable of performing even its most fundamental duty;
- (3) recognises that these are the very residents who continue to carry the financial burden of the municipality, paying for services they simply do not receive, while their

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- homes, businesses, schools, clinics and vulnerable communities are pushed to the brink;
- (4) further notes that without water, there is no dignity, no economic activity, no healthcare and no functioning community. Businesses are forced onto costly alternatives, households face ongoing damage to appliances and the most vulnerable are left exposed;
- (5) recognises the unacceptable failure of the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality to deliver a basic constitutional service, and demands immediate intervention by the Departments of Cogta and of Water and Sanitation to stabilise supply and assess infrastructure failures, require the municipality to table an urgent, time-bound recovery plan with clear accountability measures and to affirm that residents who pay for services must receive them, because governance without delivery is nothing more than abandonment; and
- (6) finally notes that the people of Thaba Chweu are not asking for favours, they are demanding what they already pay for.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

GRAVE CONCERNS OVER CRIME AND GANG VIOLENCE IN CAPE FLATS

(Draft Resolution)

Mr N GOTSELL: Chair, on behalf of the DA, I hereby move without notice:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with grave concern that in the latest reporting period, over only five days and in the jurisdiction of only 15 police stations, 40 murders and 52 attempted murders were recorded in the Western Cape, with the majority occurring in known gang hotspots on the Cape Flats;
- (2) further notes that this follows the previous week, between 9 and 15 March 2026, during which at least 83 gang-related murders were recorded in the province,

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underscoring the sustained and escalating crisis of gang violence;

- (3) notes that while the Acting Minister of Police has called on the SA National Defence Force to support the SA Police Service in response to this crisis, he continues to ignore the expansion of policing powers to capable governments as a credible long-term solution to restore safety;
- (4) acknowledges that the SA National Defence Force deployment was announced more than six weeks ago as an urgent intervention, yet communities on the Cape Flats are still waiting while lives continue to be lost;
- (5) emphasises that there can be no further failures in planning, preparation or reporting to Parliament, and that proper co-ordination and readiness must be ensured before and during deployment; and
- (6) resolves that the SA National Defence Force be urgently and effectively deployed in full cooperation with SAPS to

stabilise gang-affected communities in the Cape Flats and prevent further loss of life.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

PREMIER WINDE CELEBRATES HIS BIRTHDAY

(Draft Resolution)

Mr F J BADENHORST: Chair, on behalf of the DA, I hereby move without notice:

That this Council-

- (1) notes that Alan Winde, Premier of the Western Cape, recently celebrated his birthday;
- (2) further notes that his continued leadership in driving economic growth, job creation and service delivery in the Western Cape, which remains the best performing province across multiple governance and audit indicators;

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- (3) recognises that under his ethical leadership, the Western Cape has consistently achieved clean audits, invested heavily in infrastructure, and prioritized safety, mobility, and opportunity for all its residents;
- (4) acknowledges his commitment to responsive, accountable governance, and his willingness to embrace innovation, partnerships, and evidence-based policymaking to improve the lives of citizens;
- (5) further acknowledges that this ethical leadership stands in stark contrast to governance failures seen in so many other provinces, where mismanagement, corruption and a lack of accountability continue to undermine service delivery and economic prospects to the detriment of their citizens;
- (6) commends Premier Winde for his dedication to public service, his steady leadership during challenging times and his role in positioning the Western Cape as a province of hope and opportunity; and

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- (7) conveys its best wishes to Premier Winde for the year ahead with the confidence that his continued leadership will further strengthen good governance, economic resilience, and service excellence in the Western Cape.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The motion is defeated. However, on the positive, we wish the Premier of Western Cape a happy belated birthday. We hope you enjoyed your day Premier.

CALL TO TRANSFER DETERIORATED R59 ROAD IN FREE STATE TO SANRAL

(Draft Resolution)

Dr I SCHEURKOGEL: Chair, on behalf of the DA, I move without notice:

That the Council-

- (1) notes that the R59 Road is a critical economic artery linking the Free State, North West, Northern Cape and Gauteng, facilitating the movement of people, goods and services across key provincial economies;

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- (2) further notes that this corridor supports agricultural production areas responsible for approximately 66,8% of South Africa's maize output, while also enabling tourism to key destinations such as Parys, the Vredefort Dome and Nampo;
- (3) acknowledges with serious concern that the R59 Road has deteriorated to a dangerous state with extensive potholes, poor road markings, inadequate lighting and unsafe town entrances, posing a direct threat to the lives of motorists and undermining economic activity;
- (4) recognises that the continued degradation of the R59 Road is forcing farmers, businesses and travellers to avoid the route, resulting in lost economic opportunities, increased transport costs and further strain on provinces already facing high unemployment;
- (5) calls on the Free State Provincial Government to:
- (a) urgently engage national government to transfer the R59 to Sanral for proper rehabilitation, upgrading and long-term maintenance;

- (b) implement immediate emergency repairs, including pothole patching, repainting of road markings and restoration of lighting infrastructure ahead of peak travel periods;
 - (c) work with municipalities to improve safety at town entrances to enabling the installation of speed calming measures, signage and adequate lighting; and
 - (d) ensure coordinated intergovernmental action between the Departments of Transport, Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Agriculture to protect rural economies and secure this vital transport corridor; and
- (6) affirms that the R59 must serve as a lifeline for economic growth and connectivity and not continue as a death trap that endangers lives and undermines development.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

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CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE – FISCAL
FRAMEWORK AND REVENUE PROPOSALS

Sepedi:

Moh S NDHLOVU: Dumela mme wa rena ...

English:

Hon Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Chief Whip of the Council, the Deputy Chairperson, hon Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Premier of the Western Cape the hon Winde, the premiers of the provinces on the virtual platform, the chairpersons, the MECs, and all members on the virtual platform, and hon members here with me, good day. Allow me to present the report of the Select Committee on Finance on the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals, dated 18 March 2026.

The Minister of Finance, Mr Enoch Godongwana, tabled the 2026 National Budget before Parliament on 25 February 2026, in terms of section 27 of the Public Finance Management Act and section 7(1) of the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act. The Minister, the National Treasury team, and the SA Revenue Service, Sars, Commissioner briefed the finance committees on 27 February 2026. The committee received inputs on

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the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals from the Parliamentary Budget Office, the PBO, and the Financial and Fiscal Commission on 3 March 2026. The committee held a public hearing on 10 March 2026 and received a total of 32 submissions, six written and 25 oral.

National Treasury and Sars responded to the issues raised during the public participation process and engaged with the committees and the stakeholders on 13 March 2026. In the meeting of 27 February, the Minister gave a political overview of the Budget. He emphasised that the government has reached a turning point in the management of public finance compared to five years ago, highlighting South Africa's removal from the Financial Action Task Force grey list, a first credit rating upgrade in 16 years, and easing borrowing costs. The director-general's presentation highlighted that the economic outlook has improved moderately, whilst inflation declined to 3,2% in 2025. The presentation also indicated that budget reforms are under way to make the government more efficient and cut wasteful programmes and activities.

In the overview of the 2026 National Budget, the economic performance and outlook show that global gross domestic product,

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GDP, growth is estimated to have averaged 3,3% in 2025 and is projected to remain at 3,3% in 2026 and decrease slightly to 3,2% in 2027. Domestic real GDP expanded by 1,1% in 2025, mainly driven by household consumption, whilst investment contracted for the second year. Gross fixed capital formation contracted by 3,9% and 2,2% in 2024 and 2025, respectively. According to the Statistics SA Quarterly Labour Force Survey, there were 17,1 million employed people in the fourth quarter of 2025, whilst the number of unemployed people declined to 7,8 million. The official unemployment rate decreased in six of the nine provinces in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Turning to the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals, the 2026 Budget highlighted that the tax-to-GDP ratio averaged 25,9% in 2025-2026 and is expected to reach 26% by 2028-2029, despite challenging economic conditions. Gross tax revenue for 2025-2026 has been revised up by R21,3 billion relative to the 2025 Budget. The 2026 medium-term gross tax revenue has been revised down by R57,2 billion relative to the 2025 Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement, due to the withdrawal of the R20 billion tax increase which was budgeted for 2026-2027.

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Risks to the 2026 financial outlook include weaker-than-expected global and domestic economic growth, commodity price volatility, the financial health of state-owned enterprises, SOEs, as well as higher borrowing costs due to geopolitical risk. I remember one of my chairpersons was talking about it. The select committee received inputs from the following statutory bodies: the Financial and Fiscal Commission and the PBO. The report detailed the inputs and the recommendations made by the two bodies. During the public participation, the committee received inputs from the following bodies, as I indicated earlier, and individuals. These were, amongst others, the Budget Justice Coalition, Alternative Information and Development Centre, Institute for Economic Justice, SA Institute of Chartered Accountants, Cosatu, Dr Muller, and others.

Chairperson, the committee supports the 2026 Budget and commends the National Treasury and Sars team for tabling a progressive Budget that maintains the social wage over the medium term. Maybe I should repeat this. The committee supports the 2026 Budget and commends the National Treasury and Sars team for tabling a progressive – a progressive – Budget that maintains the social wage over the medium term.

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In conclusion, having considered the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals, the Select Committee on Finance accepts the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals. The report on the Fiscal Framework was accepted by the majority of the members in the committee. The EFF and the MKP submitted that the Fiscal Framework be amended, and that is not going to be possible because they are in the minority. The report detailed the proposals by the EFF and the MKP. I present this report of the Select Committee on Finance on the 2026 Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council. Thank you.

Debate concluded.

Declarations of vote:

Ms T I LEGWASE: On behalf of North West, Chair, it is the hon Legwase.

With a declining national unemployment rate of 1,3%, the North West has experienced one of the highest declines, with a negative 6,2% decline. These are the results of the efforts of the sixth administration to focus on mobilising investments in various industrial sectors. Despite this progress, the

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unemployment rate remains high and concerning. The improvement of our macroeconomic environment is critical, as it enables the government to pay its debt at a lower cost, placing the nation on a sustainable path. The Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals build on these efforts through gradually shifting financial allocations to increase capital investment through infrastructure development, with the highest increases of 9,7%, whilst sustaining 60% of spending to support the social wage.

We support and welcome the R1 trillion allocated for infrastructure over the medium term. Given our infrastructure backlog and the impact of climate change disasters, the government still needs to significantly increase allocations to respond to the infrastructure gap, as found in the Development Bank of Southern Africa report. With consecutive contractions of gross fixed capital formation, the National Treasury should increase its efforts to crowd in private capital, with the state retaining ownership of its assets.

As we focus on accelerating economic growth, investment in social infrastructure is important to ensure that our schools are conducive to teaching and learning and that our hospitals are National Health Insurance ready. Our human settlements

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development approach should be enhanced to ensure there is sufficient clean water, decent sanitation, and housing for communities.

State-owned enterprises moved to a positive trajectory, from a negative return on equity of 15,6% in 2023-2024 to a positive 3,7% in 2024-2025. This is a major victory for our efforts to build a developmental state. This reflects improved performance in SOEs and the impact of financial support provided for Eskom and its recovery. We applaud the leadership of Eskom for turning the entity from a loss-making entity to a profit-achieving entity.

As the North West, we support the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals. Thank you very much, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much. It would seem like there was a communication breakdown in the Free State, and I do not want to suppress their voice. May I afford them an opportunity to make a declaration?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon Chairperson, thank you for your generosity. On behalf of the Free State, I say,

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one, the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals for 2026 provide a balanced approach to stabilising our debt position as a country, to enable increased room for public investment.

We welcome the downward trajectory of our debt levels, signalling gains from interventions that began in the sixth administration. We welcome the increase in revenue collection by Sars of R28,7 billion related to the 2025 Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement. As a province, we welcome the focus on the review of the White Paper on Local Government, which will usher in a new framework to ensure municipalities function in a manner that supports economic growth and provides reliable and affordable services. The resolution of equitable share disparity will enable municipalities to reduce unfunded mandates and improve revenue. As a rural province with municipalities without an adequate revenue base, a new local government Fiscal Framework will help to improve the living conditions of people in areas such as Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality, small towns, and our secondary cities like Matjhabeng Local Municipality.

Major interventions that will help tackle unemployment and promote small, medium and micro enterprise, SMME, participation

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are the tax proposals to adjust threshold limits, such as the limit to register for value-added tax, VAT, from R1 million to R2,3 million, and this will ease the administrative burden on small businesses. We support the National Treasury's approach of moving from oversight to active structural intervention. National and provincial departments have an obligation to ensure outcomes are achieved, and the approach of leveraging state capability through the District Development Model and through national intervention to support policy implementation will enhance the provision of public services.

Through the implementation of Operation Vulindlela, the government will improve the provision of water and enhance the performance of our ports, rail, and electricity provision, on which our economy is dependent. Thus, the Free State supports the Fiscal Framework. I thank you, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon Radebe. We have noted all the declarations that have been made in the House today. Hon delegates, we shall now proceed to the voting.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chair, please do not forget the Western Cape, the most important province.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Oh, have I skipped the Western Cape? My sincere apologies. Western Cape?

Mr F J BADENHORST: Chair, with that, we would like to declare.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You may proceed with your declaration.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chairperson, from a Western Cape perspective, there are sensible, responsible choices in this Fiscal Framework that deserve recognition.

There is no VAT increase, and, for the first time in 18 years, the VAT registration threshold for SMMEs has been adjusted.

There are upward adjustments in several other limits, including tax exemptions for primary residences, an increase in tax-free savings account limits, turnover tax threshold increases, and an increase in capital gains tax exclusions for individuals, as well as businesses. Tax thresholds rise instead of silently shrinking. Debt stabilisation is prioritised.

Focusing on provincial and local governments, there are still areas for improvement in expenditure that affect the national

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fiscus. Too many programmes remain inefficient and overlapping. Too many entities remain unreformed. Too much money still disappears between the national fiscus and provincial and local governments' purses. Therefore, the response must be a sharpened focus on expenditure. If we are serious about creating jobs, better management of budgets by provinces is required. Spending reviews must be accelerated.

Ghost worker audits across all spheres of government must be accelerated and finalised. Duplication in grant funding must be eliminated, and comprehensive conditional grant reforms must be prioritised and fine-tuned.

When reforms do not happen fast enough, it is really not about time. It is about political will. A country that is serious about jobs needs ever more daring budgets and far better execution, not only by National Treasury but also by our provinces.

Noting the R252 billion payments to the Southern African Customs Union, SACU, over the medium term, the Western Cape welcomes the inclusion of the recommendation, for the first time, that payments to SACU be recognised as a fiscal risk, given their

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sensitivity to revenue fluctuations and its impact on budget stability. The review of the revenue-sharing formula, to ensure medium- and long-term fiscal sustainability and alignment with domestic economic realities and conditions, must be prioritised.

No Fiscal Framework is perfect, but this one is an improvement. It shows responsible macroeconomic policy, and therefore the Western Cape will support this report. Thank you, Chair.

Question put: That the Report be adopted.

IN FAVOUR: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, Western Cape

Report accordingly adopted in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND MINERAL RESOURCES – SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION RELATING TO THE THREATENED OR PROTECTED SPECIES REGULATIONS AND THE DRAFT NOTICE PROHIBITING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES INVOLVING AFRICAN LIONS, IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: BIODIVERSITY ACT, 2004, READ WITH SECTION 146(6) OF THE CONSTITUTION WHICH

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**REQUIRES THAT ALL SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION ISSUED UNDER THE ACT,
WHICH AFFECTS PROVINCES**

Mr M G MODISE: Our beloved Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, hon Mtshweni-Tsipane, Deputy Chair of the National Council of Provinces, hon Govender, hon Minister Hlabisa, hon Premier Winde, hon members, both physical and online, special delegates, both physical and online, people of South Africa, good afternoon. We take this opportunity to send our heartfelt condolences to the family of hon Malema of the EFF, on the loss of his aunt; we also send our sincere condolences to the Shezi family on the loss of the late hon Shezi of the MKP; we also take this opportunity to wish hon Van den Berg a very happy birthday, and also, hon Mokwele, hon Malema and hon Winde belated birthdays.

We present before this House the report on the Select Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Mineral Resources on subordinate legislation relating to the threatened or protected species, TOPS, regulation, and the draft notice prohibiting certain activities involving African lions, in terms of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, NEMBA, 10 of 2004, read with section 146(6) of the Constitution, which requires

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that all subordinate legislation issued under the Act, which affects provinces, to be submitted to the National Council of Provinces for approval. This was dated on 17 February 2026.

I am going to be very brief. I, therefore, request that parts of the report that are not going to be read should be considered as having been read. Therefore, I will concentrate and focus on recommendations. The recommendations are as follows: The Select Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Mineral Resources, having considered the matter of regulation submitted by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment, in terms of section 8(3) of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, NEMBA, 10 of 2004, refer to it on 8 August 2025 and Draft Lion Notice, which was referred on 5 September 2025, reports that the committee has concluded its deliberations on the matter and recommends the approval of regulations and the draft notice. I thank you.

Debate concluded.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: That was short and sweet, hon Modise. Thank you very much.

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Question put: That the Report be adopted.

IN FAVOUR: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, Western Cape.

Report accordingly adopted in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

**CONSIDERATION OF SA NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES INFRASTRUCTURE
AGENCY SOC LIMITED AMENDMENT BILL**

(Consideration of Bill and of Report thereon)

Mr T M KAUNDA: Hon Chairperson of the NCOP, Deputy Chairperson, the House Chairs, our Chief Whip, the Programming Whip, and the leadership, the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs present, hon Hlabisa, hon premiers present, MECs, chairpersons present, members of the NCOP and Special Delegates, and fellow South Africans, we stand before you, to present the report of the Select Committee on Co-operative Governance, Public Administration, Traditional Affairs, Water and Sanitation, and Human Settlements. Having deliberated on and considered the subject of the SA National Water Resources

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Infrastructure Agency SOC Limited, Bill B13 of 2025, referred on 18 September and classified by the Joint Tagging Mechanism.

The objective of the Bill is to amend the SA National Water Resources Infrastructure Agency SOC Limited Act 2024, so as to provide the listing of the agency as a major public entity in Schedule 2 of the Public Finance Management Act to provide for the delisting of the Trans-Caledon Channel Authority from Schedule 2 to the Public Finance Management Act, and to provide for matters connected therewith. As part of ensuring public participation in legislative processes, on 23 February 2026, the select committee placed advertisements on the parliament website and social media accounts calling on members of the public, interested groups, and individuals to submit written opinions on the objective of the Bill.

Interested individuals and groups wishing to comment were requested to forward written submissions to the select committee, and they've done so. Only the F W De Klerk Foundation submitted written submissions. On 10 March 2025, the Department of Water and Sanitation presented written responses to the submissions received. On recommendation, the Select Committee on Co-operative Governance, Public Administration, Traditional

Affairs, Water, Sanitation, and Human Settlements, having deliberated on and considered the subject of the SA National Water Resources Infrastructure Agents SOC Limited Bill B-13, referred on 18 September 2025 and classified by the Joint Taking Mechanisms as a Section 75 Bill, reports that it has agreed to the Bill without any amendments. We therefore submit, hon Chairperson.

Debate concluded.

Question put: That the Bill be agreed to.

Bill agreed to in accordance with section 75 of the Constitution.

THE ROLE OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST

(Subject for Discussion)

Mr D R RYDER: Chairperson, hon Minister, Premier Windy, delegates I live in Midvaal It is a DA-led municipality renowned for financial sustainability, good governance, and a constructive relationship between residents and the council.

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Where I live, local government works. Why is my experience so different from that of many South Africans? The answer is contained in the subject for debate. It is simply that there is a culture of ethical leadership which has been built up and has built a relationship of trust between the residents and the council. People are willing to pay for services that they receive because they know that the money will not be wasted on lavish excesses for politicians but will be reinvested into the community's needs.

Let me provide an example. My village, Henley on Klip, is divided by the Klip River. Residents have raised concerns about the river, as recent flooding has caused damage to properties. The same situation is occurring today. It is a complex area where all three spheres of government intersect, each with different responsibilities. Rather than avoiding the issue, the Mayor of Midvaal convened a public meeting to hear from residents. The mayor then committed to clean-ups at the weir, within the municipality's existing budget, and to maintaining ongoing attention, with an agreement to allocate additional budget in the future.

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Several weeks before he had this meeting, the mayor had a similar interaction with the residents of the Sicelo informal settlement in Midvaal on the subject of electricity supply, and he has committed to continued rollout of the electrical network to the informal dwellings there. That is what ethical leadership looks like in practice.

It is present, it is accountable, and it treats residents not as a nuisance to be managed but as partners in governance. However, if that is the standard, we must ask a difficult question: why is this not the norm across South Africa? Why, just a few kilometres from my village in Mfuleni, do we see a completely different reality? There, residents do not gather at public meetings to engage constructively with their municipality. Instead, they gather to protest, to demand, to plead for the very basics. Sewage flows through the streets and into the same Klip River that runs through my community. Infrastructure collapses, billing systems are in disarray, and despite repeated section 139 interventions, the situation persists.

The breakdown is not abstract, it is a daily struggle for residents, businesses, and ratepayers. Telephones at the municipal offices go unanswered, Members of the Mayoral

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Committee, MMCs, do not attend meetings, and complaints disappear into a system that simply does not function. When the system stops working, when it stops responding, people stop believing.

Hon members, these are not communities that are separated by big geographic or by economic potential or by a legislative framework. They are governed under the same Constitution, the same Municipal Systems Act, the same financial regulations. The difference is governance. More specifically, the difference is ethical leadership. Over time, the erosion of ethics becomes institutionalised, it becomes normal and in fact even expected, and it collapses.

This past week, the Speaker of the Council in the Emfuleni Local Municipality did not follow the standing orders of the municipality and consequently misrepresented the outcome of a council vote to pass the budget on the second attempt. Ethics were sacrificed for political expediency. Where ethical leadership is absent, rules become optional, procurement becomes a feeding trough, and competence is sacrificed for political convenience. Accountability becomes something to avoid rather than enforce.

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We see the same example and pattern when we scale this comparison up. Consider Cape Town and Johannesburg. Cape Town has, over many years, maintained clean audits. It has strengthened its revenue base and invested consistently in infrastructure. Cape Town is not perfect, but it is functional, predictable, and improving. Here in Cape Town, it sometimes feels like a different world from our Gauteng home.

Johannesburg, by contrast, has become synonymous with instability, coalition collapses, financial strain, deteriorating service delivery, and a growing sense that the city is losing control of its own systems.

As I drive through Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni on the way to the airport to come to Cape Town, I see potholes on the highways, streetlights that have been cut down so that they can be stripped of copper and the streetlights are left lying on the side of the road sometimes for over a year. I do not see road markings. I do not see any signs of work in progress. I do not see a glimmer of hope for the future in Johannesburg. Again, I say, Cape Town is not perfect.

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Informal settlements are a stark reminder of the inequality our country continues to face, yet efforts are being made to improve lives. Driving from the airport, the road construction is evident. In recent months, it has been particularly noticeable during rush hour, but we understand that some short-term inconvenience is necessary for long-term benefit. The roads are not being rebuilt in affluent suburbs, but across the city wherever there is need. The city allocates the majority of its capital budget to traditionally poor areas, to places where development is required. Can more be done? Yes, certainly. Is there enough budget to do more? Certainly not.

Hon delegates, these are not cities operating under different laws. They are operating under different standards of leadership. Cast your mind back and you will recall that Dara Morero told residents not to expect much from his term in office, and he was indeed correct.

This brings me to the question of clean audits. Too often, clean audits are dismissed as a technicality, as something for accountants and auditors to debate. They are not. A clean audit is a signal. It tells residents that the money they pay is accounted for, that systems are functioning, and that there is

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discipline within the administration. It tells investors that the municipality is stable, that contracts will be honoured, and that infrastructure will be maintained. It tells councillors, those entrusted with over

And it tells councillors, those that are entrusted with oversight, that the information before them can be trusted. It tells suppliers they will be paid.

The absence of a clean audit tells us something far more troubling. It tells us that we do not know where the money went. And when a municipality cannot account for its finances, it cannot be expected to deliver services. That is not a political statement, it is a matter of basic governance.

It is often argued, even by members of this House, that a clean audit does not mean service delivery. This is partly true, but it is too often argued as a political tool. A clean audit does not mean that there is suddenly enough money for a municipality to fix everything, to pave the streets with gold, and to make everyone's life a fairy tale. It means that the money that was available to the municipality is used as it was planned to be used.

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Hon members, ladies, and gentlemen, the Integrated Development Plan, IDP, system, is a key document to guide the work of a municipality. The Municipal Systems Act goes to great lengths to outline the process and how it should be implemented to develop a plan which can then be budgeted. Once a project is budgeted, it must then be measured in terms of a Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan, SDBIP.

This is what a clean audit measures in addition to the financial records of a municipality. It measures, did the council develop a budget that has had a foundation in public participation? Did the budgeted funds get spent on the things that were intended? And did the expenditure result in a delivery of the services and projects that it was supposed to do?

A clean audit measures not just the financial reporting, but the reporting on performance against the targets that the municipality set for themselves and budgeted for. A clean audit answers the question; did you do what you promised to do?

So, we return to the central issue, public trust. Across South Africa, that trust has been eroded. Residents are less willing to pay for services because they do not believe that the money

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will be used properly. They are less willing to engage with their municipalities because they do not believe that they will be heard.

And they are less willing to comply with the law because they do not see the law being applied fairly. But trust is not restored through speeches or strategies or communications campaigns. It is restored over time through conduct, through consistent ethical decision-making, through visible accountability and a competent administration, and through outcomes that people can see and experience in their daily lives. When these things become a habit, then you are governing right.

One of the great tragedies of local government in South Africa is that policies which were meant to widen opportunity have too often been captured in order to narrow an opportunity. Broad-based black economic empowerment was supposed to open up the economy, to build new entrants, to spread ownership and help correct historical injustices. But in far too many cases, particularly in local procurement, it has not empowered the many. It has enriched a connected few. It has produced a class of politically favoured intermediaries who are not experts at building roads, fixing pumps, or maintaining substations, but at

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inserting and positioning themselves between the public service, the public purse and the public good. And when that happens, the poor pay twice.

First, they pay as taxpayers and ratepayers because public money is diverted into inflated contracts, into layers of subcontracting and politically convenient deals with brown envelopes built in. They pay a second time in their lived reality because the service that they should have got from the money that was spent is delayed, is done badly or never delivered at all.

One contractor benefit, 10 000 residents do not get the service. One politically connected businessman buys another luxury vehicle. An entire community is left with a broken sewer line, a dark street, a blocked stormwater drain or a clinic project that never gets finished. That is not empowerment, which is extraction.

We must be honest enough to say that an empowerment model which measures success by who gets the tender rather than by whether the public gets the service has lost its moral centre. The real

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purpose of public expenditure is not to create tender aristocrats. It is to serve the public.

When procurement becomes a vehicle for patronage, then every constitutional promise of dignity, equality and basic service delivery is weakened. A procurement system that rewards political loyalty and access over competence does not advance justice. It entrenches a new injustice. Professor Somadoda Fikeni addressed us on this in the NCOP Strategic Plan earlier this year.

That is why the Public Procurement Act and the wider procurement framework around it deserves the most serious scrutiny. If it is used to entrench set-asides, discretion and preferential scoring in ways that weaken competition, sideline proven competence, and make it easier to channel work to the well-connected, then it will do enormous damage at local level. Municipalities do not require or do not need more loopholes. They do not need more political discretion. They need the opposite. Open competition, clean rules, transparent adjudication, published contracts, proper contract management, and ruthless consequence management when delivery fails.

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Procurement must be a tool to get the best result for the public, not the best return for the connected. The test is actually very simple. After the tenderer is awarded, are the majority of people better off? Is the road built? Is the water flowing? Are the lights on or the refuse collected? If the answer is no, then all the rhetoric in the world about transformation means very little to the mother whose child walks through sewerage on the way to school, or the pensioner whose electricity is off for days, or the small business owner whose doors close because the municipality cannot keep basic infrastructure working.

The public cannot live on procurement slogans. They need functioning services. I am going to pause and give an example at the moment that people of Mfuleni in some areas have sat for more than 30 days without electricity. Real empowerment would mean developing a broad base of capable businesses, insisting on performance, supporting genuine new entrants, and still protecting the taxpayer from abuse. It would mean using public money to uplift whole communities and not just politically curated beneficiaries. Until we recover that principle, local government will remain trapped in a model where the tender is

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treated as the end goal, while the residents are treated as an afterthought.

Hon delegates, ethical leadership is not an abstract ideal. It requires difficult choices. It requires leaders that are willing to say no to interference, who are willing to appoint on merit, not on allegiance, who are willing to act against wrongdoing even when it is politically inconvenient, because ethical leadership is not tested when it is easy. Ethical leadership is tested when it comes at a cost.

The examples that I have cited today, Midvaal and Cape Town, show that good governance is not theoretical, it is achievable, it is happening and it is already being done. The examples of Mfuleni and Johannesburg show what happens when ethical leadership fails. So, the path forward is clear. We do not need to reinvent local government. We need to restore its foundations, and those foundations are ethical leadership, financial discipline, and accountability. white paper, but it must be an improvement on the existing model and not a total throwing out of the baby with the bath water. Because at the end of the day, this is not just about municipalities, it is about people. It is about whether a family can rely on clean water

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coming out of a tap, whether the business can operate without disruption, whether a community can live with dignity.

Where ethical leadership is present, trust follows, and where it is absent, collapse is inevitable. The choice, quite simply, is ours as leaders. Are leaders prepared to take the hard choices, to sacrifice in order to ensure that the community is served, to govern with honesty and fairness, and are the voters prepared to elect people with a proven record of ethical leadership and good governance? We all know which party offers that option. Thank you, Deputy Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you very much, hon Ryder, for setting the platform for this important debate this afternoon. I now have the pleasure of calling upon hon T M Kaunda, Chairperson of the Select Committee on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Cogta, to participate in this debate for 13 minutes.

Mr T M KAUNDA: Hon Deputy Chair, I stand on the protocol that has been established. For the first time, I hear the leader of the DA saying that Cape Town is not perfect, Cape Town is also not immune to all these tendencies of unethical leadership,

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because there are leaders in Cape Town who have been charged because of corruption, and the envelopes have been circulating all around. So, it shows that we all need to work together to defeat the scourge of corruption. And corruption has no colour.

I come from the city, which is eThekweni, which became the first city in the country to develop an economic recovery plan even before the national government. And that city has been ravaged by floods, COVID-19, and you talk of civil unrest, but that city showed its resilience and its people that it is able to still attract investments. That is a city where I come from, and that's a city which I also once led. The topic of this debate today is about the role of ethical leadership in restoring public trust, which seeks to interrogate the relationship between the state and the people. This topic resonates with us as the citizens of South Africa, public servants, members of the ANC, because it goes to the heart of our constitutional democracy and the values of our liberation movement. It speaks directly to the question of integrity and accountability, which remains our moral obligation. It is through this lens that we understand the importance of public trust, not as an exercise but as a fundamental task of transforming the state into an instrument that advances the interests of the people, protects

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public resources, and drives social and economic justice. In this debate, we must begin by admitting that public trust in state institutions has been weakened.

We are not communicating a perception, but a lived reality of what is encountered by our people on the ground in the form of inefficiencies, delays, and, at times, high levels of corruption within the system. But we must commend Johannesburg for having hosted the G20 successfully and remaining the centre of the economy of this country. So, we can't come here and only highlight the negatives, but we must also highlight what the city has attained, to ensure that this economy grows and contributes immensely to the GDP of our country. So, it's very important. [Interjections.] I am being disrupted, and I'm going to be responding to that.

When our people don't receive basic services and when wrongdoings go unpunished, trust is bound to be eroded. However, this must not make us conclude that the whole system is flawed and it, therefore, requires a response of ethical leadership, not rhetoric. And standing before you here, I can claim the status of being an ethical leader in the municipality which I've led. I did not even steal a cent in that municipality. I am

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happy, I'm not laughing. So, it's important that the ethical leadership we are speaking about must be coupled with consequence management. [Interjections.] You must follow my track record, hon Badenhorst. I am sure you don't know me well.

The ANC has been unambiguous that there must be accountability in all state institutions and that there must never be any wrongdoing that goes unpunished. We have always been vocal about correcting failures and that officials must always be held accountable to avoid undermining the legitimacy of the state. There has been progress in strengthening disciplinary processes and oversight institutions, which improve audit processes and enhance the work of public institutions. We are happy that we remain with that number of municipalities which receive clean audits in the country, and we must also commend those that have moved from qualifications to unqualified audit opinions.

One of the important things we must commit to is professionalising the public service to restore public trust. The professionalisation framework that was adopted under the leadership of the ANC represents the deliberate efforts to ensure that public service is staffed by individuals who are qualified, competent, and committed to ethical conduct. The ANC

is leading by example in this regard because we talk about the ANC, which has said that if you are found to be working in parallel with the laws of this country, you must step aside. This is being decisive as the organisation that leads, and it's being exemplary in that respect. It entrenches recruitment that is based on merit, reduces instability in administration, and ensures that the public service functions with integrity and professionalism.

The commitment directly links to the vision of the National Development Plan 2030, which identifies a capable and developmental state as a prerequisite for economic growth and social transformation. We can only witness development outcomes if we professionalise the public service and implement policies with a capable state. This brings us to a conclusion that will unlock economic opportunities and improve investor confidence. We take the professionalisation framework seriously if we do so. A key pillar of this effort is the alignment of skills with what is required by the state. One of the persistent challenges has been the mismatch between the skills within the public service and the demands of the government. This has affected planning, implementation and service delivered across sectors. The ANC has recognised this challenge and has prioritised interventions such

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as the skills audit, targeted recruitment, and continuous professional development. The strengthening of institutions such as the National School of Government is part of this broader effort to build capacity within the state so that this overreliance, especially in municipalities, through consultants, is also reduced. When the state is staffed by capable and skilled individuals, it functions more effectively. It becomes more responsive, more efficient, and more credible in the eyes of the public.

This, in turn, contributes to restoring trust. A capable state is a trusted state, and a trusted state is a better position to drive development and economic growth. We have drawn lessons from the Zondo Commission, which has largely contributed to how we view ethical leadership. The commission exposed the extent to which institutions were weakened and systems manipulated during the period that tested the resilience of our democracy. It also provided a clear set of recommendations on how to strengthen governance and prevent the discrepancies that may occur in the near future. The ANC recently issued a statement commending the work that has been done by all law enforcement agencies in exposing corruption but also effecting arrests and the seizing of assets of those who are involved. As a result, billions of

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rand have been recovered from that process. This includes, as we continue, this includes strengthening procurement systems, enhancing transparency in decision-making, protecting whistleblowers, and reforming state-owned entities. It is not enough to rely on individuals to protect the state and lead ethically. We must build systems that are resilient and that can withstand pressure. Procurement reform is a critical area in this regard. It is widely acknowledged that procurement has been one of the areas where corruption and maladministration take place.

We, as political parties, have got a bigger role to play. To those whom we have sent to the government, we must make them accountable. We must hold them to account for how the public purse is being looked after. But also, procurement should not become a centre where corruption is conducted. We raise this because ...

IsiZulu:

... uma sikhuluma ngokuthi ukuthengwa kwempahla kwethu, ukuthengwa kwempahla kwethu akufuneki ukuthi laba abasebenza ...

English:

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... in procurement units or supply chain management, SCM, units
...

IsiZulu:

... bazi ukuthi uHulumeni awukwazi ukuxoxisana ngentengo. Bazi ukuthi uHulumeni ...

English:

... must always escalate price, which becomes a contradiction. Because the government, with its buying power, must say, "we can't buy this." Therefore, we dictate that we can accept this. But that is not happening. Those who are corrupt in these SCMs, are the ones who say to the service provider, times three, multiply that quotation so that we can have our own kickback. So those are the things that we believe that once we entrench our own observance and this critical and ethical leadership, we will be able to turn the tide around.

And we, as politicians, can defeat corruption. The reason why I'm saying we as politicians is because you find officials there who have been in the system, who understand the system, and who manipulate the system in some instances. And the same officials will want to capture you as a politician so that they can eat

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with you, so that you protect them. But if you are a good politician, an ethical leader, you will never accept that capture. You must remain there and make sure that you hold them accountable. And you arrest those who are supposed to be arrested, who are part of the corrupt elements. So, the things we have witnessed in the Madlanga Commission, and we are happy as ANC that the President has made it clear that even the preliminary report must effect arrests. We are not waiting for the Final Report of the Madlanga Commission. That shows that ANC is not a corrupt organisation. But certain individuals in the ANC are corrupt, and we are going to deal decisively with those individuals who are corrupt.

So, the organisation is not corrupt. I've been in the ANC for many years. I have not been taught how to steal. What I've been taught is how to service my community, how to defend my community, how to advance services, and how to grow the economy. And I was fortunate to be part of those leaders who learned those tactics correctly because I will never be on the corrupt side, and I will always serve our people without putting the people's money in my pockets, hon Badenhorst, because I'm sure you don't know me. Thank you very much, Chair. The ANC will continue to serve our people.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you very much, hon Kaunda, for your input in this debate, and for also singing the praises of eThekweni, which is my home city also. It now gives me great pleasure and honour to call upon the president of the, I'm sorry, the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs. [Interjections.] It is a force of habit. The hon Minister has 15 minutes.

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS: Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, I really like the spirit of this House compared to the other House. Hon Chairperson of the NCOP, the Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, our hon Premiers in attendance, the hon Members of Executive Council, MECs, and hon members. Good afternoon.

This debate happens at an appropriate time - the Human Rights Month. Human rights are about life and dignity. This debate must be a call and reignite, a new phase of fixing and stabilizing our local governance for our people.

Local government is the closest sphere of government to the people. If it works. People feel it, see it and they own and protect their municipality and its infrastructure.

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It is through municipalities that the constitutional promise of dignity becomes tangible. It is through effective governance at the local level that the right to basic services, the right to a healthy environment and the right to participate in decisions that affect one's life are fulfilled.

Good governance is the guarantee of basic human rights, the right to life, dignity, quality education, healthcare and social welfare. When this culture is entrenched, it builds trust and confidence to every sphere of government.

Human rights should not only be defended in courtrooms or written on papers only. They must be lived and be witnessed when a child drinks clean water, when a family has reliable electricity, when refuse is collected, when roads are safe and when people feel secure in their neighbourhoods.

In other words, the realization of the human rights is practical, and it is local. It is at municipalities, the closest sphere of government to people, where the constitutional promise of dignity takes shape.

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The Constitution is clear. Section 152 charges local government with democratic and accountable governance, sustainable service delivery, social and economic development, a safe and healthy environment, and meaningful community participation. Section 153 requires municipalities to plan, budget and manage their affairs in a way that places community needs first.

These are not abstract ideals. They are daily responsibilities. They are practical expressions of human rights. And yet, for too many communities, the lived reality falls short. When local government falters, it is not merely an administrative failure. It is a failure to uphold human rights. That is why our discussion today is urgent and happened at an appropriate time.

Strengthening governance and ethical leadership in local government is not just a government exercise. It is about restoring dignity, advancing justice and ensuring that constitutional rights are felt in people's lives. It is about building trust and confidence to democracy and local government.

Across our country, we hear the frustration, inconsistent services, decaying infrastructure, slow or absent responses. At the heart of this crisis is the growing trust deficit between

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government and the people. When, municipalities do not deliver, confidence in government declines. When corruption appears unchecked, consequence management weak and leadership unstable, disillusionment, grows.

The Auditor-General's findings are clear and inconsistent - weak financial management, poor oversight and failures to address irregular expenditure. These are not merely management failings. They point to deeper problems of governance and leadership.

So, what does good governance require? It requires transparent decision making, responsible management of public resources, institutions that act in the public interest, and leaders who set and live by high ethical standards.

In municipalities, this means functional councils, capable administrations, effective oversight and leaders who enforce standards without hesitation. It demands stability, discipline and genuine commitment to service.

But local government faces structural and operational obstacles. Leadership instability where the political or administrative disrupts continuity and weakens institutional memory.

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Weak internal controls and noncompliance with laws leave systems that exist only in name but do not function in practice.

Accountability is too often delayed. Unauthorized, irregular and wasteful expenditure are not always investigated or acted upon swiftly. Interventions by national and provincial spheres of government sometimes fall short because they do not address the root causes of poor governance.

Together, these factors feed declining service delivery and erode public trust. A decisive part of the solution is to strengthen oversight, particularly Municipal Public Accounts Committee. The Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, MPEGs, are central to financial governance and transparency. They are empowered to investigate unauthorized, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure and to recommend corrective action.

To that end, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional, CoGTA, along National Treasury and South African Local Government Association, Salga, have rolled out capacity building programs induction targeted to train our MPEG members. Competency support both before and after elections and a

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coordinated national support structure to monitor functionality and provide focused assistance.

These steps position MPEGs as frontline mechanism for accountability and for restoring confidence in local financial governance.

We have also deployed interventions to stabilize municipalities and improve governance, Ditsobotla Municipality in North West has been on the public domain for bad reason. But the good story now, Ditsobotla is performing very well. From a state of chaos with two mayors, it has one mayor now. From two speakers, it is one speaker now. From parallel two municipal managers, MMs, it is one municipal manager, MM now. The intervention by the national government when it received support from the ground, it yields good results for our people.

Section 139 provides a constitutional pathway for provincial support where municipalities cannot fulfil their responsibilities. These interventions are guided by municipal support and intervention plans developed in partnership with national and provincial stakeholders.

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We have advanced the intergovernmental monitoring support and intervention Bills to strengthen coordination. We are also intensifying our efforts, including through the Local Government Anti-Corruption Forum, which brings government, law enforcement, civil society, business and labor together to prevent and confront corruption.

We are also promoting ethical leadership through the development of a code for ethical leadership in local government, a code that sets clear standards and seeks to cultivate a culture of integrity. As launched on 1 March 2024 and with 74 municipalities that have adopted, this code for ethical leadership, we are frustrating that all municipalities in our country must adopt the code for ethical leadership.

Since taking office, we are strengthening the professionalisation of local government. We have introduced measures to ensure that senior managers are appointed on merit, backed by qualifications, competency requirements and integrity checks.

A professional, skilled and ethical public administration is not a luxury, it is an essential for sustainable governance. The

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White Paper on Local Government Review is going to be a game changer by addressing systemic challenges and strengthening the local governance. Restoring public trust will not be achieved by policies alone.

Trust is rebuilt through lived experience, when a tap runs, when power is restored quickly, when infrastructure is maintained, when refuse is collected on time, when billing is accurate, and when municipalities respond to concerns with agency and respect. Trust grows not from isolated successes, but from consistent, reliable service. It grows when leaders are visible, honest, accessible, and prepared to take responsibility. It grows when the wrongdoing is confronted swiftly and fairly, when consequences are applied without favour. And when accountability becomes the norm.

Equally important, is inclusive governance. Communities must be partners, not passive recipients. Public participation must be substantive, not merely procedural. When residents see their voices heard and acted upon, when they influence outcomes, a sense of ownership emerges and with it, renewed trust.

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Communities expect accountability, transparency, and progress. These are not unreasonable demands. They are the fundamentals of a functioning democracy. By getting these fundamentals right at the local government, we do more than just restoring confidence in municipalities, but to rebuild faith in government itself. We strengthen the legitimacy of the state and reaffirm the social contract between citizens and those who serve them.

The future of local government depends on our collective will to strengthen governance, uphold ethical leadership, and deliver unconstitutional mandate. We must reject complacency. We must confront the failures we see with honest and resolve. We must build institutions that are capable, accountable and responsive.

Good governance is not an abstract concept. It is an imperative that underpins our social and economic progress. With ethical leadership, professional administration, and a relentless focus on delivery, we can rebuild public trust and create the conditions for sustainable growth and improved life.

Let us all commit with agency and unwavering purpose to this mission. When local government thrives, democracy is fortified

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and the lives of our people are uplifted. Thank you, hon Deputy Chair.

Mr J MAMABOLO (Gauteng): Hon Deputy Chairperson, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, NOCP, and all presiding officers. I also greet the hon Minister Hlabisa and all the hon members and the people of our country and the province. Let me start by appreciating this debate and of course that our province is very much please to participate in this debate on good governance as the foundation of local government, I quote, "The role of ethical leadership in restoring public trust."

Hon members, I would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of our province to join the hon Minister for eloquently and very decisively reminding us that our country led by the President celebrated the Human Rights Day, and of course the Minister also correctly reminded us about the human rights in our country's Constitution and for that we also would like to join the people of the Vaal, Sedibeng in commemorating the event of the Sharpeville Massacre.

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Let me also just make the point that the hon Ryder I think it would have been very remarkable taking into account that you come from that area to have also acknowledge the Human Rights Day and of course the massacre that happened exactly closer to your place that you have spoken about. I think you could have acknowledged this very important point.

Hon members, let me also just indicate that as a province we take great concern a debate on a motion such as this start with a political party celebrating and claiming easy victories and grandstanding instead of focusing on what we understand to be the debate which is essentially about good governance, ethical leadership and restoring public trust.

Hon members I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the hon Kaunda for very eloquently and correctly focussing it just as the Minister did. We also as a province would like to say to the hon members that as we debate this motion we should also acknowledge and have the courage to appreciate all the previous generations and leaders that have immensely contributed to building a democratic system of local government all over the years. Of course that the principle that local government faces challenges and therefore can be improved. To that extent as a

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province, we would like to thank our hon Minister for leading a very important process of the review of White Paper which we believe will deliver exactly all the principles that we are debating of good governance, ethical leadership and of course restoring public trust.

We therefore appeal and call on all members that instate of grandstanding and cheap political point scoring, let us all join the process led by the hon Minister Hlabisa to improve local government and make sure that all of us make our constructive contributions of improving the White Paper precisely so that we can achieve the objectives that the NCOP is debating today which are very important to make sure that we can improve the quality of life of the people.

We therefore wish to emphasise that it is important that partnering and working with the people as the hon Minister has said that we indeed seek to improve on the very profound foundation laid by those who came before us. Make sure that we can have an efficient and effective system of local government.

Hon members, right here in our province, we are hard at work with the local government turnaround where we are working with

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our municipalities. Working with national government to make sure that we can improve good governance focusing as a matter of urgency on dealing with the profound question of achieving clean audits. Hon members, to this extent, hon Ryder you are correct when you say clean audits are just not a by the way issue. They are a very important instrument and a key performance indicator and a principle that restores confidence and trust in the people when they see that the Auditor-General make positive statements and findings on the performance of municipalities around good governance, good management of public finances and of course even auditing the overall performance of our municipalities.

We would like to join the hon Kaunda in saying we have achieved a lot as a province. We have achieved for example for hosting of a very remarkable memorable G20 Summit. We did not achieve this alone; we achieved it working with the rest of the three spheres of governments. We believe that it is precisely the point very profound in promoting good governance that we all work together, we all unite and have unity of purpose to improve the quality of lives of the people by making sure that we promote integration, co-ordination, good governance and good intergovernmental relations.

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The President of our country during the state of the nation address, the premier of our province on the state of our province address have all emphasized the need to work together. So, we believe hon members, we are much better and we will even co-ordinate better with the people when we work together. No point finger, blaming and all that. To this extent, we call on members that let us rally behind the process led by the Minister. We thank you. Thank you very much, hon members.

[Applause.]

The PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE (Mr A Winde): Good afternoon, thank you very much for this opportunity to address this august House. Minister, to you, MEC, to the hon members, thank you. I want to say to the hon Kaunda, I absolutely agree with you that when you see or believe in corruption happening, you need to deal with it decisively. But I think that's where the problem lies. I mean, we've seen commission after commission. I just referred to the Zondo Commission and how many people have been put in jail.

Ms S NDHLOVU: On a point of order, Chair.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Winde, could you please take your seat? On which rule are you standing?

Ms S NDHLOVU: Can you please tell ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No, which rule are you standing? The rule number.

Ms S NDHLOVU: Can you please tell hon Mokae not to take photos in the gallery? Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No, no, no. You must always quote the rule that you are standing on, hon member.

Ms S NDHLOVU: It is the principle not to take photos, hon Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Winde, please continue.

The PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE (Mr A Winde): In that point, I'd like to raise an issue that the hon Ryder said that, of course, Cape Town is not perfect, but it's how you deal with the issues

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that count at the end of the day. Our City Manager, Mr Mbandazayo, was part of a sting operation just the other day because they picked up some corrupt operators. He personally went to the operation, set it up with the police and law enforcement officials and that individual has now been arrested. Those contracts have now been stopped. That is how ethical leadership behaves on a daily basis.

But it is a great opportunity to be here today to talk about this topic. I think it's a great topic, especially this year, because we have a local government election later on in the year. But what does a capable ethical government look like? How do the residents it serves experience its services? What are the required foundations of upstanding leadership? The question always looms large in any meeting of our Western Cape government.

It is a question that, like these, must be the top of mind of every single local government when they meet, and especially across our province. There's been mention of audit outcomes, and that is just but one measurement, one measurement in the ethical leadership pathway. It is how leaders behave on a daily basis.

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It is about what you do when no one is looking. That is how you count ethical leadership, when no one is watching. It is about leadership and good governance, not as a drive, but as a habit. It was also mentioned earlier today. It's just got to be your habit because then you do the right thing every single day.

I'm going to start off with our province. In the Western Cape, I was part of it as the MEC for Finance. We spent 10 years focusing on good government to make sure good governance was at the heart of every single thing we do, and that's why every entity and every department in our province now gets an unqualified audit.

Now it is about the habit because it's just what you do. Now it's about getting the service delivery right, but it's about the culture of your organisation. So, we've got a culture programme that says, how do we develop a culture? How do we wake up in the morning and go to work? And we entered our government into the best place to work in the world competition, and our government now competes with 1 700 businesses on the African continent about the best place to work in the world.

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We are now on our fourth iteration of lifestyle audits for our MECs and myself. That is just what we do and when you have good governance, then the consequences of good governance become absolutely evident. So, for example, when it comes to our apex priority, which is growth and jobs and gets measured, then you have a look at the graph, and the graph shows which province has the best results for unemployment. By far, we're now way below 20%. We're sitting at 18%, and our next target for unemployment is 10%.

If we have a look at those jobs, and I always get asked, oh, but those are just EPWP jobs. Not one of those jobs there that are measured are EPWP jobs. Those are permanent jobs. I look at where those jobs are. The interesting thing is this data on the Business Process Outsourcing, BPO, centres, where those jobs sit, 16% of the BPO jobs sit in Mitchell's Plain, 14% in Khayelitsha, 13,5% in Langa, then 10% in Athlone, 9 per cent in Hanover Park, then Delft, then Elsie's River, and then Grassy Park. That's where those jobs are found, or that's where people get those jobs.

Cape Town leads in housing development by far. Why? Because it is a habit of good governance you can get to service delivery.

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The Western Cape leads on the labour market by far, every single other province. If we look at the quality-of-life index, there is every single indicator here. The Western Cape is by far the leader.

Degree or a higher degree, we are by far the leader. The unemployment I've just gone through, spending more than R10 000 per month, by far the leader, even beating Gauteng. Dwellings owned but not yet paid off by the bank. By far the leader. Access to piped water, by far the leader, and of course the second to us is Gauteng, but there's no water in those taps. Access to electricity, by far the leader. Access to basic sanitation, by far the leader. Refugee removal, by far the leader. Medical aid coverage, by far the leader.

The Western Cape excels in water delivery. We have just seen the latest data on youth unemployment. This is not our data. This is the national data - the youth unemployment. We are the only province that has seen a decrease, a 6,6 per cent decrease in youth unemployment. That comes from getting the basics right.

So now I want to move to the tale of two towns, just like the hon Ryder. Two towns, one is Knysna, and one is Mossel Bay. Go

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to Mossel Bay and have a look at what happens there. Have a look at all of those ratings on all of those measurements. They're in the top one, two, three, and four in South Africa. They have good governance, they have great audit outcomes, they have ethical leadership, and every single time they get measured it gets better. It gets better across the board. They have the highest economic growth in among our towns and the change happens because of that economic growth. That's why it's called growth for jobs.

Go to, which has been for a long time the poorest component of Mossel Bay, KwaNongqaba. Go there and do yourself a favour, just drive through it now and then go in a year's time and in a year after. I've been doing that for quite a few years now. You can see shacks change to bricks and mortar, proper businesses get opened, the economy rises, things change for everybody in a municipality when you get the governance right.

But just down the road in exactly the same district council in a district municipality is another town also on the coast with massive opportunities called Knysna. Knysna Municipality is an embarrassment from an ethical leadership point of view. It is a total failure in service delivery for its citizens. It started

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off with bodies floating in the water system. The reason they knew there was a body in the water system. Because when you opened the tap, you could smell it.

I went to visit that reservoir two weeks after the body was found. The fencing wasn't corrected. The security guard was asleep inside the control room. There is no willing leadership in that space to fix it. They'd rather support the water mafia with the tankers coming in.

Let's talk about water. Pumps get sent for repair; they eventually go to court to get the municipality to pay. The court forces the payment. The pumps are still there. Six months later they haven't been put in because the water mafias got all of the jobs and not the pumps, so the citizens don't get water.

In Hornlee you open the tap and when water does come out it's black. It's mud that comes out of the water. Refuse removal - the refuse pile there builds up bigger than this building that we are in. Rats the size of dogs, they don't have the capability to remove it. So, we take provincial money, we go and remove it and guess what? It just builds up again because there's no ethical leadership or willingness.

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I've watched videos of politicians in that municipality go to meetings at night with businesspeople. Later you see that person's outstanding rates get written off, and you see the other contracts just keep on going, and the illegal contracts. There is no ethical leadership whatsoever. If I think about the sewerage levels, the sewerage levels at Bikhai, 2 100 to 100 millilitres.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Winde, can you please take a seat? I see a hand here. Hon Modise, on what point are you standing?

Mr M G MODISE: Chair, I just want to check.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): What rule?

Mr M G MODISE: I want to check if he can take a question.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Okay, do you want to take a question, hon Winde?

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The PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE (Mr A Winde): The problem, Deputy Chair, I've got 19 seconds left and about five pages to get through.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): So, you're not taking a question.

The PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE (Mr A Winde): I think I'm going to say I'm happy to engage with you straight after this.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Modise. You may continue, hon Winde. Yes, you have 19 seconds.

The PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE (Mr A Winde): But most of these indicators are over 500 per 100 millilitres. I mean I'm talking 67 000 E-coli accounts for over 100 millilitres of water. Over 500, you may not be involved in that water whatsoever. These go on year-after-year, after year. This clearly shows that they are not interested in service delivery. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Your time has expired. Thank you very much.

Sepedi:

Ngk I SCHEURKOGEL: Dumela, mohl Modulasetulo ...

Afrikaans:

... mede-Suid-Afrikaners, goeiemiddag. [... fellow South Africans, good afternoon.]

English:

Hon Chairperson, as one Gen Z told me yesterday: "I don't vote because I don't trust politicians." The truth is, he is not alone. Previous elections indicated that more than half of South Africans between 18 and 34 years have chosen not to register to vote. That is the biggest political party in this country, it is not part of the Government of National Unity, GNU. It is the young people who have lost trust in leadership. That is the bleak truth of our democracy. When we look at what is happening in local government, we cannot blame them. Because what they see is not governance. What they see is a nightmare on "Pothole Street".

Let me take this House through a story of horrors in local government, where there has been no clean audit for over a decade, where basic services are but a dream, where you think

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load shedding is back, but there is actually just no street lights working, where streets look like war zones and driving on the side of the road is safer, where reliable water comes in a bottle, not through taps.

Yes, you have guessed it, the Free State, where the little right of movement is hampered by your tyres being damaged, where the right to sufficient food and water is not protected because those in government just don't care. Why in Namakwa local municipality, a fuel contract expired and nothing replaced it - no planning, no urgency, no leadership. So, no diesel meant no vehicles, no vehicles meant no pump operators and no pump operators meant no water. Viljoenskroon, Ramalotse, Kroonstad, Maokeng have gone days without water. What did the administration do? They paid local suppliers a hundred thousand each outside of supply management process without council approval.

This is not governance, this is a collapse of ethical leadership. Now, let's go to Nala, a municipality placed under debt relief programme, a second chance to get its finance in order and yet it has not honoured its current account payments. It's a continuous breach of conditions, now risking having bulk

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supply reduced when leadership refuses to pay its bill. It's not Eskom that fails the people, it's the municipality. Now, let's dig deeper into this ethical rot. In Tswelopele Local Municipality, a mayor occupies a state-owned house without clear authority. In a province where thousands are waiting for houses, where even young people have given up hope, yet leadership occupies government property because she feared for her life during a service delivery protest. And yet, she is the cause of this protest. What is the message being sent?

Let's turn the page to Maluti-a-Phofung, where the situation becomes even more alarming. A member of the mayoral committee, MMC, for social development was arrested for allegedly defrauding a community member for over R70 000 in an RDP housing scam. But it doesn't stop there. The mayor told the council that the MMC had been removed. She was asked to resign but refused. The mayor, who had the power to remove her, chose not to do so. Worse still, the mayor misled council behind rules that did not apply, despite having previously removed an MMC. This is not incompetence. This is a compliance to the scam. This is deception. Here is the real danger: our young people are watching us. What they see is simple - politicians lie,

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politicians protect each other and politicians face no consequences.

And so, they ask: why should we vote? This is the crisis of ethical leadership across the country. The nightmare is the same. This is not a resource problem. It is a leadership problem. Ethical leadership is not about speeches. It is about decisions. It is about honesty. It is about accountability. Most importantly, it is about putting people first.

When an administrator does not act, that is not an accident. When a municipality refuses to pay its bills, that is not an oversight. When a mayor occupies state property, that is not a necessity. When a mayor misled council, that is not a mistake. The ANC governed for 20 years above 60%, and they have lost 20% in just 10 years. The 2024 election result is not just a dip, it's a structural break in voters' trust. This is the collapse of ethics. Without ethical leadership, there can be no good governance. Without good governance, there can be no public trust.

So, if we are serious about restoring trust in local government, we must start here. We should enforce consequence management,

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hold mayors and councillors accountable, protect public resources, and restore honesty in governance. If we fix leadership, we will not fix municipalities. Until we fix municipalities, the youth of South Africa will continue to say, I don't vote because I do not trust you. It is our responsibility to prove them wrong. I thank you.

Ms A M SIWISA: House Chairperson, allow me to first salute the revolutionary masses of Gauteng and all those disciplined fighters who have travelled from the furthest corners of this country, using their own last cents to descend upon the Winnie Madikizela Mandela House at the Winnie Madikizela Mandela square for our massive voter legislation launch this past weekend. Let us be clear that Gandhi Square must officially be renamed to honour Mama Winnie Mandela, the mother of our nation, who never sold out.

Furthermore, we must give a revolutionary round of applause to the leadership of Region F in the City of Johannesburg that demonstrated the superior logic of the EFF, by ensuring that the premises were left spotless. We found it clean; we left it clean. That is the highest form of ethical leadership. It is a discipline that the corrupt and lazy ANC can never understand.

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We lead by example, we lead with integrity, and we lead for the people.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon Modise, on what point are you rising?

Mr M G MODISE: House Chair, I want to check if the fighter is prepared to take a question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Can you take a question?

Ms A M SIWISA: No, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): All right.

Ms A M SIWISA: No, we'll debate outside. We stand here today as the EFF to debate good governance is the foundation of local government. A topic of debate which is sponsored by the DA, a party which governs by prioritising leafy white suburbs while treating townships like dumping grounds for human dignity. We know this to be true as our people in Khayelitsha, Philippi, Langa, Gugulethu, are living in squalor, sharing one communal toilet amongst 20 families.

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Our people face restricted water access and are crammed into matchbox houses, with yards so small that they cannot even extend their homes to accommodate their growing families. The streets of the township run with sewerage, creating a health hazard while refuse remains uncollected and police visibility is nonexistent. This rot is not confined to the Cape. We see the same instability in the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality in the Northern Cape, where officials and politicians waste time in court while the Batho Pele principles are treated as nothing more than the paper they are printed on.

Now, the so-called Government of National Unity, GNU, this marriage of convenience, has further deprived our people of service delivery. Public value has been sacrificed on the altar of political opportunism, and policies meant to uplift the poor remain gathering dust because ethical leadership has been replaced by the greed of a few. The GNU has turned its back on our people, instead choosing to protect the interests of the elite. Is this leadership ethical? The answer is no.

The EFF is the only party that has through its interception embarked on a disciplined journey, ensuring that we produce ethical leadership which prioritises the dignity of the black

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majority. Unlike the hollow promises of the status quo, our members of the mayoral committees, MMCs across provinces like Gauteng and beyond have shown that we have an ethical leadership that puts citizens first and the value of the public. The evidence of this superior ethical leadership is visible on the ground.

In the City of Johannesburg, the EFF has delivered a 24-hour clinic and restored police visibility to ensure our people are safe and cared at all hours. In Ekurhuleni, we have ensured the flow of clean water, while in the City of Tshwane, our cleaning campaigns have restored pride to the streets. In Mogale City and West Rand District Municipality, we have tackled hunger, homelessness head-on by starting food gardens and opening shelters for the most vulnerable.

Our presence as the EFF is felt nationally from the handing over of houses in eThekweni and ensuring reliable electricity in Nelson Mandela Metro to the revolutionary act of scraping electricity bills for the indigent beneficiaries of Matatiele in the Eastern Cape. This success is very different to the trail of the failure of the GNU. In Karoo Hoogland Local Municipality for example, our people are still waiting for houses while the

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council has circled through eight mayors in four years, a circle of instability that has left unemployment to increase with no plan for economic growth.

In Impendle, the administration is engulfed in corruption, with officials so brazen that they are forging National Treasury letters. Minister, this is from the mouth of the Deputy Minister of Finance. There is a zero integrity and a total lack of accountability as officials convicted of fraud are simply shuffled around. These municipalities lack the basic skills and the moral compass to regain their public trust.

The EFF's solution is clear: We must build a state capacity and abolish the corrupt tender system. We will build internal capacity to ensure that road maintenance and municipal infrastructure are handled directly by the state. We will not outsource our people's dignity to the highest bidder. We will maintain our communities through capable, ethical, and revolutionary state.

Since 2013, the EFF stood as the vanguard of the marginalised. As the EFF, we have consistently redefined ethical leadership by transforming the needs of the masses into radical action policy

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across South African municipalities. While others speak of governance in boardrooms, the EFF is on the ground restoring the public trust by confronting the daily indignities faced by our people.

In Saldanha Bay, our councillor stood firm against the exploitation of workers, successfully adopting a motion for the insourcing of security guards. We are putting an end to the middleman and ensuring workers receive a living wage. In Mantsopa Local Municipality, EFF councillors took the lead in opening a criminal case against a corrupt official resulting in an arrest. We do not negotiate with thieves, we jail them.

In Bela-Bela, Ward 8 in Pienaarsrivier was left without basic services until the EFF intervened. Our motion for a new clinic was not only adopted but resulted in an actual construction of a facility that now serves the community directly. In Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality, we successfully tabled and passed a motion to write off the municipal debt of poor households.

We have wiped the slate clean for our people, giving them a chance to breathe. This is what we call ethical leadership Chairperson. It is indeed a clear indication that the EFF

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remains at the forefront of the struggle ensuring that the values of the public are only values are the only values that matter.

I need to respond to hon Ryder, I'm not sure where he is. Hon Ryder, we cannot define clean audit on checkboxes. I thought that you are going to applaud the EFF on the march they had on Friday. It's very alarming that we mention that the residents must walk through sewerage in Mfuleni, and yet the same is happening in the City of Cape Town. They cannot define good governance based on who is in government, in which municipality. So, good governance should be governance that ensures service delivery for all and not be selective on which municipality. Thank you.

Mr E NZIMANDE: Hon members, hon Chairperson, and esteemed audience, there is one thing that I think I should correct first. Unfortunately, the leader of Western Cape has left. He has forgotten speaking about the water challenges of Beaufort West.

He has forgotten to speak about the challenges of Knysna that did not start because power changed hands from white people to

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black people. He has just forgotten that it started with the DA. So, I think that it must be remembered. But also, he's forgetting one thing.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe). Hon members, please don't disturb the speaker on the podium.

Mr E NZIMANDE: He's also forgetting one thing: that the responsibility of him and his MEC is to ensure that they oversee and support the municipalities. The primary duty of the MEC is to ensure that the municipalities are functional, financially viable, and capable of delivering basic services. He comes and cry like a baby.

Hon Chairperson, the topic sponsored by DA invoke us to confront the difficult and uncomfortable truth. Last week, the very same DA rejected the motion to condemn corruption. You can't have a party that capitulate from one day to another and think the citizens will take it seriously.

You can't indicate left and turn right. Public trust cannot be restored by rhetoric, well-crafted themes, or careful worded debate, but through adherence to the rule of law, accountability

and transparency. At present, accountability in our country is no longer, lacking, but has collapsed.

Hon members, if we are to have an honest debate, we must move away from political posturing and speak to the lived reality of our people. Across this country, local government is no longer functional as a vehicle for development. It has, in many instances, become a site of destruction where public resources are diverted, manipulated, and abused at the expense of citizenry meant to serve.

Nonadherence to the rule of law and policy imperatives, it is incontrovertible that the GNU partners have no capacity and capability to curb corruption, mismanagement, and noncompliance with policy and legislative imperatives. To qualify this point, just in 2024-25 financial year, the overwhelming majority of municipalities recorded irregular expenditure. Municipal debt to the water board skyrocketed to above R25 billion, and a significant portion of municipalities have had their equitable share withheld due to persistent financial mismanagement.

Some municipalities have been placed under intervention for nearly a decade without any meaningful recovery. These are not

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signs of a system under pressure. These are indicators of a system that has fundamentally failed under the watchful eye of GNU partners.

However, Chairperson, this failure is not accidental or merely administrative. We are witnessing a systematic organised crime graft in many municipalities, so argued by Institute for Security Studies. Governance in many municipalities has been hollowed out and replaced with networks of patronage where appointments are not based on competence but on political allegiance, where procurement processes are manipulated for private gain, and where corruption is shielded by those who are meant to prevent it.

Madibeng Local Municipality is a case at hand where counsellors are conniving with service providers and mobilise public protest in furtherance of their private business interests. Justice will not exist where criminals wear suits, make laws, and rules. So said Bob Marley.

The same patterns of collapse repeat themselves regardless of which GNU partner governs them. The issue is no longer isolated leadership failure. It is a capture of the system itself.

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The consequence is the crisis on provisional basic service delivery. In many parts of South Africa, particularly in rural and township communities, remain dependent on water tankers. Years after infrastructure projects have been allocated and projects announced.

This is not a simple failure of implementation. It is, in many instances, the result of deliberate neglect infrastructure is allowed to deteriorate or is actively undermined, creating a vacuum that is then filled through emergency procurement processes that are far more vulnerable to manipulation and corruption. Even the Minister last week here of water and sanitation acknowledged the fact that we are having a new breeding ground for corrupt networks.

However, members, this is not governance failure in the traditional sense. This is governance being repurposed to serve corrupt interests. We see similar patterns in financial management. In one municipality, a listed company somewhere around there, Tugela, was awarded a contract of R100 million. Despite having sufficient funds, the municipality failed to honour its obligation, allowing the debt to escalate

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exponentially to more than R850 million through interest and penalties. This was not an oversight.

It was a calculated decision with predictable consequences and once again, the burden of its negative impact fell on communities who continue to live without reliable access to basic services. It is important that we emphasise this point. When governance fails, it is the destitute and the working class who carry the heaviest burden.

They walk long distances in search of water, live without sanitation, send their children to under-resourced school and rely on a state that is increasingly not meeting even its most basic obligation.

IsiZulu:

Bakwethu sekuyaphela. Hhayi awuthi ngisheshise.

English:

The question that arises ... We are here to debate; we are not here to debate personalities. Yet ... what we are discussing today, we have to be clear and that ... We have to be clear that accountability as professed by DA seems to be a selective thing

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and that will be totally incorrect for them. We have to indicate that, hon members. Unless we ensure that there is adherence to law, policies, and we ensure that those that are on the wrong side of the law are held to account and are dealt with.

Then you shall never restore trust. The corruption that is happening through GNU across ...

IsiZulu:

... asiyithandi iyekeni masela.

Mr B R MAKAMU (Limpopo): House Chairperson, to the Minister of the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, CoGTA, hon Velenkosini Hlabisa, to the Whip of the NCOP, hon members of this august House, SA Local Government Association, Salga, representatives, Premieres who are here.

I stand before you today in a province that serves as a northern gateway to our Republic. Limpopo is a land of vast potential. But it's also a land where expectation of our people are high and their patients are wearing thin.

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The theme of today's debate is both timely and soberly. We are here to discuss good governance, not as an abstract academic concept, but as the very foundation of local government. At the core of this foundation lies a single indispensable pillar of ethical leadership, like what we have witnessed in a municipality called Bila Bila in the Waterberg district, which since 2021 local government, they have been improving service delivery, audit outcomes to show that ethical leadership it's even possible within rural municipalities.

The public trust is the currency of our democracy. Once trust is eroded by ethical lapses, the entire structure of service delivery begins to crumble. In Limpopo, we have learn through difficult experiences that without ethical leadership, even the most well-funded projects fail to reach the people they intended to serve.

Let us crisp in our assessment. Local government is the sphere closest to our people. It is where the constitutional promises of water, sanitation, dignified housing must be made real.

However, across the nation and indeed within the certain corridors of our own province, we have seen a devastating impact

of leadership that prioritize self-interest over the public good.

We see in the shadow populations of our border towns like Musina, where resources are stretched thin and where they the diversion of funds is not just a financial crime. It is a humanitarian one.

Ethically, leadership is not merely about staying on the right side of the law. It's about the spirit of service. It is about a mayor, a counsellor or a municipal manager asking, "does the decision improve the life of the grandmother in Giyani or the youth in Polokwane?"

In Limpopo, we are working closely and tirelessly to shift the narrative of interventions to the one of innovation. We have seen the reports, we know that some of the municipalities have struggled with audit outcomes. But I must report that out of the 27 municipalities, two are clean, 18 are unqualified and only seven are sitting on qualified audit opinion. We are a disclaimer free and adverse free zone in terms of audit outcomes.

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We know that some of these instances and distance between the council chamber and the committee has become too wide. But we are fighting back with the district development model and the Intergovernmental Relations IGR, Framework. We are using these tools to enforce accountability.

Ethical leadership in Limpopo now means what we no longer working in silos, through our semester-based ... [Inaudible.] It's a meeting between mayors and Members of Executive Council, MECs, once every semester. We are bringing mayors and municipal managers to the table to account for every cent and every project. We are ensuring that the IGR structures are not just talk shop but centres ethical oversight.

Hon members, you cannot have trust without transparency. One of the greatest enemies of ethical leadership is the dark corner where procurement deals are made. In Limpopo, CoGTA, we are championing a culture of openness, public participation. We make sure that whenever a project is learned into the communities. We allow communities to know the scope of the project, the value of the project, all what is it that needs to be done by a contractor.

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We also play an effective oversight, our portfolio committees, visit projects to municipalities, we are strengthening our ward committees. These are all the eyes and ears of ethical governance. If a counsellor is not being responsive, the community development workers and ward committees must have the power to raise the red flag without fear of victimization.

Ethical leadership also requires competence. You cannot lead ethically if you don't necessarily understand the laws you are meant to uphold. We are pushing for a total professionalization of local government. This means hiring the right people for the right job, not based on political proximity like what we had other speakers or members here mentioning. In Limpopo we make sure that with technical skills and moral character are taking the precedence.

Also, with the help of the national department, we are working with the municipal infrastructure grant to deploy engineers and town planners to our districts to support the work of the municipalities.

In our province, in Limpopo, we cannot talk about local government without recognizing the traditional leaders. They are

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an integral part of local governments. Fabric ethical leadership extends to relationship between elected councillor and the traditional authority. When these two entities work in harmony, centred on the ethics of ubuntu, service delivery flourish, when they clash, the community suffers.

When I speak with Limpopo buyers, the challenges we face are ... [Inaudible.] ... of the national landscape. Whether it is a municipality in the Eastern Cape or metro in Gauteng, the role of ethical leadership remains the same.

National government provides the framework, the Municipal Finance Management Act, IGR, but it is the people in the seats of the power we must breathe life to this laws.

We must move towards national culture where consequence management is a norm, not an exception. If you steal from the poor, you must go to jail. If you fail to deliver, you must be removed. That is the work we are doing in the province.

How do we restore trust within our communities? It is restored when water leak is fixed within 24 hours in a village because municipal manager kept enough to follow up. It is stored when

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housing lists are transparent. It is stored when the MEC, the mayor and the councillor are seen in the mud, working alongside with the people during the times of crisis.

Hon members, as we head towards the remainder of the 2026. Let us recommit ourselves to the people of South Africa. Ethical leadership is not a destination; it is a daily practice. It is the choice to do what is right even when no one is watching. It is the courage to stand up against corruption even when it is uncomfortable.

The people of Limpopo, from the salt pans of the North to the busy streets of Polokwane, we hear you. We know we have a long way to go, fully to restore our trust. But we are laying the foundation of good governance stone by stone, through power to ethical leadership.

Let us build local government that is not a burden to its people, but it's a beacon of hope. A government that does not just manage borders but expands horizontal.

As we conclude, we want to say, ethical leadership is about that individual taking a leadership position, not because you occupy

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a particular position, but the actions will do on a day-to-day basis, in our position for our local government to do. Thanks very much, hon House Chairperson, for the opportunity to debate.

Mr B J FARMER: Hon Chairperson, hon members, I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Let me begin by saying this clearly: South Africans are not tired of the government; they are tired of being failed by it. What better proof could we have asked for than a premier painting, the worst picture of a town, a town that just happens to be in his province? How can the DA be taken seriously in this day and age, when the debate leader, hon Ryder of the DA, paints the perfect picture of his hometown, just for hon premier Alan Winde, also of the DA, to paint such a bad picture of his hometown, Knysna.

The crisis we face in local government today is not only about broken infrastructure, failing municipalities or poor service delivery, but it's a crisis of trust, and trust is not restored through speeches and DA lies. It is restored through ethical leadership in action. For the PA, ethical leadership is a standard. It is about leaders who understand that public office is not a privilege, it's a responsibility to serve, to deliver and to be accountable. Communities across our country, from

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townships to rural villages to coastal towns, are asking a simple question: Who is working for us? They are not asking for promises; they are asking for results. When a mother cannot access clean water, when a young person cannot find opportunities, when a community waits years for basic infrastructure, that is not just service delivery failure, that is ethical failure because ethical leadership means putting people first, not contracts, not connections, and not politics. ... [No Sound or video from the Chamber at 16:58 until 17:05...]

Mr M M BOTSWE (North West): [Audio recording insufficient.] Text inserted from member's speech notes.]

Hon Chairperson, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), has consistently argued that good governance is not just a technical accounting exercise, but it is the revolutionary foundation upon which the dignity of our people must be built. As without ethical leadership, local government ceases to be a vehicle for service delivery and instead, it becomes a feeding scheme for tenderpreneurs and political parasites.

In the North West province for example, the province where I am from, the painful reality is that many municipalities have been

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captured by corruption networks, political patronage and blatant incompetence. This is not mere maladministration, it is the deliberate capture of the people's resources by a self-serving elite who have turned local government into a private feeding scheme.

Just last year, the North West recorded some of the highest levels of unauthorized, irregular, and fruitless and wasteful expenditure in the entire country.

In Matlosana Local Municipality, the expenditure skyrocketed from R6 billion in the year 2021, to over R11 billion by late 2025. And as a result, in villages like Sueding, our people have been forced to live with raw sewage flowing through their streets for over three years without any resolution. In Matlosana, residents from informal settlements like Jacaranda, have been waiting for over 12 years for RDP houses that remain stalled or unoccupied.

Hon Chairperson, we must speak the truth without fear: the collapse of local government in provinces such as the North West is a direct result of ANC governance failures. It is a result of cadre deployment, political protection of corruption and the

systematic weakening of state capacity. The same organisation that once claimed to be a leader of society has now become a danger to society.

Hon Chairperson, when the Auditor-General tells us that municipalities continue to receive disclaimers and adverse audit opinions, what it really means is that public money cannot be accounted for. It means corruption is continuing without consequence. It means the poor are being robbed. Because when R1 million disappears through irregular expenditure, it is not just money disappearing. It is development being stolen from the people. It is stolen classrooms. It is stolen clinics. It is stolen water infrastructure. It is stolen opportunities for young people. Corruption in local government is economic violence against the poor.

Hon Chairperson, ethical leadership is the missing ingredient in our municipalities. You cannot build good governance on a foundation of moral bankruptcy. Leaders who steal cannot build clean institutions. Leaders who protect corruption cannot restore public trust. Ethical leadership means leaders must fear the people more than they fear losing positions. Today we have

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leaders who fear losing positions more than they fear failing communities. That is why our municipalities are collapsing.

Hon Chairperson, the EFF therefore reiterates its revolutionary position that the state must be capacitated to deliver services directly. We must collapse the dependency on the tender system by building a capable and developmental state.

That is why the EFF therefore calls on all young people to register for the upcoming Local Government Elections, because voting is not just a right, it is a revolutionary responsibility. It is through the ballot that young people can remove corrupt leaders and replace them with accountable leadership committed to service delivery. Young people must not surrender their future to corrupt politicians by staying away from the voter's roll. They must register. They must participate, and they must use their vote as a weapon for accountability and change. I thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon sir. The next speaker will be on the virtual platform. [Interjections.] No, you are disruptive now. Hon delegates, the next speaker, on the virtual platform, is hon O B Kunene from the IFP. Hon Kunene, are you okay? [Interjections.] Okay, you can fire on.

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Mr O B KUNENE: Hon Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, hon Minister Hlabisa, MECs present, hon members and delegates of the NCOP, and the citizens of our beloved country, in KwaZulu-Natal, the test of local government is not contained in a policy document or a compliance report. It is found in lived experience. It is measured in whether a household in Nongoma has access to water, whether a small business in uMgungundlovu can rely on basic infrastructure and whether the poorest of the poor feel the presence of a state that serves them. In that sense, local government is not simply administrative. It is where dignity is either realised or denied.

We must therefore be candid. In too many instances, the crisis in local government is not a lack of policy. It is a failure of leadership. Ethical ... failure has become one of the underlying drivers of poor performance. Without confronting that reality, no reform, however well designed, will succeed.

Ethical leadership begins with self-discipline. It is about the ability to act correctly when there is no oversight, no scrutiny and no immediate consequence. In municipalities, that discipline is tested where it matters most – in procurement, in appointments and in the allocation of scarce resources.

However, ethical leadership is also about purpose. It is about loyalty to the people of South Africa, not to networks of convenience or patronage. It requires a conscience that remains anchored in the lived realities of the poorest of the poor; those who carry the heaviest burden when governance fails.

In this regard, the values of the IFP remain clear and consistent. Ethical leadership must be lived, not declared. This tradition was shaped by our founder, *Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi*, who understood that leadership without integrity is not leadership at all. Prince *Buthelezi* did not separate ethics from governance. He demonstrated that discipline, service delivery and accountability are the very instruments through which governance succeeds. He taught that public office is a moral responsibility, not an opportunity for extraction.

The findings of the Zondo Commission and the Madlanga Commission have removed any room for denial. They expose a pattern, not isolated misconduct but of a systematic ethical collapse within parts of the state.

Corruption has not merely occurred. It has been enabled, protected and in some instances, normalised. That reality should

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trouble every one of us, because when corruption becomes embedded, it is not only money that is lost. It is institutional credibility, but also service delivery, and ultimately, it is public trust.

The Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has made progress in tightening intergovernmental relations and how the different spheres work together, but we know that years of historic maladministration cannot be changed in a few short months.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the consequences are not abstract. They are visible in incomplete infrastructure, in failing services and in communities that are forced to protest in order to be heard. That is the direct cause of ethical failure.

Ethical leadership must be institutionalised. We cannot rely on goodwill. We must enforce transparent systems, protect administrative processes from interference, and ensure that consequence management is consistent and unavoidable. KwaZulu-Natal does not lack the capability. What it has lacked at critical moments is discipline and ethical leadership.

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Since 2024, people have started to see a change in the way KwaZulu-Natal is run and are starting to reignite hope in an ethically run province. I thank you, hon Chairperson.

Afrikaans:

Mnr J H P BRITZ: Agb Voorsitter, agb lede, mede-landsgenote, as etiese leierskap en goeie regering gemeet was aan toesprake en konferensies sou Suid-Afrika heel waarskynlik die beste munisipaliteite in die wêreld gehad het.

English:

However, South Africans measure leadership in whether water comes out of a tap. Governance is measured by the level of service delivery. We can talk about governance frameworks, oversight mechanisms, compliance reports and codes of conduct, but when a community has no water, no refuse removal and no working streetlights, ethical leadership and governance has already failed ...

Afrikaans:

... en dit is presies hoe miljoene Suid-Afrikaners plaaslike regering vandag ervaar. 'n Totaal van 105 munisipaliteite kan nie basiese dienste verskaf nie maar inwoners moet maar steeds

maandeliks getrou hul heffings en belastings met swaarverdiende geld betaal.

Kom ons wees nou maar eerlik. Die gemiddelde inwoner is lankal verby vuisvoos. Hulle is nou behoorlik keelvol. Inwoners hoor die toesprake, hulle hoor die beloftes, hulle hoor die politieke slagspreuke maar wanneer hulle krane oopdraai is daar niks.

IsiXhosa:

Dololo.

Afrikaans:

Wanneer hulle 'n slaggat rapporteer word die gate net groter en dieper. Wanneer die riool in verflenter strate afloop word die stank erger en wanneer hulle die polisie bel om misdaad te rapporteer is daar nie 'n antwoord nie.

English:

That is not a paperwork problem. That is a leadership problem. The gap between words and reality has become the biggest crisis in local government. Public trust is not declining. It has collapsed. And, when trust collapses, governance collapses with it.

When we conduct oversight visits, we speak to residents and what we hear is painfully consistent. People no longer trust local government, not because government makes mistakes, but because nobody is held accountable when things go wrong. We must stop speaking about ethical leadership and good governance as if it is a theoretical concept. Ethical leadership is not an academic debate.

Afrikaans:

Etiese leierskap is die verskil tussen water en geen water, ligte aan en duisternis, werkloosheid en werkskepping, tussen waardigheid en hopeloosheid.

English:

Let me illustrate. Eric Ramkwana and his family live in Makana in the Eastern Cape. For months, his family has had no running water. Water tankers come and go at enormous cost. Refuse is not collected. Sewage flows through broken streets. Electricity is unreliable. Crime increases. Businesses close and young people leave.

This municipality has seen intervention after intervention by this House and administrators have come and gone. Court cases

have been fought. Millions has been spent, but the lived reality of residents has not changed. What did codes of conduct mean to Eric? What did policy frameworks mean to him? What did ethical leadership documents mean to his family? Nothing ...

IsiXhosa:

... dololo ...

English:

... because when ethical leadership disappears, municipalities become feeding troughs, budgets become personal shopping lists, oversight becomes theatre and communities become the victims.

Afrikaans:

Kom ek ... 'n reis na Kouga, ook in dieselfde Oos-Kaapprovinsie, waar Cynthia Grootboom en haar gesin woon. As Cynthia by haar deur uitstap dan is daar 'n geteerde straat voor haar huis want op hierdie huidige oomblik is Kouga besig om 70% van alle teerpaaie oor te teer. Wanneer sy haar kraan oopmaak kom daar skoon water uit want Kouga Munisipaliteit het nuwe watersuiweringswerke teen miljoene rande aangebou. Elke sent is voor verreken. Sy stap uit haar voortuin uit en die munisipaliteit lewer dienste. Sy meld probleme aan op 'n app

[toepassing] op haar foon en een van Kouga se 98% padwaardige voertuie sal binne 24 uur die probleem kom aanspreek.

Ontstaan 'n krisis bel sy die nuutgestigde noodsentrum waar nooddienste en polisiëringsforums saam met die polisie werk om vinnig op te tree. Hoor Cynthia van korrupsie meld sy dit aan by 'n toegewyde inbelsentrum waar daar iemand antwoord.

Die plaaslike ekonomie van Kouga floreer want beleggers hou van sekerheid en goeie dienste. Toerisme floreer want wie wil nou nie in 'n goeie kUSDorp met 'n Blouvlagstatus woon nie of selfs daar vakansie hou nie? Hierdie munisipaliteit het die afgelope twee jaar skoon ouditverslae ontvang.

English:

Same province. Same national legislation. Same Fiscal Framework. But, completely different outcomes. What is the difference between Makana on the one hand and Kouga on the other hand?

Let me tell you. Ethical leadership of a competent DA-governed Kouga Municipality. Not speeches about ethics, not documents about ethics, not more policies, but leadership that lives ethics. The type of servant leadership where the DA Executive

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Mayor in Kouga rides around with his 125cc motorbike and not in blue light brigades, where local councillors are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and are seen to be working, where public money is respected, where infrastructure is maintained, where services are delivered, where competence is appointed, not comrades, where problems are fixed before it becomes a crisis, where corruption is dealt with and not explained away.

South Africans are not asking for more legislation. They are not asking for more strategies. They are not asking for additional frameworks. They are asking for ethical leadership. They are asking for leaders such as ... in Kouga and in the Western Cape who understand that every cent wasted is a street left in darkness, every corrupt tender is a child without water, every unqualified appointment is a local clinic without electricity.

Where ethical leadership becomes optional, good governance becomes impossible. It is not about saying the right things. It is about making sure that when citizens turn the tap, government actually delivers. And, where a government delivers, trust is restored. I thank you.

IsiXhosa:

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Enkosi.

Mr G O MOLAPISI (North West): Hon House Chairperson, let me pass my greetings to the hon Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, NCOP, the Deputy Chairperson, the Chief Whip of the NCOP, and the Chairperson of the Select Committee, the hon Kaunda, the Minister, the hon Hlabisa, members of the executive council present here, my colleagues, the premier, present, hon members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good evening. Hon House Chairperson, the session this afternoon promised to be a pivotal moment in our democracy as we gather and debate on fundamental principles making up and accountable responsive and service-driven system of local government.

Hon House Chairperson, our meeting sits at the time when the credible, credibility, effectiveness and future of local government rest on one fundamental pillar which is ethical leadership.

Hon House Chairperson, it is my contention that a lot has been said about the state of local government in our country over the passed few years. The discussions took to heart the legislative reform underway with the review of the White Paper on Local

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Government and other developments in the sector which include the hosting of the successful Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, National Indaba on the Local Government under the theme, "Every Municipality Must Work."

Be that as it may, the debate continues as we count down a few months before the 2026 Local Government Elections.

Hon House Chairperson, allow me to take this moment to thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this important debate on good governance as a foundation for local government.

Although the debate is brought under the façade aimed at painting a bleak picture of a failing system of local government in South Africa. The facts prove contrary and reminiscent of a system under recovery recording pockets of improvement over the years. The clear sign of improvement is as a result of the relentless efforts and determination by the Department of Co-operative Affairs and Traditional Affairs under the leadership of Minister Hlabisa, Deputy Ministers, Dr Namane Masemola and Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe, respectively to fix local government.

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Our determination is premised on the iteration by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa when he said and I quote:

When local government fails, the impact is felt by communities, business and households. When local government works well, villages, towns and cities become engines of opportunity and growth.

As correctly professed by George Orwell in his dystopian novel 1984 and I quote, "In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is revolutionary act."

I take this time not to hide behind lamentation but to join the chorus that says without ethical leadership there can never be good governance in local government.

Hon House Chairperson, the recent report by the SA Human Rights Commission, painted a concerning picture of service delivery failures across 14 of our municipalities. Failures in water provision, sanitation and sewerage spillage and road maintenance. These issues are not merely administrative shortcomings; they are violation of the constitutional rights of our people and failure of governance. They go against the

objects of local government as envisioned in section 152 of the Constitution which provides that municipalities must strive to ensure within its financial and administrative capacity to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of service to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development to promote a safe and healthy environment and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisation in matters of local government.

Moreover, governance failures lead to weak financial management, poor consequence management, political instability, protest action, skills shortage and capacity constraints and in some cases, outright maladministration and corruption at a core rest a lack of ethical leadership.

Hon House Chairperson, I fully concur that the restoration of public trust begins with ethical leadership. Local government than ever before, requires a leadership committed to the rule of law. Our intervention at municipalities across the province including section 139 interventions are instruments provided by legislation to bring stability and improve service delivery. Thus, an ethical leadership is requisite to ensure the

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successful implementation of the recommendation arising for such intervention.

We demand more than a mere governance from our local leaders. We demand transparency in action at every material moment. We must carry our people with us, not as spectators but as active participants in the decision that shape their lives. In this era of misinformation and disinformation, community participation is not just a legislative requirement, it is our strongest shield against confusion and our most powerful tool to building understanding.

Ethical leadership has to do with willingness to take responsibility by convening public meetings, izimbizo, as leaders will be demonstrating their ability to accept accountability and take corrective action. The mandate received from the people require constant feedback. It is therefore important to constantly update our communities on issues of service delivery, so that we do not allow a vacuum.

As the province, our approach to good governance, it is theme in good action as indicated earlier in pursuit of ensuring ethical leadership, we must address challenges of weak consequence

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management, we must say no to looking away, where there are allegations of maladministration on corruption, we must move in swiftly and act decisively.

In the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years, we have invoked section 106, of the Municipal Systems Act into allegations of maladministration in Matlosana, Madibeng and Tswaing Local Municipalities. All these investigations have been completed, I must indicate and remedial action plans are being implemented to ensure compliance. I have already written to implicated councillors with the intention to invoke provision of a councillor's code of conduct. To ensure consequence management, the premier has also signed performance with the MEC relevant so that the MEC is held accountable.

Hon House Chairperson, as the co-operative governance and traditional affairs, we have in the recent years, achieved improved municipal audit outcomes with notable decrease in disclaimer opinion. Like the Minister said, Ditsobotla is improving with the intervention by the national government in terms of section 139(17) and sending in the national Cabinet along side with the seconded team. We hope and wish that this intervention will yield positive results.

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Our sustained interventions in Bojanala Platinum District, Kenneth Kaunda District and Moretele Local Municipality are beginning to yield measurable progress. While we may not have achieved our targeted of clean audit outcome for the 2024-25 audit cycle, we have made significant strides, maintaining unqualified audit opinion.

I am pleased to report to this august House that the number of municipalities achieving unqualified audit opinion has doubled from three to six with the addition of Moses Kotane and Greater Taung Local Municipalities that are rural areas and J B Marks Local Municipality.

Hon House Chairperson, this progress affirm that our recovery efforts are gaining traction and moving us steadily in the direction. Although we say it ourselves, this strength in financial management demonstrates progress in governance and accountability, offering stakeholders dependable financial information.

Equally, we are looking at the ways to assist our municipalities to reduce the litigation and consultant costs, ensuring resources are directed to service delivery. We want to encourage

our municipalities to follow the example Ratlou Local Municipality which managed to submit their annual financial statements timeously, without the use of external service provider or consultants. They managed on their own through internal capacity to improve their audit outcomes by moving from a disclaimer to a qualified audit opinion.

The total expenditure on consultants to the value of R400 million across the province is way too high.

Hon House Chairperson, a widespread prevalent of unfunded budgets in our municipalities place them at risk in terms of the high, unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure. It is another anomaly demanding our immediate attention. Ethical leadership understand that oversight structures such as the municipal public accounts need to be resourced to discharge their responsibilities. We understand that if these committees are fully capacitated, they will be in a position to do their work without fear or favour. Thank you very much for the opportunity, hon House Chairperson. [Time expired.]

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Hon House Chairperson, hon colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, the FFPlus is also of the view that public

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trust in local government has been shattered by corruption, cadre deployment and the collapse of service delivery mostly due to criminality and poor performance. However, today, we must look at some of the root causes that make things go wrong and offer a possible cure.

Let us first expose the current international ideological blindness because it also destroys local government from the inside. It has become popular to criticise and even accuse America and the West as oppressors and enemies and to proclaim reform yet the uncomfortable historical truth is American pressure and sanctions was instrumental to ending apartheid and assist in the struggle far more than many other nations.

The current antiWestern rhetoric is therefore unfounded and done on behalf of another foreign ideology that now threatens our very survival. What happens when when that ideology meets reality? What if South Africa can no longer import oil because of reckless foreign policy? What if hospitals have no electricity for lifesupport machines? What if there is no fuel for ambulances or bread trucks - bakery trucks? What then happens to service delivery in our towns and cities?

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When the lights go out the water stops. The streets become unsafe. This is not a possible future scenario. This is the direct consequence of the same ideological arrogance that has already turned our municipalities into bankrupt shells.

Hon House Chairperson, ethical leadership as enshrined in the Constitution cannot ignore these facts. It is no longer a conspiracy theory, it is a documented fact. Ad hoc commissions and commissions of inquiry prove that gangs and drug cartells have captured the entire communities and local governments. We must declare war on these. Not with empty statements but with zero-tolerance policing, more asset seizures and the removal of every corrupt official who hides behind the shield of some radical, relevant, revolutionalised and rhetoric in order to find an excuse to retort to criminal deeds.

We are also witnessing the blatant distraction of democracy itself. With the suppression of freedom to blow the whistle, gross violations to human rights, high level corruption and nepotism in the highest levels of leadership. Once democracy is gone, everything is lost.

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Oligarchs the new economic sector cartel masters will step in and control South Africa, not through votes, but through money and violence. At the heart of this rot, sits cadre deployment and disguised as Black Economic Empowerment, BEE. The BEE is not opportunity creation, it is deprivation in disguise. To give to one group, you must take from another. You must deliberately deprive a competent book keeper or an engineer or a municipal manager of his or her right for a position, so that someone else less qualified but the connected gets the job.

Ethical leadership demands colourblind merit, fullstop!
Nothing else. Restores public trust.

Colleagues, the time has come to make the right choices. Only when ethical leadership is rooted in truth, justice and Christian neighborly service, will trust return. South Africa, the moment of choice is here. Choose principle, over ideology. Choose communities, over cartels. Choose family values, over communism, so that 2026 becomes the year that local government is reset from the ground up. Honest, competent and truly South African. I thank you.

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Ms O D MEDUPE: Hon Chair, greetings to you, hon members in this august House, those on the virtual platform, the Minister in absentia, ladies, and gentlemen. Let me introduce my topic. As we delve deeper into our debate today, I would like to highlight the crucial subtopic: "Ethical leadership and the role of society beyond politics." Ethics is essential for societal functioning, serving as a guide for individual behaviour and collectively shaping societal norms. It promotes social justice, equality, and fairness, providing a foundation for conflict resolution and moral decision-making.

By encouraging ethical behaviour, society can achieve a more just and equitable environment, fostering respect and dignity among individuals while maintaining social order and promoting the common good.

Hon Chair, we are gathered here today to discuss and examine the concept of ethical leadership. Ethics serves as a framework for societal norms and is essential in guiding individual behaviour, aiding decision-making that aligns with personal values and cultural principles. Ethical leadership is vital for rebuilding trust in a state affected by rampant corruption and maladministration. By aligning strategies with integrity,

transparency and accountability, ethical leaders enhance institutional credibility.

Trust develops through consistent action that reflects the state values rather than just policies or statements. Hon members, the Zondo Commission will always remain as a stark reminder of how moral decay and unethical leadership are capable of. We dare not repeat the same complacency to revisit the nation.

As we discuss the concept of ethical leadership with its effect on restoring public trust, we need to be reminded of the Chairperson of the Moral Regeneration Movement, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa when addressing the Moral Regeneration Movement, he said, and I quote:

The movement seeks to foster social cohesion, ethical leadership and nation building through community engagement, education, and cultural programme to reverse moral decay in our society. This lays the foundation and ethical accountability of leadership to their own people.

The Moral Regeneration Movement predates in South Africa the mainstay of founding principle that ushered in the democratic

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dispensation once entrenched in these principles. The father of the South African democracy during his State of the Nation address in 1999, once said and I quote:

South Africa the society needs to infuse itself with measures of discipline and with ethics responsibility for the action we take related to this and reconstruction of our soul of the nation, which is the Reconstruction and Development Programme, RDP, of the soul.

By this we mean first respect for life, pride, self-respect as South Africans. It means asserting our collective and individual identity as Africans, committed to the rebirth of the continent, being respectful of other citizens and honouring women and children of our country who are exposed to all kind of domestic violence and abuse.

The extract emphasises the importance of community mobilisation rather than solely relying on government action for state security enforcement and religious sectors for moral development. It advocates for a collective effort to foster a sense of new patriotism which is crucial for creating and nurturing environment for a future generation.

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Merit Jurat has observed that in the fast-paced technology driven world of today it seems as if we are standing at the crossroad of progress and social responsibility. Every day we are faced with decisions that do not just impact our lives but also the fabric of society itself. It is in this moment that ethics become invaluable acting as a compass to guide us through the moral dilemmas and societal challenges.

Ethics are fundamental to trust in communities, fostering fair, honest and respectful interaction in business, education, and public service. This foundation is essential for creating prosperous and harmonious societies. We maintain that police who uphold ethical and moral standards have an advantage in curbing crime, preventing unlawful behaviour, and enforcing the law in our society.

The ANC believes that ethics and morality are multifaceted issues that require contributions from all sectors of society. The state alone cannot succeed, it needs collective effort. The roles of schools, civil society, churches, and family units in instilling ethics are crucial. Schools educate students about ethics and values through curricula, while civil society organisations offer mentorship and practical experience.

Churches contribute to moral development through teaching and community service. A family unit serves as a foundational institution for teaching values and ethics, which are crucial for lifelong ethical behaviour.

The ANC's 55th National Conference agreed that establishing a strong, ethical, and capable state is necessary for economic growth. The government has finalised the framework for the professionalisation of the state, which includes integrity testing and an ethical public sector. It is worth noting that the ANC-led GNU government has gone beyond mere lip service by entrenching legislative mechanisms to institute ethical behaviour through a Public Service Amendment Bill.

We are amending legislation and strengthening the role of the Public Service Commission to ensure that qualified people are appointed to senior management positions and to move towards creating a single, harmonious public service. The ANC recognises that there was a failure to establish a merit-based public service that could appoint individuals based on competence and ethical standards. Hon Kaunda, I would agree with you regarding the professionalisation of the public service to address these anomalies.

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Hon Chair, in relation to what members have raised here, especially the points made by the Western Cape, one must ask oneself a question, and it is something that is very emotional. We are not based in Cape Town, or even in the Western Cape. We come from other provinces, but what we see is quite different from what has been presented here.

If someone who always thinks of fruit sellers by the roadside were to ask if there is a Western Cape, I would say yes, there is something. When we talk about poverty, reading about it in books is honestly very moving. However, from my perspective, I urge my colleagues to consider the poverty that exists there. People who are indigent know where they belong when they are in Cape Town. They know their place is on the periphery of the Western Cape, which is truly heartbreaking. No one can be convinced that their lives will change. Even if it is used as a campaign slogan, nothing will change. We have seen with our own eyes the situation in Dunoon. We have witnessed many unacceptable conditions that violate women's rights. Thank you Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Medupi.

The next speaker is hon Peter. Please give him a round of applause. He has been away for some time.

Mr M M PETER: Good day, hon members ...

IsiXhosa:

... mandibulise nakuwe Sihlalo wale Ndlu

English:

Hon Chair, this debate reminds me of when the National Party was about to fall. The late hon F W de Klerk, may his soul rest in peace stood among the nation with full confidence, he said, South Africa is prospering through the National Party government and the terrorists were defeated. He was referring to the black child of South Africa. The same happened again under the government led by the ANC.

IsiXhosa:

Lo umxholo usiphathele wona awulua njengoko ujongeka. Uthi masixoxe ngolawulo olululo njengesiseko sorhulumento lwasemakhaya kwanendima yasikhokelo yokuziphatha ekubuyiseni ithemba loluntu. Ingaba awutsho kusini na Sihlalo weNdlu?

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Yintsumantsumane le. Ngumhlola kaFaku lo. Yintsomi Emini le. Isizwe sidada kwintlekele yonqongophalo lweenkokheli ezizizo. Senzeni isizwe kule nyhikityha yorhwaphilizo lweziphatha-mandla? Senzeni isizwe kulo mbhobamo wokufa? Senzeni isizwe kulo mbhodamo wendlala. Senzeni isizwe kule nyhikityha yentshabalalo

Ingaba ayizizo iziphatha-mandla kusini na ezintyumpantyumpeka kurhwaphilizo? Ayingabo abalawuli bombuso kusini na abaphelelwa bubuthandazwe? Ayingabo kusini na abawutyoboza baze bawuxangxatha umthetho akwabikho ziseko zikarhulumente zizizo neziye zanamandla? Amaziko olawulo asuke abaziintsalu, waxangxathwa umthetho wanyamalala esizweni, yaba nguvula-zibhuqe waphuncuka umthetho lwaphihlika ulawulo sijongile.

Akugcwalanga bantu basemzini kusini na apha eMzantsi Afrika? Akugcwelanga ziyobisi kusini na apha eMzantsi Afrika? Kuphethe bani kanti? Kanti yintoni le uthi masize kuyixoxa apha Sihlalo weNdlu? Hayi Sihlalo weNdlu masingafihli amakhuba kulinywa. Kanti ngubani umsunguli wolu rhwaphilizo ludodobalisa oomasipala basemakhaya? Ingaba ayizizo iziphatha-mandla kusini na? Tsi! Azi ayaphi na amathandazwe. Isizwe sangenelwa ngunogumbe kwaye konke okwakukhona kwatshatyalaliswa ziziphathi-mandla zizimele ngovoto lolawulo lwesininzi.

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Asikho nasinye isisombululo ngaphandle kokucengana nesizwe ukuba sisuse lo nonkala ugxalathele phezu kwentloko zethu. Aphi na amathandazwe okusilamlela? Abasekho kusini na ooMadiba banamhla. Tsi! Tsi! NguX kuphela onokusisusa kule ntlekele ukwazi ukunikwa isidima sawo umthetho. Yona intlekele iya kuhlala inje ingakumbi eli shwangusha likanonkala langxwathe phezu kweentloko zethu. Naku ngoku izikhakhamela neziphathi-mandla zichaphazeleka kwezi ngxingongo zotyadidi lokubulawa kwesizwe. Nkosi musa ukusisikelela, sibabale phantsi kweentloko zooSolomon Mahlangu, kwezo ntloko zeenkosi zethu, kwelo gazi lemidaka emnyama eyafa ingayolelanga.

Masambeni ke sizwe ziye kuhlanguka uMzantsi Afrika wethu kula majingi-qhiwu sizibona sikuwo. Ize singabonzakalisi ntonje senze esakwenzayo mhlamnene. Masisuse izichopho ezi bongxathe kuzo. Huntshu mawethu ikhwelo lityala. Yasuka yakhala intsikizi madoda, izulu liyazongoma. Uyaphaphazela umoya, ooMadiba basigxeleshile. Hlangulani magwala ndini umzi uyatshabalala. Enkosi.

English:

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): The next speaker on the podium is hon Badenhorst from the Western Cape. Hon Feni, this is not a shebeen, please.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon House Chairperson, hon members, fellow South Africans, good day. It's late in the day. But let's take a moment to reflect on the moral compass of those who lecture us today on ethical governance. There's lots of those lectures today. The ANC in eThekweni and you'll remember this hon Govender, Mayor Zandile Gumede's refuse collection became a masterclass in how to recycle public money into private pockets. A R200 million waste tender didn't just fail to clean the streets; it exposed a system where the only thing collected efficiently was kickbacks. The ANC doesn't just take out the trash; it becomes the system that produces it.

But voters are taking note of that, and that's why the ANC is spiralling from a liberation dividend in 1994 to an electoral deficit in 2024. Hon Siwisa of the EFF, yes, you have a special way of speaking that makes most people appreciate your silence. The fighters have told South Africans they would nationalise the banks, but first they ran a pilot project with VBS Mutual Bank. Municipal funds meant for the poor were siphoned off so

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efficiently that even the auditors were left wondering whether economic freedom had quietly been redefined as freedom to loot. Red berets in public, but behind the scenes it's green notes all the way. Ethical governance has been seeking the EFF for a long time, but they've been very effective at hiding from it.

Hon Farmer, let's get round to the PA a bit. You have this rare talent of speaking at length without disturbing the facts. In the Central Karoo, we saw a fundraiser where the only thing that truly performed was the disappearing act. Millions raised in the name of service delivery for Beaufort West, remember, somehow never found their way to the people. It raises a new slogan. It is not service delivery, but service delivery pending, subject to cash flow visibility, I believe.

I'll get to the UDM at this time, but there's more fish big enough to fry. The MK Party, hon Nzimande, where do I start the gift that keeps on giving? You have a unique way of contributing to a debate without adding much. There is the newest entrants promising moral renewal, arriving with John Hlophe at the forefront. A man whose public record has been defined by controversy around the very institutions he was meant to uphold.

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It is quite something to campaign on restoring the rule of law while recruiting those who have spent years in open to contest it. Because when your idea of renewal is to recycle controversy, you are not building a new political movement, you are simply reopening an old case file and calling it an election manifesto.

Talking of posturing, hon Nzimande, you seem to be travelling very light when it comes to thinking, because your first party leader, who is now not anymore, the party leader, was also the first judge in South African history to be impeached. Hardly the epitome of ethical governance.

But let us now contrast noise with delivery. In the DA-run City of Cape Town, some R40 billion of infrastructure pipeline has been spent over the last three years, larger than most metros' budgets combined. Around 70-75% are spent in poorer communities. Pro-poor spending backed by delivery. Not PA lies, hon Farmer, facts. Consistent clean audits year after year.

Clean audits are important members, because a clean audit dictates that the public's money is not being stolen.

Unemployment rates significantly lower than metros like Johannesburg and eThekweni. Highest access to basic services of

any metro, water, sanitation, and refuse removal. Now, compare that to Johannesburg, where billions in infrastructure budgets go unspent, while water outages and power failures intensify. I mean, the premier even bragged about showering in a hotel while his residents are sitting without water for weeks on end. That surely cannot be ethical leadership, and audit outcomes in Johannesburg that remains qualified or worse.

In eThekweni, irregular expenditures run into billions, while basic services, from waste collection to water, continue to deteriorate. That deterioration started after ... [Inaudible] ... in your term as mayor, hon Kaunda. In Nelson Mandela Bay, instability has meant repeated coalition collapses, stalled infrastructure, and governance paralysis.

Let us be blunt here. Where Cape Town invests R40 billion in infrastructure, others cannot even account for the billions they already had, or had stolen, or stolen by somebody else. Where Cape Town delivers clean audits, others deliver excuses and forensic reports. Where Cape Town expands access to services, others expand irregular expenditure and collapse.

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This is the real choice before South Africans. Not between slogans, but between governments that take and governments that build. In 2026, voters will not be asking who shouts the loudest, they'll be asking who delivers and who disappears when the water tanker bill arrives. I thank you.

Mr B S MABEBO: House Chair, greetings to the hon members present. I will start with a quote by the former president, Thabo Mbeki, which I'm directing it to the hon Badenhorst, who is attacking my leader, my comrade, the hon Kaunda.

Former president Thabo Mbeki once said:

"It is easier to break than to build."

This is what they are doing. Ubuntu ethics and Batho Pele principles are important in establishing ethical leadership because they promote values like humanity, compassion, community, harmony, hospitality, and mutual respect. These ideas are fundamental to the South African environment and have been included in a variety of service delivery policies, including the 1997 Batho Pele White Paper.

The incorporation of Ubuntu into leadership discourse is critical for addressing Africa's governance paradox and promoting successful public administration. The key features of Ubuntu ethical leadership, such as character development, efficiency, collectivism, participative leadership, and moral crisis resolution, are claimed to be relevant in the public sector.

The Ubuntu principles are a collection of belief systems that inform how public workers' interaction with citizens and one another. These ideas are critical for building strong connections and providing excellent service delivery.

Public officials are encouraged to exemplify these principles, which include compassion, respect, decency, empathy, and humility, to better serve the South African people. The ANC 2024 manifesto coined the Ubuntu Batho Pele principle as the cornerstone of moral regeneration and takes advantage of its universal acceptance to build solid legitimacy to curb moral decay in our society.

Despite its diverse expression across Africa's culture and languages, Ubuntu remains a unifying philosophy that shapes

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social relations and personal existence throughout sub-Saharan Africa as a socio-cultural framework. It influences both individual and institutional by reinforcing shared values.

Hon Chairperson, government provides health care, education, policing, social services, and a variety of other critical functions that affect every South African's life through the work of public servants. When our public sector functions optimally, it is a strong tool to social and economic progress. When it fails, our most vulnerable individuals bear the brunt of the consequences.

Chair of the august House, many dedicated public servants work tirelessly for the goodness of our country. We congratulate them for their efforts to enhance the lives of South Africans. However, our public sector faces major obstacles. This includes talent gaps, out-of-date systems, and practice inconsistency service delivery and corruption.

In many sections of the state, Batho Pele principles of putting people first have deteriorated. In the 2024 Sona speech, President Ramaphosa reiterated that as we work to build a more professional, accountable, and capable public service, we need

to bring public servants closer to the people they serve. We must challenge the idea that public servants, providers and citizens are mere beneficiaries of goods and services.

We must be a citizen-centric public participation that represents an aspiration of the people. Evident in his speech is his proclamation of the professionalisation framework for the public sector which entails professionalising public services including a culture of accountability and building capable public servants to optimally serve the people.

This place of framework guides and shapes the ethical behaviour of every public servant to work compassionately and serve the people. Frontline workers are the face of government and play an important role in providing public service. They are in charge of service quality and accessibility both of which have a direct impact on citizen lives. Conducting public service ethically is critical for preserving confidence and accountability in the public sector.

The current administration is committed to professionalising the public sector to construct a capable and ethical state. This entails attracting skilled professionals and ensuring that they

are adequately prepared to undertake their public duties with thoroughness.

The National School of Government is advancing their initiatives by providing an entry course of public servants to be educated and socialised in ethical behaviour prior to resuming their duties.

We as the ANC-led government applaud the work of the National School of Government, NSG, in calculating the culture of serving the people indiscriminately. We also acknowledge that the culture shift will take time and will experience pushbacks from the hell-bent provocateurs. But the idea of putting the people first is too big to die.

The ANC advocates that the alignment of Batho Pele principles with the professionalisation framework is crucial to ensure that the public administration is both successful and ethical. The framework seeks to develop a professional public administration that can provide public services.

The alignment is accomplished by the following essential principles, professionalism, which entails ensuring that public

officials have necessary qualifications and technical abilities, as well as being adequately trained on Batho Pele principles. Implementing excellent recruitment and selection process to guide meritorious appointments at the middle and senior management level. Promoting continual learning and professional development for public servants, including the professionalization of specific public sector's vacations.

The ANC views that it is imperative to instil good governance principles in the public sector through Ubuntu ethics. Values must be embedded in training, performance management, and leadership framework. The strategy is intended to improve ethical leadership, accountability, and citizen centred government. Ubuntu can promote inclusivity, empathy, and social duty in public administration, fostering a service culturally based on moral obligation and empathy.

It requires public officials to realise that they are legitimate systems from the service to the public, which ensures successful service delivery and promotes good governance.

As we conclude, a culture of ethical behaviour is required to ensure that public employees adhere to the highest standard of

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conduct. This includes training programmes and whistleblower protection systems to empower public employees.

Setswana:

Ba tle bare mmetla-kgola ya borwa o e betla a e lebisitse gaabo. Jaanong ke sona se ke se buang kere kgobokgobo o a ikgobokanyetsa, phatlaphatla o a iphatlaletsa.

English:

I thank you.

Mr D R RYDER: House Chairperson, hon delegates, at the outset, I would just like to thank all of the debaters that participated in today's debate. As hon Peter indicated, it wasn't an easy topic for most parties to talk on, but I see that some of you did try your hardest. Hon Mamabolo, if I can perhaps just make a comment on the debate topic as well. You complained about bringing politics into the discussion, unfortunately, political debates almost certainly will always contain an element of political emphasis.

The Minister was here today and he spoke on the topic. I am going to read the topic out again, just so that we all are aware

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exactly of what was being discussed. It was a debate on good governance as the foundation of local government, with a specific theme: "The Role of Ethical Leadership in Restoring Public Trust". I think the Minister demonstrated clearly why we find ourselves in a situation where public trust has to be rebuilt. The fact that we find ourselves congratulating one another because municipality finally only has one mayor, one speaker and one municipal manager just shows how far we have fallen. And I think it's a mark of excellent work that the Government of National Unity Minister has managed to resolve this matter after so long.

Minister Hlabisa's speech seemed like a cut and paste of many parts of my speech, and we agreed on many things, which is a fantastic start. Among that, the fact that clean audits remain an important measure for our municipalities. But we also agreed, as did many other speakers today, that ethics are not demonstrated merely in speeches and discussion. Ethics are demonstrated by good behaviour. Ethics are demonstrated by making things a habit. As the Premier of the Western Cape, hon Winde mentioned, we need to make it a habit.

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Every department, every entity gets a clean audit because every day they are practising good ethics. And I think that that fact that we can't just stand up here and speak about these needs to be a point that we remind the hon Kaunda of. As he spoke eloquently about his time as the mayor of eThekweni, he neglected to mention the R1 billion irregular expenditure that took place in just one year, in fact, the R461 million in irregular expenditure in the first quarter of 2024. I think that the fact that this House managed to relieve the people of eThekweni of his leadership is a badge we should wear with pride.

Hon delegates, the EFF came with titled arguments, and it was wonderful to see Alan Winde disproving those today before the hon Siwisa had the chance to make her title arguments about service delivery being reserved for certain classes of people. Instead, she preferred that I congratulate her for a march that was held last week.

Delegates, I think that the discomfort with the debate topic was displayed certainly by the hon Nzimande and the hon Farmer's discussions when I spoke about ethical leadership and they attacked the premier whilst talking about a place called Knysna,

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complaining that the province had not done what they need to do. It's important for us to note that ethical leadership is part of our duty in this House as well. When the Western Cape Province placed the Knysna municipality under section 139 intervention, it was this House that turned it down in a display of absolute lack of ethics.

Hon Farmer's stilted cadence and the brevity of his delivery today was a display of why many people found this topic so hard. As hon Badenhorst mentioned, perhaps it's because of the fact that in Beaufort West - in which he chose to attack hon Winde on - the ethics of fundraising and then absconding with the donations that were raised sits very uncomfortable with certain parties.

Hon Gotsell spoke to some great truths today and he emphasised the point that the power to remove unethical leaders rests with the voters. So my final closing words are aimed at the voters. Make sure you are registered; make sure you vote. And when you do go out to vote, vote for the only party that governs ethically, that builds trust, that is ready to fix South Africa. Thank you, House Chairperson.

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Debate concluded.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Ryder for your input. Hon delegates, that concludes the debate. I would like to thank the Minister, the premier, permanent delegates, MECs, and all other special delegates and Salga representatives for availing themselves for the sitting. Hon delegates, that concludes the business of the day. The Houses is adjourned.

Setswana:

Ke a leboga.

The Council adjourned at 18:10.