

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

TAKING PARLIAMENT TO THE PEOPLE:

DR KAUNDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 09:55.

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

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, before we proceed, I would like to warmly welcome the President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa. [Applause.] Also, let me welcome the Premier of North West, hon Mokgosi, all other premiers in our midst – the Premier of Gauteng, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal as well as the Premier of the Northern Cape. You are warmly welcomed. [Applause.]

May I also acknowledge and appreciate the presence of the speaker of the North West provincial legislature, hon Mohono, as well as all the other speakers who are here with us today.

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We also have the deputy speakers in our midst. We are also graced by the presence of the Deputy Minister of Human Settlements, the hon Mahambehhlala. The president of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, hon Stofile, is here with us today. Our host, the executive mayor Cllr Mashope and all other executive mayors present, our district executive mayor, Cllr Num, members of the executive council across the country – I have seen members from all provinces who are serving in the executive council – you are warmly welcomed.

The Chief Whip of the Council, the provincial legislature Chief Whip, our permanent and special delegates, our esteemed councillors in our midst, political, traditional and religious leaders, our civil society organisations and most importantly our guests – the people of Bokone Bophirima ...

Setswana:

... re a le amogela, bagolo.

English:

We shall now proceed to the annual address by the President of the Republic of South Africa as reflected on the Order Paper

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and it will be followed by the debate thereon. I now call upon the hon the President, the hon Cyril Ramaphosa to open the debate. [Applause.]

**ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES AND THE DEBATE THEREON -
ENSURING A PEOPLE-CENTRED LOCAL GOVERNMENT TOWARDS BUILDING
BETTER COMMUNITIES**

The PRESIDENT: Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mme Refiloe Tshweni-Tsipane, the Premier of the North West Province, Rre Lazarous Mokgosi, Premiers from number of other provinces who are present here, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, mayors of various municipalities that are here, the traditional leaders of our people in this province, delegates of the National Council of Provinces and all of us, fellow South Africans ...

Setswana:

... ke a lo dumedisa lotlhe ka leina la puso ya Repaboliki ya Aforikaborwa. Ke boitumelo mo gona gore re be re le fano mo porofeseng ya rona ya Bokone Bophirima.

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Sesotho:

Ke thabile haholo ho ba mona. Ke thabetse ha re tlisitse Palamente ho batho ba North West hore le bona ba bone hore na Palamente e sebetsa jwang le hore ba nke karolo mme ba bue se ka pelong tsa bona. Ba bue tsohle tse ba thabisang le tse ngata tse sa ba thabiseng, ba kgone ho re jwetsa tsohle tseo ba di hlokanng ho tswa ho mmuso wa bona.

Molaotheo wa rona o dumella batho ba rona hore ba nke karolo. Palamente e se ke ya fella Cape Town, empa e be Palamente ya setjhaba e tla kgona ho kenella setjhabeng, e kopane le batho ba heso. Palamente le maloko a yona ba kgone ho utlwa hantle hore na batho ba phela jwang.

English:

Taking Parliament to the People, TPTTP, gives effect to the promise of our Constitution that was signed into law 30 years ago. It is actually significant that on the year we are celebrating our Constitution, we are able to come to the North West, the place and the people of the North West who waged a titanic struggle against the unjust and illegal government of apartheid, and who sacrificed so much to get us where we are

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today. They also participated in the drafting of our Constitution. Today, in the main, we have this beautiful Constitution that contains the rights of all of us, and the people of the North West made a real, important contribution to make our Constitution to be what it is.

Setswana:

Re a lo leboga lona batho ba Bokone Bophirima. [Legofi.]

English:

Our Constitution declares that all the South Africans have a right to participate fully in the life of our country, that they should have a say in the way they are governed, and that they should participate fully in all the decisions that affect them. As I was saying, just as millions of the South Africans they were part of the drafting of our Constitution itself, participating into democracy is essentially the foundation of the open, free, tolerant society that we are striving to build. In 1994, our vision was to build a people's Parliament; a Parliament that represents people, where their voices are heard and a Parliament that broadly respects the will of the

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people. Taking Parliament to the People, TPTTP, is an integral part of that vision.

But before we begin the order of proceedings, hon Chairperson of the NCOP and your Deputy, today we wish to pay tribute to the lives that have been lost and the families who have been affected by the flooding in several of our provinces, and your province has also not been spared. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families that have lost their loved ones, their homes, livelihoods and those whose businesses have been severely damaged. This natural disaster is a stark reminder of how vulnerable we are, as a country and as a continent to the ravages of the growing impact of climate change. It calls on us to strengthen our emergency and disaster preparedness in the resistant.

We have to set up investment in climate resilient infrastructure. Most of all, we have to be regularly engaging with our communities, to keep them informed and empowered to respond effectively when such events occur. The communities must also be ready, but the government must even be more ready through its responders, its rescue operators and clear

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messages and warnings must be given to the members of our communities in order for them to be prepared. Over the past few days, there have been in a series of public events, where we've been able to hear, first hand, from all of you, about the challenges that you are all facing.

I am told that those engagements have been productive, deep, thorough, and many people have had an opportunity to speak out to tell the Members of the NCOP and our Parliament about their challenges. Now, this is an important part of our democracy. Our democracy must never be a democracy that is only practised in Cape Town; it must be a democracy that is practiced beyond our provincial legislatures, and it must a democracy for all our people. The elected officials are expected to report back to communities on what they are doing to address these challenges.

Setswana:

Mo makgetlhong a le mantsi, batho ba ba kgethilweng ga ba iphe nako ya go boela ko go lona go tla go lo supetsa se ba se dirileng. [Legofi.]

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Sesotho:

Seo ha re se bue ka makhanselara feela, re bua le ka bao le ba kgethileng hore ba lo le emela diprofenseng, le Palamenteng. Ke tshwanelo hore ba kgethilweng ke setjhaba ba iphe nako, ba etse matsapa a hore ba kene setjhabeng ba kgone ho jwetsa setjhaba na ho etsahala eng ka maphelo a bona. [Mahofi.]

Ke yona ntho e kgolo ya bohlokwa e re lokelang ho e lokisa. Nka thaba haholo ha le ka bua ka yona, hore e kene ditsebeng tsa rona kaofela mme le se ke la pata letho.

English:

You must not hold anything back. You must speak out so that the message sinks clearly. This is with regard to giving respect, regard and recognition to our people. This is what our democracy is truly all about. Now, I am please to hear that the engagements that have taken place were well-attended, vibrant and productive. This is a demonstration of what we need and to do on a more regular basis even on smaller groupings. I am told that, what emerged from these engagements is that local government needs to be at the centre of our

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efforts to build a South Africa of equality and dignity for all.

Setswana:

Fa re bua sentle, puso ya rona ya bomasepala, ke fa go senyegang dilo di le dintsi teng. [Legofi.]

English:

In February this year, in a state of the nation address ...

Sesotho:

... e re e bitsang Sona kaofela ha rona - e na le lebitso la yona, ba re ke Sona.

English:

I outlined our plans for the year ahead to particularly give effect to the strategic priorities of the Government of National Unity, GNU,

Sesotho:

Re ile ra bontsha leano la rona hore na re batla ho etsa eng selemong sena.

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English:

I outlined how we are driving inclusive economic growth that creates more jobs, by expanding the productive capacity of our economy and attracting more investments. We are working to tackle poverty and address the high cost of living that is putting a strain on individuals and households, particularly the poor and vulnerable. We are building a capable, ethical and developmental state that is able to deliver basic services that are our citizens rights, and we are seeking and have been at work, to build a state that treats every South African with courtesy, respect and that is free from corruption and mismanagement.

We have also prioritised measures that we need to take matters as we do now, to address water crisis that is affecting many municipalities across the country. We have also decided that we will set up the water crisis committee that will co-ordinate the efforts of the departments and spheres of government. So, we are dealing with the immediate challenges in most affected municipalities, while changing the way that water infrastructure is funded and managed. All these, and one of the key priorities is to ensure that we repair the

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dysfunctional municipalities that are right across our country.

Setswana:

Fa re lebelela bo masepala ba bantsi ba naga e ya rona, re bona gore bontsi ba bone ga ba diri sentle ebile ga ba tlise ditirelo tse di tlhokafalang mo baaging. [Legofi.] Ba bangwe ba tlholega gore go nne le metsi mo mafelong a rona, motlakase o dula o wa, ditsela ga di a baakangwa sentle le badiri ba ba dirang mo go bomasepala, bontsi ba bone ba botswa gape ga ba dire ka maikaelelo a go dira sentle. Le fa go ntse jaalo, mo go bomasepala ba ba leng 257 mo Aforikaborwa, re ikemiseditse gore mo selemong se, le ka nako ya puso e ya rona, re ikemiseditse gore ...

English:

... we are going to focus on our municipalities and find ways of engendering reforms in our municipalities. Two weeks ago, we held a historic meeting of all the mayors of our municipalities in South Africa, for the first time, to discuss the challenges that are facing the municipalities. At that meeting, we dealt with one key issue that is facing our

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municipalities, where our people live, which is the problem of water, knowing very well that ...

Sesotho:

... Afrika Borwa ha ena metsi a mangata.

English:

In many of our places ...

Sesotho:

... ha hona metsi.

English:

We don't have big rivers like in other countries. I often say ...

Sesotho:

... mafatsheng a mang a tshwanang le DRC, e leng *Democratic Republic of Congo* ba na le *Congo River*.

English:

The Congo River is 40km wide.

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Sesotho:

O ka se qete leeto leo ka letsatsi ho latela bophara ba noka
eo. Metsi a teng a matha ...

English:

... continuously, day and night.

Sesotho:

Ha o ka ema kapa wa tsamaya ka sekepe, ha o sheba o le
mahareng, o ka bona eka ke lewatle.

English:

Those countries are well-endowed.

Setswana:

Rona re na le noka e telele e e simololang ko Lesotho go
fitlhelela Aforikaborwa e yotlhe, e bidiwa Orange River. Re na
le dinoka tse dingwe tse di gaufi le mola wa lewatle tse di
ntshang metsi go a isa kwa lewatleng.

English:

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SO, we are a water scarce country, and we even have a desert in the middle of our country, the Kalahari. So, water is a major challenge of our country, and that is why it is often said that we must use water sparingly because it is a challenge, and we are now having a crisis. In the past, the past or apartheid government didn't really care about whether people had water or not. They just took it for granted that people will get water from the streams, wells and those little rivers that run for few months in a year.

But now, the democratic government's duty is to make sure that all our people have clean, running water in their homes. That is our task as a democratic government, and to have water all over in the rural areas, cities, towns and all that. So, we have now taken on the water challenge. I have established the National Water Crisis Committee, NWCC, like I've established the National Energy Crisis Committee, NECOM, when we were dealing with load shedding. We were able to deal with load shedding and bring it to an end, by and large, although there is still electricity reduction, here and there, which we are going to solve. So, we took a view that through establishing the National Water Crisis Committee, NWCC, we will, in a way,

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be able to wrap our arms around water problem throughout the country and solve it.

So, what are we doing? We are focusing on water, and we are now ensuring that we build dams, and we must focus on reticulation. We work together with our local government, we are encouraged by enthusiastic and committed support of all mayors and all provinces, to address this critical problem. During the course of the week, our Ministers, MECs and mayors have been engaging with communities on the specific initiatives to be rolled out, aligned with these strategic priorities. What I wish to emphasise today, as we have done in a number of times in the past is that, local government is where our abilities and capabilities to achieve all our national priorities will be put to test.

Sesotho:

Batho ba rona ha ba sheba mmuso, ba qala pele ka dimasepala tsa bona. Ha masepala o sa sebetse hantle, ke ntho e nyahamisang haholo ho batho ba rona. Re tshwanetse hore re lokise dimasepala hobane dimasepala ...

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English:

... is the engine of development.

Sesotho:

Ke moo dintho di tshwanetseng hore di etshale teng. Ho lokiswe dimasepaleng hore re be le batho ba kgonang ho sebeletsa setjhaba. Re be le batho ba nang le tsebo e felletseng bakeng sa ho sebeletsa setjhaba. Re be le batho ba hlalefileng ba tla sebeletsa setjhaba. Re se ke ra ba le batho ba tlo sotla batho ba rona. [Mahofi.] Re se ke ra ba le mashodu a tlo utswa tjhelete dimasepaleng.

Setswana:

Ka jalo, masepala o botlhokwa tota gonne ke moo tiro e tshwanetseng go diriwa teng ka botlalo. Go tshwanetse gore go bonagale gore masepala o a dira.

Sesotho:

Dintho tsotlhe tseo batho ba di hlokanang di tshwanetse di etsahale. Ha ke bua le bo majoro ke tla dula ke ba jwetsa hore ba tshwanetse ba nke baahi ba masepala oo jwalo ka bareki ...

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English:

... regard them as the customers.

Sesotho:

Ke bareki ba ha hao. Ebile ka Senyeseman ba re ...

English:

... a customer is always right. [Applause.]

Sesotho:

Ke yona ntho e ba e buang. Ha re fa motho ditshebeletso, motho eo re mo fang ditshebeletso o a patala, mme ha ngata ho feta ha nnyane, o dula a nepile. Masepaleng ...

English:

... that is where national policies and provincial programmes are translated into action. At a national level, we set policies and we allocate the money to implement those policies. At the provincial level, they then ensure that the money is well-allocated and set out implementation plans. At the local level, that is where execution takes place.

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Sesotho:

Ke moo mosebetsi o qalang teng. Ho ya sebetsuwa moo boemong ba selehae.

English:

So, local level is therefore critical in ensuring that our people have water, sanitation, electricity, roads, clinics that work, community services and they encourage businesses to operate, and they also remove the red tape to allow businesses to operate in order to employ our people. The local government has a vital role in determining where companies choose to establish their offices, factories, shops and outlets. When a company chooses to move elsewhere because of poor service, jobs and livelihoods are lost, and the local economy suffers.

Setswana:

Ke gopola gore mo porofenseng eno ya rona, go na le kgwebo e re neng ya tswalwa, mme re ne ra ya go e bula gape ko porofenseng e ngwe.

English:

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The local government was not delivering good services to them.
I am told that 5000 people lost their jobs.

Sesotho:

Dintho tse jwalo di tshwanetse di fele mme ho se hlole ho ba
le batho ba tla lahlehelwa ke mesebetsi ka lebaka la masepala
o sa sebetse hantle. Dimasepala di tshwanetse di sebetse
hantle.

English:

When local government works; when municipalities are well-
managed and deliver on their mandates, cities, towns and
villages thrive. I've often said when I go to various
provinces, that I am able to see whether the local government
is working or not by noticing the cleanliness of the town.

Setswana:

Fa ke bona go le leswe, go na le dipampiri le dipolasitiki di
tletse naga yotlhe, go na le kgeleloleswe le metsi a a elelang
mo mmileng, ke mo ke bonang teng gore masepala wa lefelo leo
ga o dire. Jaanong seo se dira gore ke botse baeteledipele ba
masepala jaaka rratoropo le motsamaisa gore a bone ba ka dula

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mo ntlong e e nang le kgeleloleswe e e thubegileng? [Legofi.]
Ke a tle ke ba botse gape ke ba bolelelele gore fa e le ntlo ya
gagwe, a ka netefatsa gore fela fa go thubega peipi, e e tla
tlisang leswe mo ntlong, lo a itsi gore ke bua ka eng. Motho a
ka tsoga aya go batla motho o o ka mo thusang go baakanya
peipi e e thubegileng. Jaanong ke a tle ke ba botse gore ke ka
lebaka le feng go tshwanetse gore seo se letlelelwe mo
baaging? Go tshwanetse gore dilo tse di ntseng jalo di
baakanyetswe batho botlhe.

English:

So, it is important for us to fix local government. It is one
of the most important priorities of this administration. Even
as local government faces serious challenges today, it has one
of the most effective instruments of transformation. Since the
advent of democracy in 1994, the municipalities have helped to
expand access to water and electrification to communities that
have been deliberately excluded under apartheid, including in
the most rural regions of our country.

Setswana:

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Ka jaalo, fa re bona phoso mo bo masepaleng ba rona, se re tshwanetseng go se dira ke go gopola gore bo masepala ba gompiano ba ba ileng ba tlhaga morago ga 1994, ba fetotse tsela e re phelang ka yone. Bo masepala ba kgale ba nako ya kgatelelo, ba ne ba sa tlhokomele setšhaba. Fa ke goletseng teng ko Tshiawelo, ko Soweto, masepala o ne a sa tlhokomele setšhaba, mme gompiano bo masepala ba tlhokomela. Se re tshwanetseng go se dira jaanong ke gore re tlhabologe, re dire ka thata le go itsi gore ...

English:

... local government does support our people. For example ...

Sesotho:

... ke a utlwa le ya hana.

English:

... for example ...

Sesotho:

... le mameleng hantle.

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English:

... for example, in the democratic government, we have been able to spread the electricity. About 93 to 94% of our people today, have access to electricity. That is the success that has been achieved by the democratic government. Before that ...

Setswana:

... motlakase o ne o fitlhelela batho ba ba ko tlase ga 50%. Ka jaalo, fa masepala o dirisana le Eskom ...

English:

... had to make sure that ...

Setswana:

... go na le motlakase fa re dulang teng. A o a gana kgotsa ga o gane; o a dumela kgotsa ga o dumele, eo ken nete e e sa feleng. Ke nnete ruri. O reetse sentle gape. Mo nakong e ya kgololesego, puso e ya rona e agetse batho ba ba ka nnang dimilione di le nne matlo ... [Tsenoganong.] Ke a dumela gore di a wa, hakere ka nako dingwe matlo a tle a we. Ke kopa gore o reetse sentle. Puso ya rona e agetse batho matlo, ya be ya

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fana ka tsona mahala. Jaanong nna ke na le go etela mafelo a le mantsi.

English:

... and whenever I travel, I ask a lot of questions to my fellow heads of state. I ask them, "tell me, how do you house your people"? Then they say, no, "we do build them houses". Then I ask, "do you give them freely or do you make them pay"? Then they say, "for free, never! They must pay", and when I hear them saying that ...

Setswana:

... ke gopola mo gae mo.

English:

... and what our government has done over the years, building 4 million houses, and in latter days, we are paying R160 000 or R180 000 for a house. When I was in Cape Town, the MEC for Housing Cape Town said to me that they are going to hand out a house to one of the residents, an old lady who have never had a house in her life before. He said, "President, do you realise that we are giving this lady a free house, as much as

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she never had a house before, we are giving her an asset; an asset that today, he said, we built it for R160 000, but today, the value of that house is R400 000. So, it's R400 000 of an asset that the government of the Republic of South Africa has given free of charge to many of its people, 4 million of those houses. So, ...

Setswana:

... багаetsho ...

English:

... the challenges that we had in local government are many, however, there have been positives, and I am saying, let's look at the positives and see how we can improve the positives, and also see how we can encourage those who are in local government to do more and to do better. The local government has supported the delivery of millions of homes, as I was saying, and we have built a number of clinics. You may recall that prior to apartheid, we didn't have many clinics, but today, we have more clinics. Therefore, we must build more clinics, improve our roads and we must also work on our critical infrastructure.

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The Community Work Programmes, CWPs, that we have, has created pathways for work the livelihood support. In the past, we didn't have work programmes, but now we have them. Not everybody will be able to participate in those community programmes, but many are. What do they do? They give dignity to the South Africans who are unemployed. The local government will be a critical enabler of the most ambitious infrastructure build programme in our country's history. You will know that during Sona, we said that over the next three years, we are going to be investing R1 trillion to build energy, water, transportation, roads, logistics and other essentials in the infrastructure, including IT.

This massive programme will create jobs, support local businesses and supplier development, and will enhance black businesses within our communities, so that those black businesses owned by women, people with disabilities and young people, can thrive and become better businesses. We are on a concerted drive to attract investment into our economy, and these potential investors need to know that we are bringing their investment to places that have reliable basic services that are well-regulated and managed, and that they are safe

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and secure. As such, as the local government develops, it should not just support development, it must be the axis on which our entire economy runs.

As you've heard me often, I said, when the investors come, they don't go and invest at the Union Buildings; they invest at local government. So, local government must make sure that it creates that conducive environment where our councillors, mayors, officials like municipal managers create that environment for investments to come. We must encourage them; we must go and hunt for them to bring them to invest in our local areas. We are determined that local government must rise anew from the ground. The local government and our municipalities must be areas of vibrant activities where people trade, do business, buy and sell things, where roads are well-structured, where it's a goods environment, where there is sporting facilities in the area, and where our towns are clean.

It is also important, yes, to have towns that are clean. I've seen a number of them, as I travel around the world, and I know, it is possible. The municipalities must be able to

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fulfil their role of building inclusive communities, expanding an opportunity and upholding the dignity of all. To do so, it is not enough to merely paper over the cracks. Simply allocating more budgets on hiring more people, it's not enough. Important though as this may be, we have to fundamentally transform the way our local government works, and how it is structured. The structures that were developed in the past may not serve us so well anymore. We have to change how our local government co-ordinates with national and provincial governments. For proper planning, we have to relook at the accountability and consequence management, has been enforced in instances of nonperformance. I often say that the people who works for the people of South Africa must perform ...

Sesotho:

... ba tshwanetse ba etse mosebetsi wa bona.

English:

If you don't perform, then you must ship out. [Applause.]

Setswana:

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Fa o senya, gape o utswa letlole la puso ...

English:

... there must be consequence management.

Setswana:

Re ka se tlogele batho fela re ntse re itsi gore ...

Sesotho:

... ha ba sebetse. Ba tla mosebetsing ba tlo ja magwenya feela, ba behe maoto a bona ditafoleng. O mmone motho eo hore ha hona letho leo a le etsang letsheare kaofela. O bone hore motho o botswa ebile ha a kgone le ho etsa mosebetsi wa hae.

English:

Where you know that this person can't do the work, there must be consequence management; where you know that somebody is continuously doing the wrong things, and I remember one time ...

Sesotho:

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... re fihlile toropong engwe re batla majoro, re re majoro o kae? Ba re tjhe, majoro ha a yo. E ne e le hora ya leshome le metso e mmedi hara mpa ya motsheare, ba re o lapeng o ntse a robetse. Jwale, majoro ya jwalo o etsa eng ka yena? Ke batho ba sa sebitseng.

English:

Above all, we have to reclaim the constitutional spirit that is meant to guide all the affairs of local government, where citizens are consulted and actively participate in making decisions.

Setswana:

Go tshwanetse gore ...

English:

... when we effect our reforms ...

Sesotho:

... le nako e oho tlo etsuwa dithendara, e be ...

English:

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... an open process ...

Setswana:

... go itsewe gore ke bomang ba ba dirang ka dithendara. E se ka nna tiro ya gore go fiwe ditsala. [Legofi.]

Sesotho:

E se ke ya ba ntho ya hore ho tlo fuwa batho ba itseng, ba senang bokgoni ...

English:

... who can't even do the work. You know, as we travel around, for instance, in Human Settlements, Minister Semelane gave me a report ...

Setswana:

... e e bontshang ...

English:

... uncompleted projects.

Setswana:

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Go agiwa fela motheo wa kago, gape go agiwe ka ditena go
fitlhelela mo matlhabaphefong ...

English:

... then it is an end. The people disappear and the money disappears; that must come to an end. We cannot allow that to continue. So, in the end, I am saying, as we move forward now, we want a local government that is going to function extremely well, where we show commitment to serve the people of our country. A week ago, we released the Reviewed Draft White Paper on the Local Government. Now, the changes that are proposed on the Draft White Paper, will affect all the residents directly; they impact on the people's daily lives. I therefore urge all of us to be part of the consultation process that is now underway.

The first issue that we are addressing with the White Paper is governance arrangements. For decades, the district local split has led to duplication, extra costs and overlapping powers and functions. Where there have been failures, the municipalities have been able to blame each other. The aim now is to create a systems where roles, the responsibilities and lines of

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accountability are clearly set out. The second issue is to make intergovernmental co-ordination binding, in line with the Constitution. The different spheres of government will now be expected to work together to resolve problems at local level, instead of doing it in silos. The third issue, is to reform and tighten the municipal finance systems ...

Sesotho:

... hobane mathata a mangata ao re kopanang le ona ke moo ho sebet suwang ka tjhelete.

English:

... where the finances are. The municipalities will now be held to account on how they've spent the public money, particularly on maintaining essential infrastructure. The Draft White Paper also proposes an overhaul of the municipal billing system and revenue collection. The fourth issue is to bring local government into the digital age. We are going to be focussing on digitisation and strengthening data systems that are able to facilitate and monitor service delivery. Appointments to the municipal offices are going to be professionalised, and there will be tougher consequence

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management for corruption and maladministration. So, when we talk about professionalising local government ...

Setswana:

... ke gore ra re, go tshwanetse gore go thapiwe batho ba ba nang le kitso, e seng ba ba sa itsing sepe ebile ba sa utlwisisi se se diragalang. Go tshwanetse gore go thapiwe batho ba ba rutegileng. Gape ra re, baeteledipele ba se ka thapa ditsala tsa bone go tla go dira mo masepaleng.

English:

So, that is the professionalisation of our local government; and it is when we professionalise local government, that then we will be able to shield local government officials from political influence. The people of South Africa want to see councils fixing potholes, delivering water and not fighting over who gets this or another tender.

Sesotho:

Ka nako e nngwe ha batho ba lwanela dithendara, o fumana hore puso ya naha e ntshitse tjhelete.

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English:

In the end, the money is not spent, because ...

Setswana:

... go na le ntwaga e kgolo, ya go baka gore thendara e tla newa mang.

English:

Now, that must come to an end. [Applause.] There must be more transparency, so that we must make sure that opportunities are fairly distributed, not to people with political connections, but to people who have capabilities and who know how to do things, so that we can have a well-run government. We must declare the days of patronage and factional politics in local government over.

Sesotho:

Ho na le dihlopha-hlopha tsa batho bao ereng ha ba lwana ...

English:

... our people are the ones who suffer. Those days must come to an end. [Applause.] The days of those with political

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ambition, colluding with corrupt business people to loot the municipalities, are now over ...

Sesotho:

... ha re sa batla ntho eo.

English:

You know, when you go to some municipalities ...

Sesotho:

... re utlwa ho thwe ho na le bo rakgwebo bao e leng bona ba tshwereng masepala. Ke bona ba kgannang masepala.

English:

... and we hear that, when the equitable share comes ...

Sesotho:

... ke bona ba dutseng dibentjheng tsa lekgotla ba shebile hore na lekgotla le tlo kgetha/vouta jwang hobane ...

English:

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... they are interested in the money, not the services that are being delivered for our people. That must now come to an end. [Applause.] We can no longer allow the municipal infrastructure to be deliberately ruined, so that preferred private companies can take over critical functions like providing water.

Sesotho:

Ka nako e nngwe re utlwa ho thwe ho na le ba senyang dipeipe tsa metsi, ba seha dipeipi ...

English:

... so that, instead of reticulation happening normally, there is tinkering.

Sesotho:

Bona ba na le diteraka tse tlisang metsi.

English:

... trucking water must be the thing of the past. We want to have water properly reticulated to our people. [Applause.] Now, this is people's government, and our task is to make it

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work for the people; not for politicians; connected business people and vested interests. Those who want to run clean businesses, must be innovative; create your business; provide for service; make your business profitable, without trying to capture the state, and we will support you, because we want clean businesses to drive the economy of our country. We will encourage you to employ people, to get loans and to open up opportunities. Do not capture our municipalities! Leave our municipalities alone and run your businesses properly!

Now, communities, businesses, civil society organisations and traditional leaders are our partners in rebuilding local government. For too long, the municipalities have gotten away with the saying that they are committed to public participation because they place an ad in the newspaper, had a public hearing or they have a complains line. Meaningful public participation in local government, must be a structured partnership. We are going to be looking at different ways in which all of society can play a more important role, in shaping how our local government is administered. Our country has entered a new era of hope and promise.

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Our economy is recovering in spite of what is happening in the Middle East, that is sending jitters all over the world and threatening to lower the growth rate of many countries.

Investors are increasingly seeing South Africa as a favourable place in which do business, and we must focus on attracting them, doing everything we can to bring investors in. Go out and reach out to them; interest them in our local areas and our municipalities; showcase our municipalities and showcase the beauty and the opportunities. We cannot bring them into a very dirty town in our municipalities. They will not come; they will just walk away. The investors want certainty, a well-run municipal area and they want a well-run government.

Over the past few years, we have faced many moments where our resolve has been solely tested, including a global pandemic and energy crisis, but working together, we have been able to weather those storms, and we emerged stronger. Just as we have seen in recent days, where the South Africans were opening their hearts to the victims of the floods. We are a resilient people, capable of overcoming even what may seem to be insurmountable. That is why I have no doubt that we will fix local government, so that it can assume its rightful role and

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place, as the beating heart of our democracy, where lives are improved and transformed. It must happen at local government level.

As the National Council of Provinces; as the National Assembly; as the provincial, local government and our legislatures, right across the entire apparatus of the state, let us ensure that Taking Parliament to the People, TPTTP, doesn't end here. We must take our people's concerns back to our offices, our legislatures, our councils, but more importantly, we must act on them. Now, when the next session of Taking Parliament to the People, TPTTP, comes around, we must be able show what we have done. [Applause.] This is about restoring confidence and trust in our government and our democracy; a government based on the will of our people, is a promise of our democracy, Constitution and all the South Africans must be determined to honour it, now and into the future.

This is the time for all of us as South Africans to work together, to correct what is not working well, and it is at local government where we must start and make sure that local

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government works for our people, and in the end, that all of us must feel proud about towns we live in as residents. Thank you, Chairperson of the NCOP. [Applause.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Order, hon members, please do take your seats. Thank you very much, hon President for a well-articulative response to our communities, that sought to restore trust and confidence in their government. Indeed, action needs to be taken, and it's eminent. Thank you very much for that. Before I proceed to the next speaker, may I take this opportunity and acknowledge the presence of the Deputy Minister of State Security, hon Kenny Morolong. You are welcome.

Setswana:

SEMESEGOLO SA NCOP (Rre K M Mmoeimang): Ke go tlotlile Modulasetilo wa Ntlo ya Bosetšhaba ya kgaolo ya Diporofense. Ke tlotle le boeteledipele jwa ...

English:

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Can you hang on, hon Chief Whip? Hon members of the community, can you kindly take your seats?

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If you want to take a comfort break, please do that swiftly without making noise because you are disrupting the proceedings.

Setswana:

Ka kopo tlhe. Re a le kopa bagaetsho. A re tsweng ka situ.

English:

Thank you very much. You may proceed, hon Chief Whip.

Setswana:

SEMESEGOLO SA NCOP (Rre K M Mmoeimang): Ke a leboga Modulasetilo. Ke tseye tlotlo yaka e tona ke e lebise go Moporesidente wa naga ya rona Rre Ramaphosa, ke tlotle gape le Tonakgolo ya Bokone Bophirima, rre Mokgosi le Ditonakgolo tsa diporofense tsa rona tse di leng gone fa, babusakgotla ba rona ba diporofense ba ba leng gone, Dimedigolo tse di leng teng le maloko a Ntlo ya Bosetšhaba ya kgaoalo ya Diporofense ba ba leng teng, le matona le baeng botlhe ba ba leng teng mo Ntlong e go ya ka ditiro tsa bona tse di farologaneng.

English:

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House Chairperson, the 2026 National Council of Provinces
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Setswana:

... mo porofenseng e ya rona ya Bokone Bophirima, ...

English:

... takes place at a time, ...

Setswana:

... jaaka Moporesidente a setse a tlhalositse, go keteta, ...

English:

... the 30-year anniversary of our Constitution which was adopted on that historic day, 8 May 1996 by the Constitutional Assembly, which was chaired by President Ramaphosa, then as the chair of the Constitutional Assembly. Again, this debate coincides as we move towards the 26 years of celebrating our democratic local government which was formed on the 5 December 2000, thus committing our government to ensure that we make our system of local government more developmental. Our Constitution, ...

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Setswana:

Jaaka Moporesidente a setse a tlhalositse, ...

English:

... is celebrated internationally as amongst the best in the world. It gave birth to this House, the National Council of Provinces, as a Chamber of South Africa's democratic Parliament ...

Setswana:

... e e emelang dikgatlego tsa diporofense mo seralong sa ...

English:

... the national sphere of government. This makes a compelling case for this debate of the 2026 National Council of Provinces parliamentary work to celebrate and critically reflect on the role and position that the National Council of Provinces has played. The President will remember that the ANC's submission to the Constitutional Assembly Theme Committee on Governance made a reflection on the National Council of Provinces institutional mechanism within the national legislature that should serve to integrate the system

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of provincial and local government in the national policy architecture.

Hon Chair, this finds concrete expression in Section 139 and Section 67 of the Constitution, respectively, which empowers the National Council of Provinces to approve and monitor provisional intervention in local government administrations. More than that, it also makes space for the presentation of not more than 10 representatives designated by the organised local government in the proceeding of the National Council of Provinces.

As the former President Mbeki contends, what distinguishes the National Council of Provinces from the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures is its location at the intersection of the three spheres of our system of democratic governance. The special powers assigned by the Constitution to the National Council of Provinces to mediate and arbitrate the intervention of provincial government in the local government is quite pronounced. We can be a reflection on the good work that the National Council of Provinces did when we were faced

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with the intervention in the Knysna municipality by the provincial government.

As the 53rd ANC National Conference resolved, the more we strengthen integrated co-operative governance, the more we build a democratic developmental state. The National Council of Provinces is the only legislative Chamber in our constitutional dispensation that is located at the cutting edge of the integrated co-operative governance. In pursuance of this mandate, the National Council of Providence has designed and adopted a programme ...

Setswana:

... e Moporesidente a buileng ka yone ya go tsaya Palamente re e isa kwa bathong. Jaaka Moporesidente a tlhalositse, ...

English:

... the product of this week's Taking Parliament to the People will find the expression in the work of the National Council of Provinces select committees so that we are able to make a follow up on the issues that were raised by our

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members. We need to elevate those issues to the annual performance plans, APPs, of the departments.

We stand here today – not in an ordinary debate of the House – but the special of its kind.

Setswana:

E kgethegile ka gone ...

English:

... our report reflects on the observations ...

Setswana:

... tse e eleng gore re kgonne go bo dira

English:

... on the submissions ...

Setswana:

... tse di dirilweng ke batho ba rona mo bekeng e. Ba tlhagisa maitemogelo [experiences] a bone ka matshelo a ba iphitlhelang ba le kamo tlase ga one

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English:

This is special because, as representative of the people, we are debating this report about our people after listening to their voices and in their presence across age, race and also across gender and class. This is indeed a truly activist, responsive people's Parliament in action.

Mr President, on the ANC, we present and debate this report with a firm belief that for the majority of our people in Kenneth Kaunda, the 30th anniversary of our Constitution is the story of hope as it will present the collective heritage of resilience and a victory nation against adversity as demonstrated by collective commitment and loyalty to the Constitution with its transformation, vision and agenda to heal the historical injustices of the past which inspires hope.

On the other hand, there are challenges that we were able to observe and also reflect on as we embark on our oversight visit. We in the ANC enter this debate inspired by one of our own, the revolutionary legend of our anti colonial struggle,

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the late President of the ANC, Rre Reginald Oliver Tambo who once said:

Let's tell the truth to ourselves, even if the truth coincides with what the enemy is saying. Let us tell the truth.

The ANC that you lead, President, with honour and dignity as a selfless servant of the people is second to none in pursuit of the truth as a visionary virtue propagated by the late Oliver Reginald Tambo even under the most difficult circumstances.

Mr President, I stay here confident that the story of the outstanding achievements of the South African government under the leadership of the ANC over the last 30 years will go down in the annals of history as unparalleled among the former colonised developing nations of the world for many generations to come. The building of an inclusive, centred, transparent and accountable democratic local government is among critical achievements of the ANC-led government over the last three decades.

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Setswana:

Jaaka o tlhalositse Moporesidente, ...

English:

... we have broadened the provision of basic services ...

Setswana:

... di tshwana le motlakase, metsi le go naya batho ...

English:

... sanitation facilities.

Setswana:

Ba e leng gore mo malobeng ba ne ba sena dilo tse.

English:

The ANC has never shied away from taking responsibilities for unintended consequences of some of its policy choices, including apologising to our people of South Africa for such choices. As the people's movement, with accumulated experience of 30 years of governance unparalleled empathy superior vision to lead National Democratic Transformation, the ANC has

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embarked on fundamental policy reforms to fix local government, as the President has indicated.

Setswana:

Jaaka a tlhalositse ...

English:

... the review of the 1998 White Paper, ...

Setswana:

... Moporesidente o e tlhalositse sentle. Selo se re tshwanetseng re se tlhaloganye ke gore re batla go bona, jaaka Moporesidente a tlhalositse, re nale pusoselegae [local government] e e leng gore ...

English:

... its professionalised.

Setswana:

Ga ese fela go fitlhelela mo pusoselegaeng [local government].

English:

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The President has ascended to turn the Bill in to an Act of Public Administration Management Act, Pama, and also the amendment to the Public Service Act. So the same attributes that are the cornerstone of the amendment to the Municipal Systems Act are the ones that are in the Public Service Act and the Public Service Administration.

According to official reports, among the causes of the delays in certain areas that we have visited was the issue of disjointed planning. In certain areas you will find that there are interventions that are made. An example of that is Matlosana N12. But at the same time, ...

Setswana:

... ga re batle go bua fela ka Matlosana N12, re batla go bua gape ka Khuma hostel e e leng gore baagi ba teng bana le dingwaga di le 10 ba le moo ba letetse gore ba tle go nna le tulo e e maleba. Se sengwe gape se re batlang go se tlhagisa se se batlang tlhokomelo e e masisi [serious attention] ke ko Mphe Motho. Ba e bitsa "Dark City". Ke one mafelo a e leng gore ...

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English:

... upon our observation, it's a clarion call to us to ensure that the municipalities plans are able to ensure that they speak to the urgency that our people are facing.

Mr President, we can assure you that the National Council of Provinces has continued to discharge this critical function of forging integrated co-operative governance. Therefore, the platform that we had with the provincial government and also what the Minister set a critical stage for us to ensure that areas that were raised by our communities need address.

It's important that as the National Council of Provinces, we are able to continue with our work of generating evidence-based reports that flight potential and real challenges in terms of policy design and implementation which it hands over to the national executives through our intention with them at the select committee.

Mr President, I am sure that you will agree with us that critical policy issues that require robust and honest policy

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conversation is the issue of funding model of the local government in light of the changing social economic landscape.

Setswana:

Jaaka o tlhalositse, diphetogo tse e leng gore di a go tlisiwa ke ...

English:

... the revision of 1998 White Paper ...

Setswana:

... di tla kgona go rarabolola [address] mathata a tshwana le a.

English:

At the same time, we are also mindful of the fact that National Treasury and the Financial Fiscal Commission are also seized with reviewing the interventions that are necessary to ensure that the issue of sustainability, vulnerability of our municipalities becomes a reality.

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Mr President, you have highlighted the issues around the state of local government. I will not go into that, but I think what is quite critical is the commitment that the government is making in terms of fixing local government.

Mr President, we have heard the cries of our people over the last three days about their state of public infrastructure due to lack of maintenance. At the same time, we are also mindful of the fact that the municipalities, in our interaction with them, raised issues of plans that they have to address the issues around maintenance, the issues around the deteriorating state of service delivery marked by persistent water and electricity outages, as you have already pointed out, Mr President.

Mr President, our people want a permanent end to the challenges around clean governance and the issues around transparency and accountability and also a permanent solution to fix local government so that we are able to restore it as a sphere of government that is at the coalface of service delivery. You will agree that the challenges also raised is the issue of violent criminality, particularly from the zama-

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zamas. So it's an area that would need special attention also from the Minister of Police.

Mr President, the North West and Northern Cape province, as you have already pointed out, over the recent weeks were ravaged by the devastating floods that have destroyed social infrastructure. And we appreciate the fact that Minister Hlabisa, through your leadership Mr President, has declared those areas as disasters. Therefore, on behalf of the ANC, we want to appreciate the leadership role that was displayed by the province, by local government and also the Cabinet Ministers and also the Deputy Ministers that were with us to make sure that our work this week becomes a success. Thank you, hon Chairperson. [Applause.]

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Hon Chairperson, hon President, hon members, fellow South Africans, good day, dumelang. Cry, my beloved North West, cry. Cry for the people of J.B. Marks. Cry for Matlosana and the entire Kenneth Kaunda District.

Mr President, section 152 of the Constitution makes it clear that local government exists to encourage the involvement of

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communities and community organisations in matters of local government. Local government was never meant to be distant, arrogant or disconnected from the people. It was meant to be people centred. It was meant to place communities first. Yet, across the North West province, communities are asking a painful question: Where is the government when residents are suffering?

As a resident of North West for more than 50 years, I can say without hesitation that what we are witnessing is not merely municipal dysfunction, it is a slow collapse, and sometimes not so slow, of dignity itself.

Mr President, I have seen communities forced to live in sewerage spills, collapsing roads, unsafe infrastructure, power failures and water shortages, or no water at all.

In municipalities such as Matlosana, Jouberton to be more specific, and many other areas, residents navigate roads that resemble moon craters rather than streets. Families wake up to sewerage flowing into their areas and their yards, in their houses. Businesses struggle to survive amid failing

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infrastructure and rolling power outages, leading directly to job losses. [Applause.]

As crime escalates, convictions remain a pipe dream filled with sewer, all while basic municipal functions collapse. We must ask the difficult but necessary question. If this and these municipalities were businesses, who of you would invest in them? What successful institution survives without accountability, maintenance plans, consequence management, financial discipline or competent leadership? No business can survive. [Applause.]

Yet, ANC-run municipalities continue year after year with failed audits, endless excuses, blame shifting and collapsing service delivery while residents pay the price. [Applause.] The reality is, vulnerable residents are being failed daily by municipalities. If a resident does not breakdown, like during the past week, with a heart-wrenching plea of a service delivery collapse, nothing gets done.

Oversight visits by the NCOP, and such as Taking Parliament To The People, which costs a lot, should be to strengthen

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accountability. But too often, they have become opportunities for what I call the best fly halves in the country, because the blame shifting and sidestepping are Olympic level performances. Even worse, is the Pinocchio syndrome. You know Pinocchio? His nose starts growing when he lies? Because the lies, the promises, the endless announcements of timelines and interventions, commitments are repeated, yet communities return home to broken service delivery. [Applause.]

It is important that we realise that in North West ... across the North West, the Auditor-General, AG, exposed irregular expenditure, poor finance controls and infrastructure failures. This is not just an administrative failure, it's a betrayal of constitutional obligations. [Applause.]

Unfortunately, Mr President, the reality is that residents in North West are trapped in the perfect ANC storm of collapse. Failing infrastructure, rampant crime, sewer spills, power outages, water insecurity and financial mismanagement, all feeding into one another, while our communities lose hope.

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As Joseph Story warned, and I'm loosely refraining this, a feeble execution of our plans is but another phrase for a bad execution and the government ill-executed. Whatever the plan and promises may be, must in practice be a bad government. I thank you. [Applause.]

Mr Z WILLIAMS (Eastern Cape): Hon Chairperson of our National Council of Provinces, His Excellency the President of the Republic, hon Premiers of various provinces, Speakers and Deputy Speakers, Deputy Ministers, MECs, the president of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, executive mayors, traditional leaders, hon delegates, Members of the House and the people of Bokone Bophirima.

Hon Chairperson, this debate, as led by His Excellency the President, reminds me of our shameful past, which was steeped in separate development and where the black majority was governed by a government that was not based on the will of the people. The illegitimacy of the apartheid system and its intended infrastructure distortions and spatial segregation are a stark reality that the ANC-led democratic government has

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to unbundle today due to systemic ostracization and lack of participation of the masses of our people during that time.

These demonic race-based policies have contributed to the difficulties we face today in extending services to areas where previously there were no such services. Economic deprivation was also the cornerstone of the apartheid local government system, as townships were deliberately established very far from affluent "white-owned only" areas. Therefore, people's participation could not be imagined in that system.

It was only through the democratic government where our people, for the first time, were allowed participation in the affairs of their municipalities. The 1998 White Paper on Local Government presented a clean break in conceptualising a local government system that was developmental in character, emphasising working together with the people to allow them to participate in their own development. This was a blueprint towards the development of both the Municipal Systems and Municipal Structures Act and later, the Municipal Finance Management Act. These legislations presented, for the first

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time, the concept of public participation and people's budgets. Any deviation from these evinces non-compliance.

The deliberate race-based system distortions in terms of spatial segregation, economic deprivation and huge infrastructure backlogs, especially in rural areas, are used as a weapon, today, against the democratic government to represent failure of our performance. But someone took a decision to come up with a system of apartheid racism that distorted the future of this country. It is under these difficult conditions that the democratic government has delivered basic services to the communities, regardless of the difficulties we're confronted with.

In what Statistics SA described as a decade of progress and service delivery, our government has provided communities across South Africa with access to clean drinking water at 88,7%, sanitation at 80,5%, refuse removal at 67,1%, whilst electricity is at a massive 94,3%. Our provincial perspective, hon Chairperson, in terms of access to basic services indicates that both Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela municipalities have above 97% access to drinking water,

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including Sarah Baartman District. This reflects a mere 10% of communities that are located in those areas that still have demand for water.

Chris Hani District has access to 87%, Joe Gqabi 80%, and backlogs remain a binding constraint towards progress in these two districts. The Amathole District with 71%, Alfred Nzo 61% and OR Tambo District 54% reflect historical backlogs and lack of access to bulk services in these district areas. Access to electricity is at 90%, with a provincial average of 95%, and only about 7-10% of people still have a need for electricity. In areas like Sarah Baartman District and Nelson Mandela District, our performance in terms of refuse removal has shown an unacceptable 80% performance; we would want to perform better in those two areas. These statistics describe that, albeit that we have encountered deliberate and man-made deprivations of services by other human beings, we've worked hard to bring services to those disadvantaged communities.

In an effort to accelerate infrastructure development for all our municipalities, we've developed what we call the Risk-Adjusted Strategy for the Eastern Cape municipalities. This

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strategy aims to manage the whole value chain of project initiation, project feasibility, approval, procurement and project management. It is through the implementation of this strategy that we have avoided returning much-needed infrastructure funding in the past three financial years back to the national fiscus.

The only municipality that struggles to achieve our goals is the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality due to political instability that has impacted negatively on the performance and administrative stability of this municipality. We are, however, busy with Cogta and with deployment of 11 officials to support that municipality. These efforts are based on our commitment to ensure that coalition instability does not affect the people of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

The introduction of the ward committee system in local government since the early 2000s was a stepping stone towards a people-centred local government, where members of the public are allowed to participate in governing themselves, working together with ward councillors. The development of five-year integrated development plans, IDP, and budgets to give effect

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to such plans are inexorably linked with the democratic government's philosophy of participatory democracy, where our people and communities work together with the municipalities to define their own destination.

These mechanisms are such that no IDP or budget can be approved by any municipality without proof that communities have participated in those processes. These are legislated processes that ensure that a people-centred and consultative local government system that is primed to deliver to our people is achieved.

We have, again, as the provincial government, introduced a booklet with a package of Standard Operating Procedures that explains step-by-step how infrastructure must be maintained and what performance standards are expected from municipalities of the Eastern Cape. This booklet is called the Municipal Non-Negotiables Booklet and this tagging, hon Chair, emphasises that we expect no explanations as to why towns and cities are not cleaned, why potholes are not patched, why there are sewer spillages, why beautification of our towns is not happening, why informal settlements are not properly

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planned, why electricity networks are not upgraded and a myriad of other municipal functions that must be performed.

We want to enforce that municipal officials should understand the business of running our municipalities. This strategy pushes them out of their offices so that they can understand the lived realities of our people. You can't manage what you do not understand ... [Applause.]. Service delivery agreements are to be signed with all mayors and executive mayors as a commitment to deliver services in our province.

In the same vein, we appreciate the President's initiative of Operation Vulindlela which is a catalyst for municipal infrastructure development, as our infrastructure in municipalities is dilapidated and unable to absorb the pressure of growing communities, resulting in exorbitant maintenance costs.

A people-centred local government is an institution that is primed to deliver to communities. It's an institution that communicates effectively with the people when delivery challenges are confronted. It is a people-centred local

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government when it is well governed with good audit outcomes which can account for financial management and resources at the disposal of the municipality. It is an institution that has the best interests of communities at heart and that can bring about trust to the people. This is the minimum we would want to achieve, so that we can fulfil the dream of a better life for all.

As I step down and conclude, let me congratulate the people's movement for winning Ward 20 in Matlosana ... [Applause.]. This indicates that our people still believe in the ANC as an agent for change. Thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Ms N SIFUBA (Free State): Hon Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, NCOP, hon Chairperson of the NCOP, His Excellency the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, hon permanent and special delegates of the NCOP, premiers present here, members of the executive council, Deputy Ministers, councillors, mayors distinguished guests ...

Sesotho:

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... bomme le bontate, setjhaba sa Bokone Bophirima, setjhaba sa Afrika Borwa ka kakaretso, ...

English:

It is with greatest humility that I rise to deliver the statement on behalf of our Premier Mme Maquoen Letsoha-Mathae who could not be here because of other pressing matters that she had to attend to.

Hon Deputy Chairperson, guided by the clarion call towards and I open quote:

Ensuring a people-centred local government towards building better communities.

As articulated by the hon President during his address to this august House. It is our considered view that we need to be reminded of some undeniable basic truths. In doing so, let us conduct a bit of a quick historical reflection.

In his meeting with Cher Geuvara in Yugoslavia in 1959, Tito as the then leader of Yugoslavia shared the following advice

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to Cher Guevara who was a representative of a very young people's revolutionary government of Cuba and I quote:

You will still have lot of trouble in your fight, but, once you have overthrown the old regime, difficulties should not discourage you. It is harder to maintain power, but you will succeed if you persist. Of course, it is important that you do not make a big mistake now, and that you go on gradually, step by step, taking into account the international situation, internal possibilities and the balance of power. Some things you will need to keep for better times. You need to stabilise now.

Echoing the same sentiments for own self-liberations heritage icon, President Oliver Reginald Tambo also forewarned us as follows and I quote:

Comrades, you might think that it is very difficult to wage a liberation struggle, wait until you are in power. I might be dead by then. At that stage, you will realise that it is actually difficult to keep the power than to wage a liberation war.

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Hon Deputy Chairperson, as we reflect on the challenges that confront us, particularly at local government level, we therefore need to not wallow in self-pity and sorrow we need to come to terms with reality as warned by the independent fighters that transformation is not a mere walk in the park. You have to keep walking, you have to keep fighting and you have to keep struggling, because transformation is not a once off, it is a journey. Until we have reached what our own people promised. The journey is not over.

The above invocation of the stalwarts of the struggles for independence is cogent at this time when we celebrate 32 years of our democratic dispensation as well as the 30 years anniversary of our Constitution the journey, we have travelled and the path that we continue to traverse to the future indeed continues to be characterised enormous head winds. However, to be oblivious to the reality that much has changed and that a lot continue to be done to change the life conditions of our citizens would be to suffer from what Frantz Fanon characterised as cognitive dissonance.

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Hon Deputy Chairperson, as the Free State, a microcosm of South African society with its own peculiarities, we are alive to an honest about these challenges that continue to confront us particularly at local government level. These challenges can broadly be outlined as follows in what framed as solutions-seeking pedagogy.

Firstly, we need to address financial management capacity and capability in our municipalities. Necessary financial management skills have to be attracted particularly to some of the peripheral and rural localities.

Secondly, the consciousness around interconnectedness between governance and service delivery has to be inculcated to intensify municipal good governance and administration must be the bedrock upon which service delivery imperatives are constructed.

Our municipal administrators have to be alive to this interconnectedness.

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Thirdly, prioritisation of service delivery as a constitutional right of citizens not by a way of exercise but must be seen as a mitigation against discontent and potential trigger for a revolt against the constitutional democratic state.

Hon Deputy Chairperson, while indeed there is a plethora of challenges that we are confronted with as outlined above, we will not suffer from cognitive dissonance by being oblivious to the concrete progress we have made in coming to terms with the challenges as we have outlined them above. We do so in order to simultaneously determine solutions to those challenges in the problem-solving orientation.

We therefore are proud to report the following milestones that we have recorded in our province as part of continuous quest to obliterate the historical legacy of about four centuries of colonial apartheid rule that we seem to be encouraged to forget about.

We are pleased to report that we have since implemented all the recommendations of the Joint Oversight Committee since its

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visit to our province in July 2024. This includes imperatives of submission of annual financial statements of all the municipalities except two who could not meet the 31st August deadline of submission of annual financial statements. Section 139 interventions have been instituted in municipalities among other imperatives to address these challenges. Section 106 investigations were carried out in one municipality and disciplinary proceedings instituted to ensure consequence management. Where we instituted section 154 interventions, such as Kopanong Local Municipality, the municipality has continued to improve its key performance and the number of paragraphs on material irregularities has decreased considerably since section 154.

Hon Deputy Chairperson, audit readiness and performance has been prioritised through the appointment of three financial experts and working with sessions were conducted with municipalities in February and March 2026 to bring these municipalities up to scratch with audit and governance requirements. We are building on positive audit performance we have experienced in other municipalities. Dihlabeng Local

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Municipality improved from a qualified to an unqualified audit opinion.

District municipalities in the Free State including local municipality Tswelopele Local Municipality, Setsoto Local Municipality and Phumelela Local Municipality, have received unqualified audit opinions. We are now challenged to move them to clean audits.

With regards to Recovery Plans and Municipal Performance Turnaround Strategies we introduced some municipalities that include Machabeng Local Municipality which is one of the key municipality the provincial government together with National Treasury has finalised its recovery plan.

Hon Deputy Chairperson, as I conclude the challenges of the moment should not overwhelm us and make us not to see the tree from the forest and the forest from the tree. We must demystify the myth that it is all doom and gloom. The positive lessons from the milestone we have made in the Free State must serve as a beacon of hope that more can be achieved and indeed

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more will be achieved if we all work together in unison and in conflict. I thank you, hon Deputy Chairperson. [Applause.]

Mr P A LESUFI (Gauteng): Hon Deputy Chair, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the Chair of the NCOP, our hon President, premiers and MECs present, the leadership of South African Local Government Association, SALGA, represented here by their president, executive mayors, traditional and religious leaders present, NCOP delegates and hon members.

On behalf of the Gauteng province, I thank you most sincerely for the opportunity to participate in this debate. Our approach, unfortunately, today is to thank our hon President and appreciate him for the decisive interventions that he has made in our province in Gauteng. Hon President, we asked you that illegal miners were creating havoc in our communities. We pleaded with you to send soldiers in our province. We come back to you, President, to thank you heartily. The soldiers have resolved our problem of illegal miners. [Applause.]

Now order has been restored, hon President, and we want to make it clear that we are not against emerging miners, but we

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can't allow miners who misbehave and kill our people, and we don't even know where they come from in our province. So, President, we plead with you, let's soldier on with the soldiers that we have. There must be no inch of illegal minors being tolerated in our province because this country belongs to us and we'll never donate it to any other person who we don't know where they come from. [Applause.]

Hon President, we once more come to you to thank you. We asked you to establish a water crisis committee to tackle the challenges of water in our province. We are proud to report back to you, through the Deputy President and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, that last month we opened a 26 million litres Brixton water tower that has now finally resolved the water challenges that we had in the middle of Johannesburg. For that, we are grateful for your intervention, and we are also grateful for the presence of the Ministers that you have deployed in our province.

However, we want to urge you to enter the serious debate of undocumented foreigners in our country. [Applause.] Our cities have seen unprecedented marches of citizens raising concerns

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about undocumented immigrants. Ours is to state this clearly that we refuse to be against all foreign citizens, but we agree that undocumented foreigners who entered our country illegally must leave our country peacefully. [Applause.]

Once more, we want to make it clear we are not against foreigners, but we can't tolerate people we don't know how they came in our country, what they need in our country, what they are doing in our country, and where they stay in our country. [Applause.]

So, we urge you to enter the debate and allow us to ensure the new immigration laws and the Immigration Bill, that is currently in public participation mode, is utilised as the final document to resolve this matter once and for all. Those that have given foreigners up until 30 June to leave our country ... [Interjections.] [Applause.] ... we want to emphasise the point that this must be done orderly and through the processes of the law in our country.

President, let me take this opportunity to thank you for intervening with the Minister of Social Development. We want

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to urge you not to stop there. There is a certain Minister that the country assigned a task to develop an AI policy. He used AI to develop a policy of the country. [Applause.] ... Then they have the audacity to come here. There is a member representing the DA who came here to say, cry the beloved Matlosana. She forgot to say, cry the beloved country where policies develop through artificial intelligence. [Applause.]

However, we want to go further than that. The same Minister that is developing an artificial intelligence policy of our country through AI, wants to sell the security of our country by trying to scrap the Black Economic Empowerment, BEE, so that their friends in America can come and invest there. We say no, President ... [Applause.] ... Our country is not for sale, and the policies of this country will be defended at all costs, whatever it takes.

So, don't stop there, President. There is another Minister in the Basic Education sector who thinks that we can allow a company that was established three days to get a tender to print books for our children. You must not allow that, President. We have to be firm against any form of corruption.

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These are the same people who were saying this government is corrupt. They come to government, and instead of assisting us to fight corruption, they do corruption themselves.

[Applause.]

We will not allow that, and they must know that we have a President that is decisive, we have a President that can intervene, and we have a President that can fire them if they misbehave.

I want to take this opportunity and wish Bafana Bafana well as they go to the World Cup. We say to Bafana Bafana,

IsiXhosa:

... ndizani Bafana Bafana.

English:

Bring that World Cup back home where it belongs. Thank you so much for your attention. [Applause.]

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you very much. Thank you, hon members. Can you please return to your seats and be silent.

I would like to remind the members of the public that are here that when you applaud during the person's time for speaking, you are actually taking away that hon member's time to be heard. Although you appreciate what the member is saying, do not applaud so loudly that you are taking away that hon member's time.

The next hon member to participate in the debate is the hon premier from KwaZulu-Natal, the hon T Ntuli, who has 10 minutes.

The PREMIER OF KWAZULU-NATAL (Mr T Ntuli): Deputy Chair of the NCOP, His Excellency the President of the Republic, hon Ramaphosa, Chairperson of the NCOP, fellow premiers, hon members, representatives from the SA Local Government Association, Salga, and fellow South Africans, this debate takes place at a defining moment in our democratic journey, as South Africa enters the 2026 local government election year.

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This is significant because local government remains the sphere of the government closest to the lived reality of our people.

Local government elections, therefore, are far more than a constitutional event. They are a democratic accountability mechanism through which citizens assess leadership, demand better governance, and shape the future of their communities. That is why today's theme - *Ensuring a People-centred Local Government Towards Building Better Communities*, is both timely and urgent. A people-centred municipality is not defined by compliance reports, but by whether citizens feel heard, respected, and served with dignity. In KwaZulu-Natal, we understand clearly that local government is where the legitimacy of the democratic state is tested directly. For this reason, the Seventh Administration deliberately shifted away from a narrow compliance-driven model towards one centred on performance, accountability, institutional resilience, and measurable developmental outcomes. Twenty-two months into office, we can say, with humility and realism, progress is being made.

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The number of distressed municipalities in our province has declined from seven to two. Stable municipalities have increased to 21. No municipality is under section 139 intervention compared to four a year ago. Thirty-seven municipalities achieved between 75% and 100% of their service delivery and budget implementation targets. Audit outcomes have improved significantly, with no municipality receiving a disclaimer audit opinion.

These are important indicators of progress, but stability is not transformation. Thirty-one municipalities remain at risk, service delivery remains uneven, and public frustration remains real. Citizens judge the government not by audit reports, but by lived experiences. That is why our reform agenda must be measured not only by governance indicators, but by citizen satisfaction. Our progress has been driven by a differentiated intervention model. Municipalities face different risks, therefore, require different forms of support. Through section 154 of the Constitution, we have strengthened support where capacity can be rebuilt and intervened decisively where governance failure requires strong action. We have also seen the Presidential eThekweni Working

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Group enhancing stakeholders' collaboration. And indeed, in eThekweni, there are still challenges, but we have seen significant progress in terms of addressing issues in that metro in our province.

And we thank His Excellency the President, for the vision to establish such a strategic partnership to solve the problems in local government. We have also restored executive accountability. We have treated municipal performance not as an administrative issue, but as a strategic governance priority. Together with the executive council, we have instituted structured oversight performance platforms where municipalities account for governance failures, audit outcomes, and recovery plans.

Just on Wednesday, 13 May, we have engaged 10 municipalities that are the major contributors to the unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure, with an intention to find areas of support. We also understand that a truly people-centred local government must also be participatory. That is why we have strengthened ward committees, war rooms, revitalised Operation Sukuma Sakhe, and

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deployed municipal rapid response teams. Thirty-eight municipalities now have highly functional ward committees. Forty-five municipalities have operational rapid response teams. We have also deepened the integration of traditional leadership into governance. Approximately 98% of municipalities now have chiefs participating in executive structures. In KwaZulu-Natal, this is not symbolic. It is strategic governance rooted in community legitimacy, especially in rural development. However, we must be candid. Financial sustainability remains a major challenge.

Weak revenue collection undermines service delivery. Debt owed to Eskom and water boards continues to strain municipal finances. Water and sanitation infrastructure remains under severe pressure in many municipalities. Capacity shortages, governance instability, and administrative weaknesses persist, but we are responding decisively to all the challenges. We have strengthened financial oversight, introduced mandatory pre-audits and reviews, expanded anti-corruption interventions, including ethical leadership codes and lifestyle audits, and we are personalising municipal administration to ensure capable ethical leadership.

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The future of local government cannot be built by the government alone. It requires co-ordinated partnership, innovation, and long-term reform. Through the District Development Model, we are strengthening alignment across all spheres of the government. Through partnerships with the National Treasury, Eskom, and water boards, we are addressing structural constraints. Through digital monitoring systems and integrated complaints platforms, we are modernising accountability. And through our Secondary Cities Programme, we are repositioning towns as economic growth centres to decentralise development and unlock inclusive growth.

In conclusion, the experience of KwaZulu-Natal confirms that the renewal of local government is not simply an administrative task. It is a democratic imperative. The true test of people-centred local government is where municipalities are experienced by citizens as institutions of hope, delivery, accountability, and development. A people-centred municipality listens before communities' protest, acts before crisis deepens, manages public resources with integrity, and places the dignity of citizens at the centre of governance. KwaZulu-Natal remains firmly committed to building

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municipalities that are capable, ethical, accountable, and responsive.

And I must appreciate, on behalf of the people of KwaZulu-Natal, the leadership of His Excellency, in our country, leading the Government of National Unity, GNU, that government is stable, the economy is stable, and hope is instilled in many citizens. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chair.

Mr K E MAHOAI (Limpopo): Esteemed Chairperson of the NCOP, Your Excellency, our President Ramaphosa, hon delegates of the NCOP, Ministers and Deputy Ministers present, premiers present here, speakers present here, MECs present, the president of Salga, mayors and executive mayors, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I am speaking here on behalf of my premier who is recovering well from a bout of flu, and on whose behalf I am going to be participating in this debate...

IsiNdebele:

Lotjhani.

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In a timeless novel titled, *When Rain Clouds Gather*, Bessie Head reminds us that gathering rain clouds are not always symbols of destruction and despair, but often signals that renewal, hope and new beginnings are on the horizon. Yet it is during those very moments of gathering storms that the resilience of humanity, the strength of leadership and the unity of communities are tested the most.

Today, as we debate the important theme, and I quote, "Ensuring a people-centred local government towards building better communities", we are reminded that local government must become the shelter that protects our people when the storms of life arrive. We must strive to make a positive impact in the lives of our people, and this is the standard by which our local government must measure itself.

We cannot agree more with what our President has just emphasised, that this is the centre where everything is fixed. It is the basement if we were to be a building. The recent floods have left painful scars across many communities in Limpopo. Roads and bridges were destroyed, houses collapsed,

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families were displaced, and access to schools, clinics and economic centres became severely disrupted.

For many villages in all our districts, the destruction of infrastructure did not only inconvenience communities, but it threatened livelihoods and slowed economic activity. Farmers struggled to transport produce to markets. Small businesses lost customers because roads became inaccessible, and learners and workers faced dangerous journeys while ambulances and emergency services could not reach certain communities in time.

Working together with national government, municipalities, traditional leaders, and local communities, our province has already begun the rebuilding process through the disaster management grants and other provincial interventions. Roads are being repaired, bridges reconstructed, and temporary access roads established while permanent infrastructure is underway.

We remain resolute that no community will be left behind. This is made possible by our agreement with this hypothesis that

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local government indeed is not only the important centre, but also the cold face of accountability. And when it is holding together, all other spheres of government are able to implement interventions with ease, and we find it working so far.

Therefore, the challenge before us extends beyond building climate-resilient infrastructure, but ensuring that mechanisms, especially quality assurance mechanisms, are built at local government level so that we can be assured that the structures that have been reconstructed are indeed resilient. We have therefore ensured that local communities become part of the project, steering committees, labour forum, monitoring teams, and consultations from the beginning of the reconstruction projects until completion, because development imposed on communities without their involvement cannot truly be sustainable.

This is to be led at local level by councillors and mayors, and our premier is leading from the front to ensure that this synergy is established from the beginning. As these projects get underway, local labour is prioritised while youth, women,

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and small contractors are empowered through participation in construction and maintenance projects. Community members, on the other hand, are not only beneficiaries of development, but they are also active partners in rebuilding their own community infrastructure. This is because local government must continue to strengthen its role as a catalyst for local economic development by creating an enabling environment for small, medium and micro enterprises, SMMEs, and co-operatives to thrive. These enterprises remain critical drivers of economic growth, innovation, and job creation, particularly in rural and township communities where unemployment and poverty continue to affect many households.

As government, we remain committed to expanding most of these opportunities so that young people can participate productively in the economy and contribute towards building sustainable and resilient communities. We are equally aware that for many communities, access to water remains one of the greatest daily challenges confronting them. Water is not a luxury. It is a basic necessity of life and fundamental human right. No person should walk long distances in search of water, nor sleep without access to this essential resource. As

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a province, we have elevated water provision as one of the top priorities within our service delivery agenda. To strengthen coordination, accountability, and rapid response, water war rooms have been established across all municipalities to ensure forecast attention aimed at improving water supply, monitoring challenges, and accelerating solutions in affected communities. The recent water summit held on 30 April marked a decisive national intervention to confront water challenges. As a province, we fully align with the outcomes of that important gathering.

A people-centred local government also requires ethical leadership, accountability, and responsiveness. Communities want leaders who listen, leaders who act, and leaders who understand the daily realities faced by ordinary citizens. As Limpopo province, we remain resolute in strengthening ethical governance and intensifying the fight against corruption across all spheres of government within our province through lifestyle audit, stronger vetting processes for senior officials, and reinforced accountability mechanisms to ensure that public representatives and public servants uphold the highest standards of integrity. We have also developed strong

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governance structures to support an accountable and people-centred local government that municipalities perform in line with their intended objectives.

This call to fix local government is a very serious one. In heeding it, we first started to fix the provincial administration. And I can report to you, as we speak, in our province there is no provincial department, even the legislature, that has what we call qualified audit. All of them have unqualified audit reports, and five of them are clean. The challenge we have that our oversight mechanism is calling to us is that, how do you replicate the same? It is here, as the MEC for finance, that my premier has directed me to ensure that we live to that one.

We do not go for clean audits for the sake of it. We do not want to have a compliance freak mentality, but to ensure that if financial systems are in place, good governance is in place, you will show that there will be service delivered. So as provincial treasury and other role players, we are responsible for promoting accountability through ongoing support to municipalities. We support and sanction. We start

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with support first, and then we sanction from there. We do not micromanage.

We do what we are supposed to do to ensure that they too will join the bandwagon and ensure that every cent of public funds must be directed towards improving the lives of our people and accelerating service delivery. There is no room for allowing resources meant for roads, water, healthcare, schools, and community development to be diverted through corruption and malfeasance.

I will not have done justice if I do not emphasise that leadership must never become distanced from the people. Those entrusted with responsibilities as councillors, mayors, and public representatives must remain firmly connected to the communities that elected them. Leaders cannot move away from poor communities and settle comfortably in affluent centres while the people they serve continue to experience hardship without visible leadership and support on the ground. We take charge to ensure that they retain their addresses in most cases.

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We therefore reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that local government remains people-centred, developmental, and responsive to community needs through rebuilding all damaged infrastructure, addressing present issues affecting our people, empowering our communities, creating opportunities for economic growth and jobs, and building safer, stronger, and more sustainable communities for generations to come.

As the rain clouds gather, may they not become symbols of fear and destruction, but remind us that together, through unity, responsive governance, and community participation, we can weather every storm and build a better future for our people.

Sepedi:

Pula!

Mr S K MASHILO (Mpumalanga): House Chairperson, to our President of the Republic of South Africa, hon Ramaphosa, whom we love so much, receive the greetings from the people of Mpumalanga.

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Indeed, I debate on behalf of my Premier, who could not make it because of other pressing matters. To our hon Premiers that are here, to the members of the National Council of Provinces, community of North West, Bokone Bophirima, good day.

We gather during the month of May, a month of workers, a month of Africa solidarity, and a month that reminds us of this resilience of ordinary people across our continent.

Hon President, I rise in this debate, mindful that local government remains the sphere where citizens encounter the democratic state most directly. It is therefore our collective responsibility across all spheres of government to ensure that municipalities remain capable, responsive, and people-centred institutions.

This debate is not only about municipalities, but also about the future direction of governance, development, and public confidence in a democratic institution as we approach the 2026 local government elections.

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This year, the commemoration of Africa Month takes place against a difficult global backdrop marked by geopolitical tensions, rising fuel prices, instability in global markets, and ongoing conflicts that continue to affect economies across the world.

This escalation of tensions involving the United States and Iran, together with conflicts in other regions of the world, may appear distant from the community in Mpumalanga. But this impact is felt directly by ordinary families. When global oil prices rise, transport costs increase, food prices rise, small businesses come under pressure, and the cost of living becomes heavier for a working-class household.

It is the ordinary worker, the pensioner, the unemployed graduate, the small trader, and the commuter travelling daily to work who ultimately carry the burden of global instability. It is for these reasons that government must continue building a resilient local economy, strengthening infrastructure, expanding social services, and creating opportunities closer to where people live.

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The theme before us today, *Ensuring a people-centred local government towards building better communities*, therefore speaks directly to government's responsibility to protect communities, restore dignity, and create conditions for inclusive development.

A people-centred local government is one that responds to the practical realities facing communities. It is the government that understands that service delivery is not abstract concept, but something that affects the daily dignity of our people.

Hon Chairperson, this reminds me of a very important matter here. In 1929, the Carnegie Commission was established just to assess the poverty of the white community, not Africans, only whites.

In 1932, they concluded the report, and they confirmed that over 300 000 whites lived below the poverty level. The English government rejected that report until 1948, when the National Party took the same document and implemented it fully and made apartheid a document that they've implemented.

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Our people had to wait until 1994 when we changed all these things and made everybody a beneficiary of government. Today, we are one nation we must indeed appreciate that. [Applause.]

Hon President, Bushbuckridge, was formed in 1884 with no water. In 1926, National Kruger National Park was established with a beautiful tar road, including Manyeleti. Our people had no road to travel in the area, no water, nothing. That had to until 2001, when we established Inyaka Dam, and in 2005, we gave the people of Bushbuckridge water.

In Mpumalanga, we remain firmly committed to build municipalities that are responsive, developmental, ethical, and capable of improving the everyday lives of our people.

Hon members, despite global uncertainty and economic pressures, Mpumalanga continues to position itself as a province of growth, investment, and opportunity. We heard you very well, hon President.

One of the most significant developments in our province is the establishment of Mpumalanga International Food Produce

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Market, which is indeed expected to be open in this first quarter of the year. This development will not only strengthen food security and agricultural trade in the province but is expected to create opportunities of almost 100 000 indirect jobs and 156 permanent jobs after that.

For many young people and emerging farmers, this project represents more than infrastructure. It represents access to markets, economic participation, income generation, and a hope for a better future.

In further advancing agricultural development, the provincial government has just signed a memorandum of understanding, MOU, involving the University of Mpumalanga and the partners from China to establish what we refer to as a hybrid rice farming program in the province.

These initiatives have the potential to create approximately 380 000 jobs and opportunities across the agricultural value chain while improving the food production, agricultural innovation, and indeed skills development.

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These interventions demonstrate that a people-centred government must not only provide services but also create conditions for communities to participate meaningfully in economic activities. As a province, we believe if people are given an opportunity, they can develop by themselves.

Hon Chairperson, education remains one of the most powerful instruments for breaking the cycle of poverty and inequality. The provincial government therefore remains firmly committed to expand access to quality education infrastructure, particularly for rural and vulnerable communities.

During this financial year, the government will build 10 new schools, including a dedicated school for the deaf learners. This investment forms part of our broader commitment to improve access to education and ensuring that no child is left behind because of disability, poverty, or geography.

We have also expanded the constructions of a boarding school in rural municipalities, having realised that our kids in the rural communities deserve equally better like any other

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persons. This is the ANC government and we leave no one behind.

For many families, these boarding facilities are restoring dignity, improve learner safety, increase school attendance, and create a better condition for academic performance. Indeed, we are looking not less than 90% pass rate by the end of this year.

This progress reflects the dedication of educators, learners, parents, and government working together to build a capable and educated society.

Hon members, a people-centred government must also invest in health and well-being of its citizens. During this financial year, government will construct four new clinics to improve access and primary health care services in communities. We are also continuing with our programme in terms of the major health projects.

Linah Malatjie Tertiary Hospital remains a priority project, while the Impungwe Psychiatric Hospital project is almost done

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and will start work very soon. The King Nyabela District Hospital in Steve Tshwete Municipality is completed, operational, improved health care access for surrounding communities. Mapulaneng Hospital phase two is completed, and we have now started with phase three. That is in Bushbuckridge, hon President, where our people had no services before, they will equally have the health care centre.

Hon Chairperson, Mpumalanga remains a youthful province. We therefore recognise its importance of sports creation, arts culture in youth development and for those reasons, a 5 000-seater indoor sports arena aimed at promoting indoor sporting codes and creating opportunities for the young talent is already underway. We shall have that in this financial year. We mean business in the province.

Setswana:

Mo letsatsi le tlhabang gone. Fa le tlhaba le tla mo Bokone Bophirima.

English:

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At the same time, the provincial government continues to invest directly in the youth economic empowerment. Through the Premier's Youth Development Fund, more than 320 youth companies have been funded.

Thank you very much

Ms S L SITHOLE: Hon Deputy Chairperson, let me first greet the hon Chairperson of the NCOP, Mme [Ms] Refilwe Tsipane, President of the country, his excellency Rre [Mr} Cyril Ramaphosa, Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Govender, Chief Whip of the Council, hon Mmoiemang, House Chairpersons hon Radebe and hon Ryder, Ministers and Deputy Ministers that are present here today, Premiers that are here ...

Setswana:

... ke nopo le fela Rre Lazarus Blackhat Mokgosi ...

English:

... Speaker of the legislature, Dr Mhono, and Members of Executive Councils, MECs, that are here, Executive Mayors of district and local municipalities and Speakers also of all the

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municipalities, all councillors and traditional leaders present, most importantly ...

Setswana:

... baagi ba Dr KK, dumelang.

English:

Over 70 years ago our people gathered in Kliptown, drafted and adopted the Freedom Charter, which is the foundational document for our struggle against the apartheid system. In that gathering they declare that people shall govern.

One of the most important clauses of the Freedom Charter was that there shall be houses, security and comfort affirming the people's right to decent housing.

As South Africa celebrate 30 years of our democratic Constitution, a document anchored on the Freedom Charter we must reflect and introspect.

This Constitution was crafted to bring hope, restore dignity and secure a better life for all South Africans. It further

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encourages us to improve the quality of life of all citizens and to free the potential of every person.

The question we must ask ourselves is: Whether through our daily actions and through our oversight visit here as the NCOP, we have indeed moved the needle in the effort to free a potential of each person in South Africa?

Hon President, the democratic government has made significant progress in delivering on the constitutional promise of decent housing, with more than five million housing opportunities provided across South Africa since 1994. [Applause.]

While much more remains to be done, we must reflect on the context which Human Settlement deliver takes place.

The deep wound of apartheid spatial planning deliberately designed to enforce racial segregation and placing white residential and business areas in central, well-resourced locations; while relegating black, coloureds and Indian communities to peripheral townships remains visible more than 30 years into democracy.

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Areas such as Khuma and Kanana remain painful reminder of the cruelty of apartheid spatial planning.

As we conclude this Taking Parliament To The People programme, we must reassure Ntate [Mr] Bakhulule Mabaso from Khuma that we have heard his plea for urgency, delivering quality human settlement not only for the people of Dr KK, but the community across the country.

Hon Andriaanse said here, cry my beloved country. Now, I'm still searching for the word of a person that puts you into misery and they come back they act as if they rescued you.
[Applause.]

Hon Chairperson, during the course of this week we heard first-hand concern from Khuma members regarding a blocked project. Mme Frida from Khuma extension 6 told us that she has been waiting for a house since 2006. Twenty years later she still endures the indignity of living in a shack.

Hon members, this is not the hope of our Constitution that we have promised.

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Again, hon Jandri, we have missed you during our oversight on this Taking Parliament To The People. But you come here and you talk as if you were part of the delegation that was going around. [Interjections.] [Applause.] But anyway ...

Setswana:

... re leboga motho o go tlotletseng gore re ntse re kopana le eng fa fatshe fa. Mme ke go tshepise gore gotwe maraganela a ban aba mpa ga a tsenwe.

English:

MEC Molapisi, the commitment made in this august House that the department has reprioritised 80% of its budget this year was completing blocked houses, must not remain a merely promise, it must become a lived reality for our people.

[Applause.]

Setswana:

NCOP e tla boela kwano mo porofenseng ya Bokone Bophirima. Re solofela gore fa re tla re tla bona Diphetogo le ditshepiso tse di dirilweng fa gore di a diragala.

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English:

While we welcome the prioritisation of budget to complete blocked project, it is equally important to ensure effective consequence management against contractors who fail to deliver on their obligation.

Hon President ...

Setswana:

... go na le baagi ba ko Khuma ba ba tswang kwa hosteleng ya kgale eo re ba ntshitseng ko go yone ka 2014, ra ba isa kwa ... [Kgaogo ya modumo.] ... e re e bitsang New Village, ra re mo go bone gore ba tlile go dula dikgwedi di le thataro fela.

Gompieno ba iphitlhela ba dutse dingwaga di le somenngwe moo. [Legofi.] Mme ke seemo se se sa tshwanelang go ka diragala.

Fela re le ANC re ntse re ba tshepisa gore re tlile go tla mme ke itumella gore o teng gompieno, e bile re a gopotsana ka yone.

English:

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The living conditions faced by our people in these temporary structures are heartbreaking and require urgent intervention. Families continue to enjoy inadequate shelter, overcrowding and conditions that undermine their dignity and quality of life.

I am confident, hon President, that you will direct all spheres of government to urgently intervene and ensure that this long outstanding housing project is finally completed, for the benefit of the residents of Khuma hostel.

Setswana:

E bile ke go tshepise gore baagi ba kwa hosteleng ba hema ANC, ba tshela ANC. [Legofi.]

English:

It is unacceptable that contractors are allowed to cause undue delays in which, in turn, leads to escalated project costs without being subjected to appropriate corrective measures and accountable mechanism.

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A culture of non-performance without consequence undermines service delivery, erodes public trust and weakens the credibility of government programmes.

Hon members, municipalities remain the sphere of government closest to the people and to service delivery. The challenges facing this sphere cannot be overstated as weakness within the municipality directly affected the quality of life experienced by our communities.

The ANC is well-aware of all the challenges facing local government and we have decided that no one of the critical tasks for 2026 is to fix government and improve the basic services. We are aware that there is a lack of suitable and well-located land for low-income housing and the inability of the municipality to find a solution has aggravated the housing backlog and lead to delays in finding a permanent solution for resettling communities.

Hon Chairperson, we welcome progress in refurbishing water waste treatment plan within the City of Matlosana.

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Functional water waste treatment plans are not only essential for service delivery, but also critical for environmental preservation and public health.

Hon President, we commend you for the decisive directive to review the White Paper on Local Government. This intervention will hopefully remove the structural obstacles that have hampered the effectiveness of local government and delivery of quality services to our people.

Hon members, we live in an era of global warming and climate change, which requires municipalities to develop effective climate adaptation strategies. These include investing in resilient infrastructure such as flood resistant roads, enhancing water security, integrated climate adaptation into integrated development plans and building institutional capacity within local government to implement climate resilience measures.

Hon President, the decision to broaden the mandate of the Department of Human Settlement from narrow focus on housing to

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a more holistic approach of human settlement was both necessary and progressive.

Ntate Mosimanegape Mathebula of Ikageng ward 20, we have heard your call that government must do more to ensure access to basic services such as water, sanitation, road, electricity and schools so that human settlement are developed in a holistic and dignified manner.

In line with this call, I appeal to the MEC of Human Settlement in the North West to urgently honour the commitment made to the disabled gentleman in Jakaranda that he will be prioritised for housing.

Hon members, municipality will only be effective if they create a conducive environment for economic development and growth. Many communities continue to experience the harsh realities of unemployment and poverty on a daily basis.

It is with this context that we raise a concern regarding the stalled Urban Blue International Gas-to-Power project, which was envisaged not only to contribute towards electricity

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security but also to create much-needed job opportunities for the youth of the city.

The municipality, working together with the provincial government, must move with speed to ensure that this important project is realised. Community cannot continue to wait while opportunities for economic growth and employment remains delays.

The delays caused by rezoning and transfer of the land, environmental rehabilitation requirements and outstanding provincial approvals needed for the project to proceed must be finalised.

In conclusion, I urge all government officials at all spheres of government to roll up their sleeves and work tirelessly to realise the promises of the Freedom Charter.

Let us recommit ourselves to the pledge to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage. Until the democratic changes here set out have been won, let us work to restore our

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people's dignity. Our people demand no less and we dare not fail them.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa. [Va phokotela.]

Cllr B STOFIE (Salga): Greetings to you Chair of the session, greetings to the Chair of the NCOP, greetings to the President of the Republic or President-General of the Joint Forces of the Republic, the Deputy Chair of the NCOP, the parliamentary committees that are present here and, of course, special greetings to the premiers of our province, the members of the executive council, MECs, that are present here, the SA Local Government Association, Salga, national executive committee members, and the Chair of the North West province of Salga. It is once again my honour on behalf of the collective leadership of organised local government and the sphere of local government to contribute towards the debate in the President's annual address to the NCOP during the occasion of this week's programme, Taking Parliament to the People.

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In this beautiful province of North West which is rich with an endowment but poor that those endowments do not benefit them, the populates of this area. As we gather here today, we continue to witness the scale of the threats posed by the climate change and the impact that it has on the lives of our communities. The extensive wildfire a few months back and now severe storms are all confirmation of the threat posed by climate change. As the collective of local government at local, national and provincial level requires to work together. We must consider combating climate change and fundamental change our perspective approach regarding planning of the climate change. We must reaffirm our call for greater collective climate action.

Our thoughts are with our people in the province of the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and most recently in the North West province. Disasters such as severe flooding, droughts and wildfires severely cripple municipalities by destroying essential infrastructure, depleting financial reserves and disrupting basic service delivery. These events strained local budgets forces emergency redeployment of staff and trigger systemic challenges that take years to repair.

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It is during these moments that we must acknowledge respect and reject any notion that there is a general lack of appreciation from municipal officials and councillors. While many officials and councillors work diligently often and in difficult conditions the public perception is frequently overshadowed by systemic failures. It is therefore our responsibility as organised local government to be the voice of reason and use moments such as these to display our diligence. The Constitution of the Republic entrenches local government as a fully-fledged sphere of government in a system of co-operative governance in which the three spheres are distinct yet interrelated.

This week as Parliament through the National Council of Provinces in partnership with the province of the North West government and municipalities in this province in the Kenneth Kounda District descended in the City of Matlosana and engaged with the people. One reality we must accept is that these conversations took place with ordinary people from a local government community level. A space where the will of the people finds most expression through the direct elections of mayors in rendering service to our communities. A space where

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councillors as public office bearers cannot hide from ordinary people under the guise of blue lights, bodyguards and high electrical fences walls. A space where there are no office hours and yet very little appreciation and reward. A space where those speaking from a privilege find it convenient to pass the buck if not pass the blame.

A space where public service is a curse, where criminal elements visit us at night when we are at our most vulnerable time, and when we are spending times with our families and loved ones to eliminate or attempt to scare and intimidate us. A space where our obituaries are read too often. A space where dedicated warriors, people servants who had dedicated their lives to serving others were selflessly devoted and fearless in putting the interest of their people above their own. Had their lives cut short and here we are reminded of Cllr Jimmy Mohlala, Moses "Big Moss" Maluleke, Muzi Manyathi, Mngqobi Molefe, to mention but a few. A space where many of us continue to take the responsibility of public office as reliable and committed leaders despite the curse.

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Chair of the session, as the sphere of local government is as closest one to the people, we plead for your intervention and the intervention of this House in ensuring that appropriate application of support by provincial and national governments to local government to perform functions and discharge their duties and responsibilities. It is our considered view that not much has been done to diligently give effects to section 154 support but instead observe an unprecedented state of an appropriate invocation of section 139 intervention. Some perpetuals since time in memorial whilst others have not been assisted with capacity since the 2021 elections. Instead, directly imposed with section 139 intervention even in the instances where section 154 support intervention will be the most appropriate type of intervention.

Chair of the session, with this context where government has for the past 26 years introduced numerous intervention to improve the functioning of municipalities with very minimal success should we not instead use the opportunity presented by the review of the White Paper on Local Government to examine the fiscal architecture, the powers and functions accountability and that service ethos should underpin the

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remodelling of the local government system in the Republic. Our considered view is that the challenges facing us to redress poverty, inequality and underdevelopment can only be addressed through a concerted efforts by government acting in all spheres working together and integrating our actions in the provisions of services and development of our communities.

Ultimately, the three spheres must together provide effective transparent accountable and coherent government for the Republic of South Africa and therefore ...

IsiXhosa:

... hoi hoi

English:

... we agree with you that banks and insurance must play a role in making sure that the financial viability of municipalities realised. A vehicle when hits a pole, a poor mayor that is blamed today and tomorrow had to steal money somewhere in the budget to fix the poles that have been hit by a vehicle. As we march towards the six democratic local government elections on the 4th of November, as was pronounced

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by the President-General this year, it is our view that local government has had a profound impact on the lives of ordinary South Africans in expanding the provisions of services to our people while it is true that several serious and complex challenges persist in many of our municipalities. By and large local government has delivered quality services and a better life.

Most of our people, as confirmed by the official statistics, tell us the story of the journey of the transformation. As I draw to conclusion, I once again stand before you on behalf of the leadership collective of organised local government and the local government leaders from all our municipalities throughout the country and pledge our positive response as we embrace the spirit of citizens activism. Our communities look up to us in this period of need.

Difficult and complex as it may be, President Nelson Mandela always encouraged us when he launched Salga that: "Once implored us to use our freedoms to light the path to a more humane, more caring society." He demanded that: "We lift our sights far into the horizon. That we use our voices to

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proclaim our freedoms." In turn our history taught us that we need to be courageous and resilience. That we embrace the challenges. That we be strong. That we be confident. That we be humbled. That we be patient and focus to the ball.

As we now reflect on the past few days as we attempt to answer many questions provided clarities and mistake contributions, let me conclude, as I have recently done on many platforms, by quoting a very important quote by a Burkina Faso leader:

Our revolution is not about public speaking tournament. Our revolution is not about a battle of fine phrases. Our revolution is not simple not spouting slogans that are no more than signals used by manipulators.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, Cllr Stofile, for your input. However, what I'd like to bring to the attention of the delegates is that this mic does not respond. It does not work when that mic is on or the speaker is on the podium. Therefore, I request the delegates to be

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watchful of the time they are allocated to because Rule 60 was crafted intentionally so that the time can be shared equitably. The next speaker who is invited to the podium is the hon Premier of Bokone Bophirima, L K Mokgotsi.

Mr L K MOKGOTSI (North West): Chair of the session, the Chairperson of the NCOP, Mme Rifilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, Deputy Chair of the NCOP, hon Les Govender, His Excellency, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, the Speaker of the North West Provincial Legislature, Dr Desbo Mohono, all premiers from different provinces, the Chief Whip of the NCOP, Ntate Kenny Mmoiemang, the Chief Whip of the North West Provincial Legislature, hon members of the NCOP, special and permanent delegates, MECs present here today, House of Traditional Leaders, Executive Mayor of Matlosana, the city, Executive Mayor of the District, Mme Nikiwe Num , all senior management of government, president of the Salga, and the chairperson of the North West Salga.

Setswana:

Ke a le dumedise, bogolo jang багаetsho ba mo Dr Kenneth Kaunda. Baagi ba rona ba Bokone Bophirima, dumelang.

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English:

I'll also just have a different chair of the session, like I normally do when I address the NCOP because I'm the hosting premier. I'll be a little bit focused and not be all over.

But let me start by saying that we are also excited and we thank you very much, the Chair of the NCOP, for bringing Parliament to the people and for deciding to bring it to the North West province. [Applause.] We thank you very much. As our people are excited and they are happy that the government is here, and they also get the feel-to-sense and how Parliament works. Thank you very much for that decisive decision.

President, we also want to thank you and would like to follow what Gauteng has said. But we also ask you personally, and I remember when I went to see you in Pretoria, I said, can you please expedite the intervention to bring soldiers to the illegal mining that is taking place in the North West.

[Applause.] We also say thank you very much for your response, and it was a swift response. We are very happy for that.

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President, we also want to tell you today that the heavy rains that took place in this country and in particular in this province also had a very serious impact on the lives of our people. Schools were disrupted. Our daily lives were also disrupted.

People could not access their amenities and their medical care, and clinics, and hospitals. People were displaced and so forth. Some of our people in our communities died and want to say the provincial government through its disaster centre is on the ground.

Assessments are made. We are going to report to you nationally but would expect a swift response in terms of intervention and assistance as a province, President. We just want to officially say your government is with the people, is on the ground, and therefore they are doing their way.

President, there was a cry beloved country and Matlosana. On Wednesday in ward 20 in Matlosana, there was a by-election. Eighty per cent of the people of ward 20 voted for the ANC.

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[Applause.] Some of the people who came here, they were not even participating in the election.

I want to say to you, President, that vote is a vote of confidence. It's a vote of people who are saying the leader of the society, which is the ANC, understands our challenges. They understand our situation. They understand our circumstances and they are committed and resolute. They will resolve our challenge and our problems. So, I'm saying people of Matlosana, they still have confidence in the party that calls the ANC.

Hon Chair, today's event marks the final day of a week-long engagement with the residents of Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality on the visit of the NCOP. Today's sessions held under the theme, and I quote, ensuring a people-centred local government towards building better communities affirms our ongoing efforts to live up to the ideas and objectives of our national democratic project.

This includes building a capable, ethical, and developmental state that can drive job creation, reduce poverty, address

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inequalities, and take a high cost of living. As we execute this mammoth task, we are reminded of the words of a revered leader of our continent, Julius Nyerere, when he said, and I quote, "if real development is to take place, the people have to be involved." This accession by Nyerere is given impetus by the preamble of our Constitution, which impresses upon us to prioritise the dignity of our people by improving their quality of life through building better communities.

Setswana:

Bagaetsho, ...

English:

... we have heard your cries.

Setswana:

Bagaetsho ba rona ba mo Matlosana ...

English:

... in particular. We have heard your concerns and your proposed solutions. We understand your frustrations, and we

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are hard at work to turn the tide against a litany of challenges raised during the entire week.

In bolstering these efforts, particularly in bringing about administrative stability and sound financial management in Matlosana. We have recently implemented section 139(5) and (8) of the Constitution through the deployment of a provincial executive representative to assist with the financial recovery plan. Among others, we are focused on the enhancement of the revenue collection. We also focus on improving the financial control mechanisms in the municipality. We are also insisting on a funded budget, and we are also focusing on the reduction of the unauthorised, fruitless expenditures and so forth.

We also recently, President, invoked section 106 in the municipality to investigate, and the report is out, and as provincial government, as we speak, encouraged by our priority to uproot corruption. Secondly, to build a capable and ethical state, we are implementing, President, all the recommendations that are coming from the 106 reports. This is primarily aimed at ensuring that the municipality meets its financial commitment and rolls out an uninterrupted provision of

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services to residents. We believe that this intervention will culminate in what we have managed to achieve in one of our municipalities called Kgosi Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality in Ngaka Modiri Molema District.

We managed, following years of instability in that municipality and stagnation, to stabilise the municipality. As previously indicated, Infrastructure South Africa has officially, based on the performance and assessment of that municipality, adopted this municipality and several projects in the form of roads projects, water projects, and sanitation will be rolled out from September this year in Ramotshere Moiloa.

A similar approach is being touted for Matlosana Municipality, and once we are convinced that Matlosana is out of the woods, a solid business case will be consolidated for consideration by Infrastructure South Africa and other developmental institutions.

On behalf of our President, we can report to this House that the march anticipated for the provincial growth and

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development strategy has been officially launched to boost investor confidence and accelerate growth and create jobs in the province. While we acknowledge ... [Time expired.] Thank you very much.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon premier, on the note of the provincial growth strategy, your time has expired. Thank you very much.

Mr M BILLY: Hon House Chair, hon President, hon members and fellow South Africans, this week, as we bring Parliament to the people of the North West, we have not just heard statistics and presentations; we heard the pain, the frustration and disappointment of ordinary South Africans who feel abandoned by the very government that promised them dignity and a better life.

Residents told us about transformers that burn every time it rains, leaving communities without electricity for weeks.

Mothers cannot cook, children cannot study, small businesses cannot survive. We heard about cable theft that has become so common that darkness itself has become normal.

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Communities live without functioning streetlights, while crime continues to rise and municipalities fail to respond. We heard about informal settlements growing faster than municipalities can manage, while illegal electricity connections continue placing enormous pressure on collapsing infrastructure. We heard from young people in Matlosana who are not asking for handouts, they are asking for skills, for jobs and opportunities.

They want a mining school in one of the country's biggest mining regions, so they can participate meaningfully in the economy, instead of sitting unemployed, while politicians make empty promises. But perhaps most heartbreaking of all, Mr President, is that we witnessed a government that has simply stopped caring. One of the most painful oversight visits this week was to the Klerksdorp Wastewater Treatment Works, a plant designed to process millions of litres of sewage every day that has completely collapsed.

Since 2023, untreated sewage has flown directly into the Schoonspruit and eventually into the Vaal River. Communities downstream are paying the price of ANC failure through

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polluted water, environmental destruction and a collapsing public health system. [Applause.] Hon President, this is not governance, this is neglect. This is what happens when corruption, when cadre deployment, when incompetence and political arrogance become the foundation of government.

Mr President, we also visited health facilities where another crisis is unfolding. The Health oversight group found clinics terrorised by illegal taverns and shibeens operating nearby. At Kanana Clinic, the situation is so severe that the clinic building itself has bullet holes from violence linked to taverns operating right next door. Imagine that - patients are seeking health care in a building marked by gunfire. Health workers are expected to serve communities, while operating under intimidation and danger. And the law is very clear - alcohol may not be sold within 500 meters of a clinic.

So, the question is, where is the liquor board? Where are the police? Why are municipalities failing to enforce bylaws? Why are these illegal taverns allowed to destroy communities and undermine health care facilities? Mr President, these illegal taverns must shut down immediately. The ANC has broken local

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government in many parts of this country. And the people know it.

But fellow South Africans, there is also something else we witnessed in the Northwest. And there is hope. Because communities are beginning to realise something important. It does not have to be like this. Where the DA governs, things work better. And that is not a slogan. It is a proven reality. In Cape Town, residents receive some of the best basic services in the country. The President has said it before.

In uMngeni Local Municipality, a province I come from in KwaZulu-Natal, clean governance, infrastructure, investment and service delivery have become the standard way of doing things. The President has said it himself. In Midvaal Local Municipality in Gauteng, not far from here, people experience stable governance, investment and dignity. The President has said it right here.

Whether rural or urban, large or small, when the DA is given an opportunity to govern, communities improve, because we believe that governments exist to serve people, not

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politicians. The DA fixes roads instead of stealing road budgets. The DA repairs infrastructure instead of allowing it to collapse. The DA appoints qualified people instead of politically connected cadres. The DA governs with accountability, urgency and transparency. And most importantly, the DA respects the people who pay for government.

Mr President, the people of the North West are not asking for luxury. The people of the North West are not asking for stacks of dollars. They are asking for electricity, for clean water, for safe clinics, for working sewage, for safer streets, opportunities for their children. These are not impossible demands. They are minimum expectations of a constitutional democracy.

However, after decades of ANC governance, many communities still live as though a functioning democracy never arrived. To the people of the North West and South Africa, you are not trapped. You are not powerless. Through your vote, your communities can work again. But don't take my word for it.

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Take the President's word who acknowledges that the DA governs municipalities better. I thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Can the House be in order, please. We are running behind schedule. The House is running behind schedule.

Mr B J FARMER: Hon Chair, before you start my time, with your permission, I would like to inform the House of an elderly lady, who on Wednesday cried in this passage about the sewage at her house that is not being solved. She told us of the number of places that she went to for assistance and help never came. The chairperson of that session, hon Bones Modise, called her to the front and told her to go to the municipal manager, MM, give her details, so that we can follow up. Mr President, last night, we received pictures of a brand new sewage system being installed at that lady's house. This is the difference that Taking Parliament to the People can produce.

Hon Chairperson, hon President, hon members, but most of all, the people of this beautiful province, it is a shame that the

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DA must use a brilliant young man to lie. If you talk about sewage running down the streets, I can take you to Wallacedene in Cape Town. I can take you to Philippi in Cape Town.

This beautifully run province of the Western Cape needs to be put under administration because of the failure of building houses for the people. Close to R1 billion has been sent back to the national government for not delivering houses.

We are gathered here today not just to discuss logistics, but to discuss dignity. In 1994, a promise was made to the people of this country, a promise of a better life of functional, accessible and dignified services. Today, over 30 years into our democracy, we must be honest. For too many of our citizens, that promise remains unfulfilled.

We see it in the protest, we hear it in the complaints, and we feel it when basic infrastructure fails. The problem is not just a lack of resources; it is a crisis of attitude. It is a shift from the servant leadership model of Batho Pele towards an inward-looking bureaucratic culture.

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Today, I call for a radical, immediate change in mindset from each and every public servant. Too often citizens are treated as a nuisance, rather than the reason for our employment. We have witnessed a disconnection between the political administrative interface where officials at the coalface feel disempowered or unmotivated to serve. Changing their attitude means moving away from, I am doing you a favour, to, it is my duty to assist. It means eliminating the silo mentality where departments fail to communicate and replacing it with an integrated collaborative approach to solve problems like water leaks, potholes and power failures.

A professionalised, ethical and capable state cannot exist without a public service that takes pride in its work. We must change from a culture of apathy to a culture of empathy. We must move from being bureaucrats to being change-makers.

Service delivery is the cornerstone of our social contract. When it fails, social cohesion breaks down. When it succeeds, democracy thrives. Let us rebuild trust, one interaction, one service complaint, one repair pipe at a time. Let us stop working for the government and start working for the people.

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Afrikaans:

Mr [meneer die] President, moenie baiza [huiwer] nie.

English:

Salute! [Applause.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon delegates, the front desk is now disrupting the House. That front desk is disrupting the House. All right, without further ado, I have the pleasure of announcing the presence of the Khoisan community in our midst. They are heartily welcomed as part of the community of ... [An unofficial language spoken.]

English:

We really appreciate their active interest in the issues of the province.

The PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN CAPE (Dr Z Saul): House Chairperson, let me take this opportunity to greet the national Chair of the Council of Provinces, hon Refiloe Mtshweni-Tsipane. Let me also greet His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa. I saw other premiers were bragging about

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winning by-elections. I thought it would be amiss of me if I don't do the same.

We have just won a ward from a civic movement and gained full control of Siyathemba Municipality in the Northern Cape. [Applause.] We also doubled our electoral support in a historically DA-dominated ward. Let me greet the Deputy Chair, the Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces and all the traditional and religious leaders. Because of time, let me then stand on the established protocol.

It is with profound sense of appreciation that I welcome the address delivered by the President, Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa. Comrade President, despite all the seemingly insurmountable challenges, the country is moving forward in the right direction. As your soldiers, we remain undeterred with unflinching resolve and commitment to improve the quality of lives of the people of this country and my province. The theme of this debate: Ensuring a people-centred local government towards building better communities, relates directly to the daily lived realities of the 1,4 million people in the Northern Cape that account for almost 400 000 households.

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To give account of the transformation journey since 1994 is telling a story of change. In 1995, only 36% of households in the province had access to piped water in their dwellings or in their yards. Today, 82% and 14% have access to community standpipes. In 1995, hon President, 31% of households have access to flush toilets and connected to public sewage system. Today, 73% of households have access to flush toilets and 16% are using modern ventilated pit latrines.

In 1995, only 42% of households had access to electricity. Today, 95% of households have access to electricity in the province. In 1995, only 18% of households had waste removal once a week. Today, 77% of households have their waste removed every week. In 1995, 52% of households were informal. Today, only 13% of households are informal in the Northern Cape. All of this is because people chose the party of Oliver Reginald Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and now Cyril Ramaphosa to bring about these changes.

With this positive development trajectory, the call should be, rise the beloved country. A call to action and hope, rather than a misplaced lamentation; *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

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Distorting Alan Paton's 1948 novel, which was meant to expose the human cost of apartheid. So, the hon member vulgarised the brilliant work of Alan Paton. Alan Paton was a white anti-apartheid activist and was never an apartheid apologist as many leaders of the DA. As a former student of African literature and diaspora, who extensively studied the work of Alan Paton, I want to assist the hon member with most relevant quotations.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Just a minute, hon premier. Please, there's a lot of noise on this side. Let us give the premier a chance to make his presentation. Over to you, premier.

The PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN CAPE (Dr Z Saul): So, as a former student of African literature and diaspora, who extensively studied the work of Alan Parton, I want to assist the hon member with the most relevant quotation from the book: *Cry, the Beloved Country*. This is what Alan Paton said about apartheid, I quote:

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The truth is that our civilization is not Christian; it is a tragic compound of great ideal and fearful practice, of high assurance and desperate anxiety, of loving charity and fearful clutching of possessions.

In the same novel, he goes further to say, I quote:

I see only one hope for our country, and that is when white men and black men, desiring neither power nor money, but desiring only the good for their country, come together to work for it.

Chairperson, we intervene decisively in municipalities based on our 10-Point turnaround plan. The plan focuses on stabilising municipalities. One such example is the intervention in Sol Plaatje Local Municipality. Section 139 intervention is directed at restoring administrative stability, strengthening governance systems, improving infrastructure maintenance and rebuilding public confidence in the municipality. Through the municipal infrastructure grant, all 25 local municipalities continue to receive support for planning and implementation of infrastructure grants.

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It is important to report that for the financial year 2024-25, municipalities in the province spent 87% of the allocated municipal infrastructure grant, MIG. For 2025-26 financial year, R522 million has been allocated, which is an increased figure, particularly to six municipalities in the province. By now, 65% of this has been spent and our goal is to achieve 100% expenditure this financial year. There will undoubtedly be consequences for any municipality that fails to spend 100% of its MIG allocation.

In addition, the province also secured substantial support through the Budget Facility for Infrastructure Programme, where R2,5 billion was approved for bulk water infrastructure in Sol Plaatje Local Municipality. Comrade President, we highly appreciate this intervention. Currently, there are nine projects which are being implemented in Sol Plaatje Local Municipality. We are intensifying our efforts to ensure water security and adequate sanitation for all our communities.

During the 2025-26 financial year, investment in water and sanitation infrastructure in the Northern Cape amounted to approximately R1,27 billion, with nine projects completed

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across the province benefiting more than 21 800 households. Conditional grant allocation for the coming financial year includes R385 million from the water services infrastructure grant and R874 million through the regional bulk infrastructure grant. These interventions matter because dignity begins with access to basic services.

Financial sustainability remains central to the long-term viability of our municipality. The Northern Cape Provincial Treasury has significantly re-engineered its support model to decentralise assistance and place technical support closer to municipalities. This also includes intensification of interventions aimed at improving audit outcomes, reducing irregular expenditure and strengthening consequence management. As a result, eight municipalities improved their audit outcomes in the previous financial year.

The provincial Treasury has worked closely with municipalities participating in the Eskom Debt Relief Programme. Six municipalities in the province have already benefited from debt write-offs amounting to R447 million. Building better communities is also about growing the economy through

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different interventions. Critical to growing the economy, is massive roll-out of infrastructure and creation of sustainable jobs. The executive council, Exco, just approved the provincial infrastructure plan 2040.

For the first four years of the implementation of the plan, the provincial government will spend R25 billion on social and economic infrastructure. To strengthen our efforts to fight unemployment and particularly unemployment amongst young people, we also approved the Northern Cape jobs plan ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): ... hon premier, on the note of fighting unemployment for the young people, your time has expired.

The PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN CAPE (Dr Z Saul): All right. Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Premier, you should have just asked. I have got a lot of extra minutes, so I could have helped you. In the Northern Cape, we help each other.

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Chairperson, President, colleagues and citizens, during our oversight visit to the Klerksdorp, Orkney, Stilfontein, and Hartbeespoort, KOSH, area this week, we wanted to ensure that local government is truly people centred. Parliaments exist precisely for this reason, to hear the voices of the people and to convey their needs in order to secure better governance.

Throughout the ages, as soon as people started to live in communities, humanity has learned that leadership is necessary to maintain order, ensure security, and deliver basic services. But we have also learned the hard way that leaders who gain power often begin to protect and enrich themselves instead of listening to those they serve. Parliaments serve to remind leadership of the will of the people, and this week, the citizens spoke clearly.

Ms Juwake told us how informal businesses in the area collapsed due to deteriorating infrastructure and theft, mines have closed, unemployment has risen sharply, and empty buildings in old mining areas are being occupied by criminals. Mr Mujake and many other residents complained that the mayor

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does not keep his promises and that targets for electricity supply are continually shifted. One resident stated plainly that the City of Matlosana Local Municipality does not have the capacity to even install an electrical transformer.

Cable theft is rampant and communities have to patrol the area by themselves just to keep the lights on. Ms Kanana described the security problems, burglaries, and murders in the area and emphasised how important good street lighting is.

After hearing complaint after complaint about power failures, unemployment, crime, tender fraud, and incomplete projects, local government's response is the same every time, blame shifting and denial of responsibilities. Officials point fingers at other departments, make vague promises about future projects, and try to pacify communities instead of solving problems. The Freedom Front Plus believes it could and must be different. We call for proper law enforcement and the end of corruption in municipalities.

Local government must be rebuilt from the ground up. We must get rid of all these entrepreneurs and unnecessary projects.

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Services and maintenance must be insourced and delivered by competent personnel who want to make it work and are motivated to make a difference.

Rather, appoint plan makers and doers, not tender creators. The sad reality is that what we witnessed here is repeating itself in too many towns across South Africa. Unfavourable labour actions, policy uncertainty, black economic empowerment, BEE, requirements, and uncertainty around ownership have chased away investors. And this is what has made the mines to rather close operations and the employment they bring. Welfare and the leniency in collection of municipal bills in exchange for political votes have become the new normal.

Citizens who came to speak to us are good, informed people who know their rights and they can articulate their issues well. Continue to raise your voices, be active citizens, and make sure your voices are heard at the ballot box on 04 November 2026. Appoint a local government that serves you and cut out the self-serving fat cats. Only you can make the change. Thank you.

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Mr M M PETER: Chairperson of the NCOP, hon President of the Republic of South Africa, and my president of the United Democratic Movement, Major General [Retired] Bantubonke Holomisa. I stand here today to declare to this province of Northwest that the prestige of the people must be restored at all costs. People must be protected from those who occupy government benches to destroy the gains fought for by our grandfathers.

Now is the time for those whose democratic rights have been deprived to be rescued – not tomorrow, but now. Those who are meant to serve the people have turned themselves into the bosses of the people. They are no longer serving the interests of the people of Matlosana; they are serving their own interests as bosses. Through the mandate given to them by the same people, when the people of Matlosana take to the streets, they open cases against them – against their own voters. What kind of leadership is that?

We all heard the cries of Matlosana and the surrounding areas about their safety. Government officials are no longer civil

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servants; they are giants who chase the people for their own needs.

IsiXhosa:

Mongameli, siphilapha kanti xa siza kuphinda simangalele abantu abasivoteleyo? Kanti siphilana?

English:

Sewage spills, potholes ...

IsiXhosa:

... iindlela Mongameli, azikho kuba wena kuqala uhambe kwindlela enezigongxo. Okanye bakuhambise kwiindlela ezizodwa?

English:

What does that mean, President?

IsiXhosa:

Mongameli, kukho umama apha ebenengxaki yokumoshakala kwendlu yakhe yangasese. Loo ngxaki ilungiswe namhlanje kuba sikhona. Iphelile iminyaka emihlanu lo mama enukiselwa livumba lelindle. Siphilapha kanti, Mongameli?

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English:

There is no longer a functioning government in Matlosana and the surrounding areas. Now is the time for the people to save themselves. If you cannot save yourselves with your vote, you will remain in the sewage.

IsiXhosa:

Mongameli, xa ndiququmbela ...

English:

... there are life spillages in Matlosana. People have been killed in their homes. People have been killed because they cannot speak out against the same officials whom they serve. These same officials are criminals. The state has been taken over by criminals.

IsiXhosa:

Xa ndisiya emaphethelweni, Mongameli siyakucela ukuba ukhe uthi tsi gxada eGqeberha. Mandiqale kule ndawo phambi kokuba ndifike eGqeberha.

English:

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There is a tendency here: when the government does good, some members claim that the ANC has done the best. When the government does badly, your members in the ANC say the government of the Government of National Unity, GNU, has done badly.

IsiXhosa:

Mongameli, kukho iindawo ezakhelwe izindlu ezintle kakhulu phaya eGqeberha.

English:

Beautiful houses have been built. My ward, ward 41, is my ward. There are nice houses there. You have built beautiful houses, but where are the title deeds?

IsiXhosa:

Siyakucela Mongameli ukuba uye phaya. Okokugqibela, sicela uye kuhlangula umeya kaMasipala oMbaxa iNelson Mandela Bay.

Ndibona ngathi uya kwantshabalala. Idolophu yethu yeyaseNigeria naseSomalia. Awukwazi ukungena eKorsten kuba akusekho bantu baseMzantsi Afrika abahlala phaya. Ndiyabulela, Mongameli.

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Mr F J BADENHORST: House Chairperson, Mr. President, fellow South Africans, hon members ...

Sepedi:

Dumelang. Le kae? [Tsenoganong.] Aowa, nna ke gona.

English:

Mr. President, it is interesting to know that the EFF and the MK has forgone the opportunity to take part in today's debate. Let us hope that the people who vote for them in the local government elections will show the same interest in them in November later on this year.

If we are serious, Mr. President, about ensuring a people-centered local government towards building better communities, we must begin by asking a very simple question. Where are the people in this ANC-led government? Because across South Africa, wherever the ANC rules, and especially here in the North West, communities are not experiencing a people-centered state. They are experiencing collapsing municipalities, sewage in the streets, broken roads, water shortages, corruption,

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cadre deployment, and political elites who have become disconnected from ordinary citizens.

The people of Matlosana do not need slogans anymore. They need a functioning government.

Afrikaans:

Die inwoners van hierdie dorp soek plaaslike regering wat werk. Hulle soek nie meer leuens en beloftes nie.

English:

This is where the ANC has fundamentally failed South Africans. The truth is that corruption has hollowed out local government. Money meant for development is too often redirected into patronage networks and political protection schemes. What we witnessed this week was a complete collapse in accountability. On far too many oversight visits this week, Parliament was met not by decision-makers, but by junior officials sent to absorb the pressure while political and administrative leadership conveniently disappeared. No mayor, very few MECs, very few directors, and the municipal manager was also missing in action.

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Here is the thing, Mr. President, ordinary South Africans are entitled to ask difficult questions. South Africa has strict exchange control legislation. As you know, ordinary citizens cannot simply keep large quantities of undeclared foreign currency hidden in their homes without facing serious scrutiny from law enforcement and regulatory authorities.

So, the question begs, Mr. President, what would happen if an ordinary South African in Jouberton in Alabama was found with stacks of US dollars hidden inside a couch in their homes? Would SAPS simply walk away? Would the SA Revenue Service, Sars, ask no questions? Would the Reserve Bank remain silent? Would there be no immediate criminal investigation? Of course not. That ordinary citizen would face the full might of the law. And that is precisely why accountability matters because a people-centered government cannot operate with one set of rules for political elites like the President and another for ordinary citizens struggling to survive. And this becomes even more serious when we remember the oath taken by the President when he took office. The President swore to obey, observe, uphold, and maintain the Constitution and all other laws of South Africa. Not some laws, Mr. President. Not the convenient

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laws. All the laws, Mr. President. That oath is not ceremonial. It is a sacred constitutional commitment to the people of South Africa. Because once citizens begin to believe in those in power or above the law, trust in democratic institutions collapses. And when trust collapses, local government collapses with it. And then you get what we see in Matlosana this week. There is no way, but there is a way, Mr. President, to fix local government.

The residents of the Western Cape fixed their local government in 2010 when they turned their backs on the ANC lies and corruption. They voted for the DA. The DA believes local government must return to its constitutional purpose, serve communities, not politically connected cronies. Go and look where the DA governs. And yes, hon members, the DA, we do not claim perfection, but we do demonstrate that clean audits, functioning infrastructure, and better service delivery is possible.

Hon Farmer, you forgot to mention Beaufort West, which you guys broke. The DA broke by the President. And you forgot to mention how you are busy baizer in Knysna.

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In the DA-led Western Cape, DA-led local governments continue to outperform because we understand a simple principle. The government exists to serve residents, not politicians. Unlike the ANC in the North West, the DA ensures that every cent collected from ratepayers delivers actual services. Premier Mokgosi, sorry, you said the ANC understands the challenges of local government. One would argue that the ANC created the challenges in local government. People say that the government begins when leaders stop protecting themselves and start delivering for the people who elected them.

Hon Lesufi, you have a unique way of contributing to a debate without actually adding much. Do not fear the DA Ministers that are doing so well. They are doing better in 20 months than what the ANC Ministers did in 30 years.

Go and check what your AmaPanyaza is doing in Gauteng. That is fallen to pieces and that is why you have to have the army sorting out the zamazamas. Scores of community members have stood patiently in long queues as we tell Parliament about how the ANC has failed.

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On 4 November, those same people will be able to queue at the election voting box. The people of Orkney, Stilfontein, Garsfontein and Klerksdorp, you can make your cross for the DA and change ... [Inaudible.] ... [Time expired.]

Sesotho:

Mof M G DHLAMINI: Ke a leboha Modulasetulo Ntate Radebe, ke dumedise Modulasetulo wa NCOP, Motlatsa Modulasetulo wa NCOP, Sephadi sa NCOP, Matona a rona teng le Matlatsa Matona, dinakgolo tsa rona tse hlomphehileng tsa diprofensi, dikgosi le marena a rona, re le hlomphele. Ka sehlohlolong re dumedise re be re hlomphe setjhaba sa Bokone Bophirima ka kakaretso, dumelang.

Re kopane mona letsatsing la kajeno re le Ntlo ya bobedi ya Palamente e bitswa NCOP, tlasa tema e latelang, Ho etsa bo nnete ba ho aha mmuso wa selehae o behileng batho pele kapa batho ka hara ntshetsopele, re tle re tsebe ho aha setjhaba se betere.

English:

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Ensuring a people-centered local government towards building better communities.

Sesotho:

Re a laelwa ke tema ena re le barumuwa ba setjhaba hore ho tsohle tseo re di etsan, mosebetsing was rona wa ho emela setjhaba ke ho tlisa ditshebeletso ho batho. Ke mandate wa rona wa matlha. Ene bath oba rona ba lokela ho una ho tseo mmuso o di etsang. Re boele re laelwe hore ha re ntse re fana ka ditshebeletso ho setjhaba, re se ke ra kgetha nku ka pere, hoba mmuso wa rona ho tloha 1994 ha o na mmala. Mmuso wa rona ke mmuso wa setjhaba ka setjhaba.

Eya, re a tseba, re le mokgatlo wa ANC hore di teng diphoso tse etsahetseng tse ngata, empa ha re bale diphoso tse, re bala hore ke eng se entseng hore re di etse, le hore re di lokisa jwang.

English:

What is important in life is not how much you fall; it is how many times you can rise and self-correct.

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Sesotho:

Re lokela ho itokisa. Re rata ho leboha setjhaba sa mona Bokone Bophirima, mohl Mopresidente, ka hore re amohela ka matsoho a mofuthu. Ba sebeditse le rona beke kaofela, ba hlahisa ditletlebo tsa bona, ba hlahisa dillo tsa bona. Mme re a thaba hoba ba ikutlwetse hore le diprofensing tse ding diphephetso di teng.

Ditonakgolo di hlahisitse kwano hore na di tlo rarollwa jwang. Mme, le mona profensing ena ya Bokone Bophirima, mohl Mopresidente, re lakatsa hore ntate Moprimeri wa kwano a etse jwalo, hoba Bokone Bophirima ke enngwe ya diprofensi tse nang le diminerale le mehlodi ya meepo. [Mahofi.] Re lebelletse hore, ntate Moprimeri le khabinete ya hao, diminerale le mehlodi ena di tswalle batho ba Bokone Bophirima melemo. [Mahofi.] Mme re tla be re phethahaditse tema ena ya rona ya ho beha setjhaba sa rona bohareng ba tsohle tse re di etsang.

Setjhaba seso, ke lakatsa ho hlalosa hore mmuso o tshwana le lelapa, moo ho nang le batswadi, bana, bo rakgadi le bo mmangwane. Ha ho na motswadi a ka emang a re yena o romme ngwana hore a ilo etsa ntho e sa lokang. Le ka hare ho mmuso

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ona, Ntate Ramaphosa kapa Bapresidente ba tlileng pele, ha a
yo a rommeng motho ho etsa ntho e sa lokang. Le ona mokgatlo
wa ANC ha o ka ba wa roma batho ho etsa dintho tse sa lokang.
[Dikena hare.] [Mahofi.]

Ke dikgetho tsa rona re le batho, ka matla ao re a kadinngweng
ho emela setjhaba, re etsang dintho tse sa lokang. Mme ke sona
seo re le ANC re lokelang hore re se hlaole, ebile re eme ka
maoto hona jwale, hoba re ka hong botjha, kopano le
ntshetsopele ya mokgatlo wa rona re lokisa dintho tseo. Ha re
keke ra di etsa re le bang, re tlo di etsa le lona setjhaba sa
rona se hlomphehileng. Re a le hloka! [Mahofi.]

Bomasepala ba rona, mohl Mopresidente, ba aparetswe ke mathata
a ho se sebetse hantle. Le a tla, le le baetapele ba tswang
Palamenteng, Mopresidente le Kabinete ya hae, ekasitana le
Mopremiri le lekgotla la hae, le etse dithsepiiso ho batho. Ha
le geta ho furalla, ba bang ba rona re sala re iketsetsa tsa
rona. [Dikena hanong.] [Mahofi.]

Ke tsona dintho tse etsang hore mokgatlo wa ANC o be le
mathata pusong, mme ke tsona dintho tseo re lokelang ho di

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hlahola. Bontate le bomme Mopremire, ha re sebetseng ka matla ho lokisa dintho tseo. Setjhaba sa rona ha se sa hlotse se lakaditse ho utlwa ditshepiso; se batla ho bona diketso, e leng ditshebeletso. [Mahofi.]

Mohl Mopresidente wa rona, bomasepaleng ba rona re na le mafaratlhatlha a kgathetseng haholo, a mang a feta dilemo tse lekgolo. Mme, mafaratlhatlha ao a hloka hore a lokiswe kapa a ntjhafatswe. Ekekebe yaba ntho e lokileng hore batho ba rona ba bone ditshebeletso hang ha Mopresidente a tla.

English:

It is very bad and sad because ...

Sesotho:

... ha se sona seo re se ronngweng hore re ilo se etsa re le baronngwa ba mmuso. Ake re tloheleng ho senya naha ya rona, re mpe re e bolokeng, hoba kaofela ha rona re a e hloka!

[Mahofi.]

English:

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I am alive to the fact that the municipality has a limited tax base, low revenue collection and substantial debts. However, these challenges need to be addressed through collaborative innovation, political and technical leadership.

Sesotho:

Tsamaiso e kekebe ya sebetsa kgahlano le thomello ya polotiki kapa ofisi ya politiki.

English:

That is so bad!

Sesotho:

Re lokela ho sebetsa kaofela, re etse ketane ya mebuso ena e meraro kaofela eo re nang le yona, e leng mmuso wa kakaretso, mmuso wa diprofensi le mmuso wa selehae. Ha re ka ra sebetsang kaofela, re atameditse setjhaba sa rona, re keke ra hlolwa ke letho. Eya, ke nnete hore re keke ra kgona ho ba fa tsohle tseo ba di hlokang. Empa, batho ba rona ha ba batle dintho tse kgolo; ba batla dintho tsa mantlha, e leng ditshebeletso. Ke phetho! [Mahofi.]

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Ho a hlokahala, Ntate Mopresidente, hore re tlo sebetsang ka potlako ho etsa bo nnete ba hore dillo tsa batho, tseo re di nkileng, di a arabelwa. Ha di hloke ho arabelwa hona jwale fela, empa di arabelwe ho tloha hona jwale ho isa ka bo sa feleng.

English:

Mining is a cornerstone of the North West economy, generating over 50% of GDP and accounting for roughly 64% of South African platinum production.

Sesotho:

Empa re fumana setjhaba sa mona e le sona se sa sebetseng ka bongata. [Mahofi.] Potso ke hore na merafo ena e hirile bo mang. Ke seo re lokelang ho se lokisa Ntate Mopremiri le lekgotla la hao. Ha nke ke hlalose ka puo eo le e utlwisisang setjhaba seso hore ha ho na nnete ho seo bahlomphehi ba bang ba se buileng mona, ka hore: Moo DA e busang, dintho di lokile.

Re tswa Kapa Bophirima, moo ho dulang batho ba bo rona, ba tshwanang le nna le wena. Maemo a bona a mabe ho feta a Bokone

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Bophirima. [Dikena hanong.] [Mahofi.] Botle boo, bo ntate ba emeng mona ba bahlomphehi le mme, ba bo buileng, ke botle bo ditoropong moo ho phelang bona. Empa, moo ho phelang batho ba bo rona, maemo a mabe ho feta Bokone Bophirima kapa profensi enngwe le enngwe.

Nnete e nngwe ya bobedi ke hore ntho ena e bitswang bobodu, ha e na mmale, ha e na dilemo, ha e na bong, ebile ha e na kamano ya dipolotiki.

English:

It is about the character of an individual! [Applause.]

Sesotho:

Ka hoo, ho bohlokwa hore re le setjhaba re se ke ra thetswa hore bobodu ke ba ANC, hobane ha ebe bobodu e le ntho ya mokgatlo, ho bolela hore Kapa Bophirima e bo bobodu bo fetang! [Dikena hanong.] [Mahofi.] Seo se bolela hore bomasepala ba okametsweng ke DA -hoba ha ba tlise ditshebeletso ho batho le bona - ba bodile! Ke lona lebaka leo setjhaba seso ke reng re seke ra thetswa, hobane ha re le dithaleng tse tjena re nka

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monyetla re lebile ho etsa letsholo bakeng sa mekga ya rona ya dipolotiki.

Ha e le hantle, NCOP mona e tlisitse Palamente ho batho ba Bokone Bophirima hore re tlo utlwa mathata a bona, le hore re ka ba thusa jwang. [Mahofi.] Hore na batho ba mona ba tla kgetha mang, ke bona ba tsebang. Ebile ke bona ba tseba hore na ba batla eng.

English:

It is not upon us ...

Sesotho:

... hore ha re lokela ho etsa mosebetsi wa rona wa ho ba baemedi ba setjhaba, re be re ba thaothela ho re voutela ka la 4 Pudungwana 2026, hobane re a ba thetsa.

Profensi ya Gauteng e sebetsa hantle ntle le DA, ebile ha e na mathata, dintho di tsamaya ka nepo. Ha se nnete hore moo DA e leng teng dintho di a loka; tjhehe, hobane phoso e etswa ke motho, ha e etswe ke mokgatlo o mo rommeng. Mme re tlo hlahola re sebetsa mmoho re le ANC e etelletseng pele ke Mme Rifilwe.

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Re tlo hlahola re sebetsa mmoho le diprofensi tsa rona le bo masepala, re hlahola bohlaswa bo teng. Mme re mema setjhaba hore se tle se be le rona leetong la rona la ho hlahola. Le seke la tshaba setjhaba sa bo rona ho re qhwaolla rona re le ANC.

English:

You must criticise us and you must tell us when we are wrong. Our responsibility and task ...

Sesotho:

Ke ho tlo ikokobetsa ka pela lona, e seng re be le boikakaso. [Mahofi.] Ke ka hona letsatsing lena re tlisitse Palamente ho lona re tlo ikokobetse, re sa le laele, ebile re le hlomphele.

Ha ke qetela, Motsamaisi wa dipuisano, ke rata ho netefaletsa ... [Dikena hanong.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Order, hon members! Order!

Sesotho:

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Mof M G DHLAMINI: Ha ke getela, ke rata ho netefaletsa mohl Mopresidente wa rona le ditonakgolo tsa rona tse etelletseng diprofensi, hore rona re le NCOP, re ikemiseditse ho tlo sebetsa le lona re le tshehetsa ka hohlehohle ka mokgwa oo re ka kgonang. Re kopa le lona le re atomele, ha mmoho le bo majoro ba rona diterekeng le bomasepaleng. RE tlo etsa bo nnete, Ntate Mopresidente, hore tebelo yona ke ntho eo re tlo e phetha ho fihlela bofelo ba sehla sena sa puso.

Mme Refilwe o itse bophelo ba rona, re le NCOP, ha e sa le ho dula ka hare ho dula ka hara Palamente, empa e se e le ho tla bathong. Jwale, re le NCOP, hobane re ditsebe le melomu ya batho ba Afrika Borwa ba diprofensi le bomasepala, re tlo dula re na le lona. Le lona le re atamele, le ha re ntse re le Motse Kapa. Le re ngolle mangolo. Re tlo tla ho lona re tlo lokisa dintho tseo re di tshepisiseng dibeke tse pele tse fetileng. Ntate Mopresidente, re kgutlile bekeng ena, re entse mekeno, ene batho ba ile ba nna ba paka mona hore mekeno eo e a sebetsa.

Setjhaba sa Bokone Bophirima, re le rata haholo re le NCOP. Re le rata haholo re le mmuso ona wa GNU o etelletsweng pele ke

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Ntate Ramaphosa, ebile re a le hlompha. Re tlo sebetsa le lona. Re kopa fela hore le be le mamello, empa botlokotsebe le dintho tse sa lokang tsona le se ke la di mamela, le di hlahole. Mookamedi, Mopresidente le Ntate Mopremire, re kopa hore le eketse sesole ka hare ho Bokone Bophirima. [Mahofi.]

Le rona re le tjena, Ntate Mopresidente, re il era tshoswa re le Maloko a Palamente. Re fumane mehala hore ba bang ba rona re tlo bolawa ha re ka nna ra tswela pele ho etsa seo re se etsang. Mme re lakatsa ho etsa bo nnete ba hore re netefaletse setjhaba sa kwano hore le ha re ka ba ra tshoswa, ha re no baleha ka hara Bokone Bophirima; re tla dula re ntse re le teng jwaloka diprofensing tse ding kaofela.

Sesole ha se eketshehe, ntate mookamedi ka hare ho Bokone Bophirima hoba dizamazama di bonahala di nkile matla a mmuso, e le bona mmuso. Ehlile di hlobaetsa le batho. Hothwe ho thunywa ha motho seterekeng sena ha se letho. [Dikena hanong.] Letsatsi le letsatsi batho ba ka thunywa. Mme re lakatsa hore re re ho baahi ba Bokone Bophirima: Viva lona! Viva lona! Viva lona! Re le rata haholo. [Nako e fedile.] [Mahofi.]

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, I stand on the protocol that has been established and the protocol I also articulated at the beginning.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to close this NCOP plenary, which has in many ways been robust and constructive, and which has focused on the issues that affect and concern the people of the North West, and may I add, the country as a whole, for as the Chairperson of the NCOP, the Deputy Chairperson, the Secretary to Parliament and other officials have brought Parliament to the people of the North West, they have effectively brought Parliament to the whole country, as many of our people will have been following these proceedings.

I'd like to thank everyone who has participated in this plenary and to the many citizens of this area, Matlosana, who came to all the engagements that were held and to be part of this very special occasion.

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Participating in a process like this is important, because Taking Parliament to the People is one of the most important ways of deepening democracy, strengthening legitimacy and rebuilding trust between the citizens of our country and the state.

It transforms Parliament from being seen as a distant institution in a capital city or in a parliamentary city in Cape Town, into a living instrument of public participation and accountability, as Members of Parliament give themselves time to be amongst the people. At its core, it also gives practical meaning to the constitutional principle which says the people shall govern.

This visit has made NCOP delegates aware of the severe challenges, ranging from political instability, financial mismanagement and the lack of service delivery, that affect our people here in municipalities across the province, but also across many other provinces.

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This visit by the NCOP must reinforce the work of national, provincial and local government through the District Development Model to fix the problems of our municipalities.

I would like to thank the premiers, as well as the MECs of our various provinces, for being here to articulate precisely what they are doing in their various provinces. Many, and indeed all, have articulated really forward-looking plans, setting out the work that is being done – good work in the most part of what is happening.

What I have heard is a most powerful message of hope after this parliamentary outreach visit, and that is about the fact that democracy is listening, the state has not abandoned the people of our country and the future can still be shaped through collective action, partnership and accountability.

This visit communicates that Parliament did not come here to merely observe the problems that our people are going through, but to help unlock solutions and to renew the social contract between citizens and the democratic state.

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We should not be dismissive of the fact that a lady who has not had a house for a long time or the one who has had a house where sewage was spilling through her house was immediately fixed. We should not dismiss that.

That is intervention. Intervention has been made. What we should hope for and demand is that there should be continuous intervention in solving those individual and collective problems on an ongoing basis.

People facing unemployment, poverty, crime, energy shortages or failing infrastructure are less interested in political point scoring than in practical solutions. It was sad for me to hear some political point scoring here. When parties spend all their energy on blaming one another, humiliating opponents or weaponising every mistake, government's effectiveness suffers. [Applause.]

We must remember the saying that, when you live in a glass house do not throw stones ... [Applause.] ... because when you do throw stones, those stones can also come to your house.

When colleagues continuously say, we are better, we are this

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and this, and others continuously say, you have to go to a particular area of the same city that is said to be the best and when you go there you see the very worst conditions ever ... I have seen that with my own eyes. [Applause.]

Now, it is said that for people who live, for instance in Cape Town, in Philippi and other places, their conditions are even much worse than you can find here in the North West. That should tell us something. There is a message in that.

So, in the end we should rise from here with hope. Hope that this session, this engagement, has given rise to hope. Hope is generally abroad in our country. It is spreading right throughout. Many of the delegates who spoke here – premiers, MECs and other speakers – spoke about how hope is spreading in the areas where they are. Indeed, there is hope. So, we should speak about hope because to our people we should say the coming of Parliament here means that your voice matters, your voice is being heard. Also, government still has the capacity to change lives and communities should be partners in development.

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Now, South Africa has overcome bigger challenges before and we intend to continue doing so. We have a big challenge of jobs. The creation of jobs depends on an increase in investment. We need to see more and more investment coming into our country from local firms, from offshore firms, but we also need to create spaces for those who want to do business, so that they do business and increase investment from which we will derive growth.

As it is, our investment drive is yielding significant results. Over the last five years, a total of R634 billion of investment has been pledged and a lot of it has already been spent on projects.

At the sixth SA Investment Conference ... Let me pause and say one of the things that many people don't realise and should really, really applaud is that as soon as we started holding our own national conference for investment, our provinces started holding their own investment conferences one after the other, and at those investment conferences they have been able to garner a lot of investors who have pledged to invest in the provinces as well.

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So, in that regard I applaud the premiers. I truly applaud our premiers for taking forward the vision that we have had that there should be localised investment commitments, localised investment going into various projects. I welcome that.

When you agglomerate all those commitments and when you agglomerate the various projects that are ongoing in our country, we can safely say that South Africa is becoming and is going to lead in becoming a building or a construction site.

You see it all over. I go to the Eastern Cape and I see construction. I go to KwaZulu-Natal and I see that construction. I go to Gauteng and I literally see new cities being built and I see tremendous infrastructure projects. I go to the Northern Cape and I go to many of our provinces, and I see that. It is the result of the work that is being done by our premiers, by our provincial councils, our MECs. I want to applaud them for all the work that they do. I will give you a round of applause, even if I'm alone. [Applause.]

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So, at our investment conference we raised quite a lot of money, but coming to where we are, at the sixth SA Investment Conference companies pledged investments totalling R30 billion into renewable energy and mining in the North West, and when you combine it with what the province is raising in investment as well, it is higher.

The R1 trillion that we have allocated to infrastructure over the next three years will increase economic activity and create jobs, both directly and indirectly.

One of the critical industries for the North West is mining, which correctly accounts for about 52% of the gross domestic product, GDP, of this province. Obviously, the North West is a platinum province. It's where we get most of the platinum in our country, although Limpopo also shares in that. Where we have seen a decline in production in other areas, mining still remains a mainstay for us.

That is why we have dedicated resources for further exploration of our mineral resources, because the North West is a mineral-rich province, although the whole of South Africa

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is mineral-rich. That's why we are dedicating money from the fiscus for exploration, so that we can open more mines and add value to the country as well.

We are focusing on building the agricultural sector by releasing state land for agriculture, and providing more support and funding for emerging black farmers.

In terms of water, we are investing significantly in bulk water infrastructure to ensure that there is enough water supply for areas in our country that have serious water challenges.

The National Water Crisis Committee is providing support to municipalities to ensure that they are able to maintain their water infrastructure and ensure the supply of quality water to all households and businesses in our country.

Premier Zamani Saul gave a proper account of how far our country has moved from where we were in 1994, in the most statistical way, to say we have moved forward. Let it be said

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that we are not stuck in one place. We are continuing to move forward.

There's eight or so per cent of people in our country who do not have electricity. Eskom is rolling out ... to all those. In those areas that do not really have water, we are working on that, and we are working to improve the road network and infrastructure in our country.

Yes, what has held us back is the focus that we placed on the social welfare of our people. A total of 61% of our Budget goes to social welfare. As poverty was rising, as our students needed more support at universities for free education, as we found that we needed to establish early childhood development, ECD, centres so that the mistake which we made right at the beginning should be corrected, because for education that's where we should have started. In 1994 ... formalise ECD, put it under Basic Education rather than under Social Development. Now we are turning that wheel and we're committing more money.

As we faced COVID, we needed to support the livelihoods of our people and had to allocate R54 billion just for that. So, what

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that led to was an increase in social welfare and a decline in the more important investments that we should put in place. Truth be told, we also declined in defence spending and in supporting the police.

Now we are correcting all those problems and we are moving forward. We are moving forward in quite a determined way. For a country like ours, for the first time in its history, to commit R1 trillion in infrastructure, means that we are serious about moving South Africa forward.

The reforms that we have embarked upon are also demonstrative of the fact that we are moving forward. We are not stuck in one place. We are undertaking those reforms in water and we're doing so in electricity, and ensuring that we reposition the economy of our country so that going forward it's primed for growth.

Those areas that still have load reduction, where there are still challenges of electricity, are areas that Eskom, together with the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, are working on, and ensuring that we rid our country, not only

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where we've done well ... load shedding, but also with load reduction.

As you well know, we have to build 14 000 kilometres of transmission lines, so that as we generate more energy, either through renewables or otherwise, even nuclear, we're able to have the grid that will support all that. That is going to require almost R400 billion. So, all those projects are projects that we are working on. We are pushing ahead and restructuring the various areas that drive the economy of our country.

In terms of housing, there's been a slowdown in the delivery of houses here in the North West and across the country. That is why we are changing the housing delivery model, so that it is led by people's needs.

We've built almost four million houses, and we have slowed down for all the reasons that I set out. However, we now need to ramp up and come up with a model.

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In terms of roads, a significant portion of our infrastructure ... and I heard complaints that potholes are replete throughout the country. That is true. Now, our SA National Roads Agency, Sanral, is dedicated to building roads, and we also need to build our roads at provincial level as well as local level now. We are focusing on that because a country that does not have roads will never grow its economy. That is why they say, if you want to get rich ... the Chinese say, if you want to get rich, build a road. That's what we are focusing on now.

In terms of crime and safety, we are putting a dedicated strategy in place to tackle organised crime and to dismantle the criminal networks that are driving much of the crime in our country.

We are also focussing on illegal mining, including here in the North West. Premier Lesufi talks positively about how the SA National Defence Force, SANDF, has helped to eliminate illegal mining in Gauteng. Yes, we will bring the SANDF here as well, so that it can come and help. [Applause.]

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We didn't speak much about education, with education being the bedrock in what we need to do to improve our economy. We must ensure that young people have the skills that they need to find jobs. There's been a mismatch between the skills base of our young people and the jobs that are needed in the economy.

So, we are solving all of that. We are undertaking an overhaul of the skills development system. This includes strengthening the sector education and training authority, Seta, system and reviewing it, as well as the National Skills Fund.

We are working to ensure that our Technical and Vocational Education and Training, TVET, colleges are more closely aligned with industry and with the provision of workplace experience. Here in North West, we should have a university that just focuses on mining. That's what we need ...

[Applause.] ... and we will be looking at that as well.

Where the economy of the North West province ... the GDP is 52%, we need to be generating the skills that we need in those mines on an ongoing basis and in a massive way – metallurgical

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skills, engineering skills, environmental skills and mining skills as well.

I've touched on the fact that we are expanding and investing in ECD.

We haven't spoken about health, but ... going ahead with the preparations for the strengthening of the National Health Insurance, NHI, so that it can strengthen our health system. That is a given. It is going to happen, whether people like it or not. [Applause.] We cannot continue having a health system that is underpinned by the past system of apartheid. We must rid our country of all vestiges of apartheid, so that our people can have the better life that they were denied. We have also committed to the construction and refurbishment of our hospitals.

In terms of governance, the key ... effective development and service delivery is a government that is clean, capable and developmental. We have to make changes at the local government level. That is a given, and I'm glad that there is commitment that the White Paper process should move ahead and we should

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finalise it as quickly as possible so that we can reform our local government system.

So, I leave this community with renewed conviction that the future of our country is not hopeless. We have seen the resilience of our people. We've seen the determination of our young people as well, the wisdom of our elders and the courage of communities that continue to strive for a better life, even as we face immense challenges.

Parliament in the end has not come here merely to listen and depart. We come as representatives of a democratic nation determined to ensure that the voices of the people must shape the priorities of the state. Now, the road ahead may be a difficult road, and it will be difficult, but the story of our nation has always been one of overcoming adversity through unity, through courage and through collective effort. Now, if we work together ...

Sesotho:

... ha re ka sebetsa mmoho, ra tswela pele ho sebetsa mmoho.

Re hlotse puso ya kgethollo ka ho sebetsa mmoho kaofela ha

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rona. Le bao ba neng ba buella mmuso wa kgethollo kajeno ba re
bolella hore, e le rona ...

English:

... we were anti-apartheid. We accept that. However, we worked
together to bring apartheid to an end. We must now forge ahead
and work together as government, business, labour, civil
society and our traditional leaders and communities. There is
no challenge that is beyond our capacity to solve.

What has happened here in coming as the NCOP has also given me
a lot of courage that the National Dialogue process which is
going to go ahead in earnest is also going to be well received
and our people will engage in that process with a great deal
of enthusiasm, and our people will come forward and articulate
their views, their fears and their hopes.

Hope is not the denial of our challenges. Hope is the belief
that together we possess the strength, the wisdom and the
determination to overcome those challenges.

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The future of our country is still ours to build. It is not a future that will be built by the politicians in Cape Town, by the executive in the Union Buildings. It is a future that belongs to all of us, and that is why we say we must work together.

When our forebears ended the drafting of the Freedom Charter, they said, these dreams and aspirations we shall work for side by side until we have won our total freedom. That is what we should be saying. On these challenges, we will work to eliminate them, to solve them until we have won that hope of the South Africa of our dreams.

Sesotho:

A re sebetsang mmoho.

English:

So, thank you very much. It's been a most fruitful day being here.

Sesotho:

Ke a leboha.

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English:

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon members. You may take your seats. Order, hon members. Let's take our seats please. Hon members, this marks the end of our visit in the province of Bokone Bophirima. [North West.]

As the President already stated in his opening remarks, we will be taking the issues from the people here back to Parliament, to the provincial legislature, as well as to the council of Matlosana.

As the NCOP, we will be at the centre of co-ordinating the responses. We will come back to report to the people as part of ensuring that the matters they raised are attended to and to ensure government accountability.

We want to thank many people who contributed to the success of this programme – the staff who began conducting research and visited the area to collaborate on work with local officials, the Members of Parliament who undertook oversight visits in various areas in preparation for this important gathering, the people who guided us on the issues they wanted tabled and

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considered, our civil society groups and the service providers without whom this visit would not have been possible.

In particular, I thank the permanent as well as the special delegates to the NCOP, the members of the North West provincial legislature, the president of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, and the leadership and administration of the City of Matlosana Local Municipality, under the stewardship of our executive mayor and the Speaker, as well as our district executive mayor, and everybody who participated in the activities during this week. Above all, ... the community of Matlosana for their constructive participation and contribution in their programme.

Finally, with utmost humility, I would like to thank the President, our premiers, as well as the MECs for joining us here today, and outlining the imperatives of this programme and what government is doing.

Having said that, hon members, that brings us to the end of our business today. May I once more request you to remain

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seated whilst the procession leaves the Chamber. The House is adjourned. Thank you. [Applause.]

Debate concluded.

The Council adjourned at 14:38.

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