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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:00.

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

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Can I request that we switch off the air conditioning? It is a bit chilly. Are you fine?

Hon delegates, I would like to remind you that Rules, and in particular subrules 2(1), 2(2), and 2(3) of Rule 103, will apply in this House.

I will now allow an opportunity to delegates to give notices of motion, which is planned for approximately 20 minutes. I do have a list before me of the hon delegates who will be moving for their motions and motions without notice. I will start

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with notices of motions, and I call upon the hon Mmoiemang to proceed.

NOTICES OF MOTION

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE COUNCIL: Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, on behalf of the ANC, I hereby give notice that, in the next sitting of the Council, I shall move that:

The Council—

- (1) debates progress in the professionalisation of local government, equipping municipalities with the competent, ethical, and skilled workforce to improve service delivery;
- (2) notes that nearly half of South Africa's senior municipal officials do not meet the government's prescribed minimum competence levels and that, out of 2 747 municipal officials, only 1 565 officials meet the minimum competence level; and

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- (3) acknowledges that professionalising the local government sector includes addressing governance issues, promoting merit-based recruitment, and ensuring adequate training and development for all local government employees to place them at the forefront of the delivery of service to our communities and enhance municipal service delivery.

I so move, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces.
Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Mmoiemang. Can we be assisted? My screen is blank. I don't have the timer. Can I be assisted, please? [Interjections.] But I can't see anything from where I am seated. There is nothing. It is like the DA.

Thank you very much. Thank you for your patience, hon members. We are going to proceed with the Order of the day. I am now calling upon the hon Nzimande.

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Mr E NZIMANDE: Chair, I rise on behalf of MKP to give notice of motion that I shall move in the next sitting of this august House that:

The Council—

- (1) debates the quality of water, which has reached pandemic proportions in having present polycyclic hydrocarbons causing waterborne illnesses like cancer and the high number of the population not having access to clean and quality water, which is regarded as an infringement on section 24 of the Constitution
- (2) acknowledges the availability of a legal framework in dealing with water problems; and
- (3) calls for responsive, urgent action to realise the National Development Plan goals and full enjoyment of rights as espoused in section 24 of the Constitution.

We demand a comprehensive strategy since the established presidential task team on water has failed to advance full enjoyment of this right. We urge government to conduct regular

testing of water consumed by citizens, including rivers, Jojo tanks, and supplied water. Developments reflecting a critical situation requiring immediate attention to the advancement of prudent health indicators include the increase of life expectancy for citizens.

I so move.

Ms L H ARRIES: Chairperson, I rise on behalf of the EFF that, in its next sitting:

The Council debates the need to address the lack of early childhood development special needs and also the shortage of early childhood development practitioners for children with special needs.

I so move.

Mr M M PETER: Chair, the UDM moves that the House, given that several municipalities across South Africa, including Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, Emfuleni Local Municipality, and Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, have returned big amounts of allocated grants to the National Treasury due

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to underspending ... I wish to raise the matter at the next sitting of the House. Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality returned R1,9 billion. Emfuleni returned R640 million, and Nelson Mandela Bay R430 million. This financial mismanagement comes at a time when residents in these areas are facing severe service delivery challenges, including deteriorating infrastructure, sewerage flooding, potholes, uncollected refuse, and ongoing water and electricity issues.

I so move.

Mr E NZIMANDE: Chair, I rise on behalf of MKP to give notice of motion that I shall move at the next sitting of this august House that:

The Council—

- (1) debates the delay of removal of asbestos roofs in the Free State, intermittent removal of asbestos roofs in the Free State linked to each financial year, and the health risks thereof; and

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- (2) acknowledges the commitment of the provincial government to intermittently remove asbestos roofs in the Free State to comply with the regulations.

We call for compensation of community members that contracted illnesses, including asbestosis, mesothelioma, and lung cancer, as a result of government failure to eradicate asbestos roofs and demand a comprehensive strategy to eliminate health risks for community members owing to a delay in eradicating the asbestos roofs in issue. The strategy should increase the number of houses from 2 000 to avoid further risk and overburdening of the health budget ... urges government to conduct regular health screening and testing for communities whose health is at risk of contracting asbestos-related illnesses ... development, reflecting a critical situation requiring immediate attention to the prudent health indicators and, again, life expectancy of the citizens.

I so move.

Ms S L SITHOLE: Chair, notice of motion: I hereby move on behalf of the ANC that, in the next sitting of the Council, I shall move that:

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The Council—

- (1) debates gender transformation and the imbalance that continues to prevail in the small, medium, and micro enterprise, SMME, sector in South Africa;
- (2) notes that, according to the latest report, men own the majority of SMMEs and dominate those that employ between 51 and 200 employees, with women at only 1,2% of these enterprises; and
- (3) further notes that female ownership is most prevalent in small businesses comprising one to five employees, with women owning 51,3% of these enterprises.

I so move.

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, HON THOKO DIDIZA, APPOINTED
PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICA GROUP IN THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
UNION, IPU**

(Draft Resolution)

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THE CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP (Mr K M Mmoiemang): Hon Chair, I
move without notice:

That the Council -

- (1) notes with utmost humility and exhilaration the appointment of the Speaker of the National Assembly, hon Thoko Didiza, as the President of the Africa Group in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU, which is a Geopolitical Group of all Members of the African Continent in the IPU;
- (2) acknowledges the appointment of hon Didiza, who is currently leading South Africa's parliamentary delegation to the 150th IPU in Tashkent, Uzbekistan;
- (3) further acknowledges that her appointment stands as a testament to her exemplary leadership, stewardship and unwavering commitment to the advancement of the ideals of peace, development and co-operation on the African continent; and

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- (4) takes this opportunity to congratulate and wish hon Didiza well as she undertakes the critical responsibility of leading the Africa Geopolitical Group in the IPU to remain at the forefront of advancing the African agenda of a prosperous, integrated and peaceful continent.

Agreed to.

Mr M F MOKWELE: Hon Chair, on behalf on hon Noe I hereby move without notice ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Mokwele, that's not how it's done. A permission is sought prior to that. I have not received any from hon Nowe that you will be standing on his behalf. So, therefore, that will not stand. We'll afford him another chance.

**SENIOR MANAGER AT THABA CHWEU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA,
ACCUSED OF LACKING A MATRIC CERTIFICATE**

(Draft Resolution)

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Ms H S BOSHOF: Hon Chair, I move without notice:

That the Council -

- (1) notes with grave concern the recent allegations regarding a senior manager at Thaba Chweu Local Municipality in Mpumalanga, who is accused of lacking a matric certificate, possessing only a Grade 10 qualification;
- (2) further notes that the Mpumalanga Premier has initiated an investigation into these allegations and the provincial legislature has called for a comprehensive skills audit of all municipal staff;
- (3) recognises that such allegations, if proven true, undermine public trust in our municipal institutions and highlight potential deficiencies in our hiring and verification processes;
- (4) that this House calls the Member of Executive Council, MEC, for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, CoGTA, in Mpumalanga to come

and account to the Select Committee on CoGTA and Public Administration on the findings of the investigation and audit, at the earliest possible time; and

- (5) finally notes that this process needs to be expedited to restore public confidence in our municipal administrations to ensure that our municipalities are led by qualified and competent individuals dedicated to effective service delivery.

Not agreed to.

**IKHWEZI QUARRY MINE'S NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE RESIDENTS OF
MPINDWENI, NYANDENI MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE**

(Draft Resolution)

Ms A MATSHOBENI: Hon Chair, I move without notice:

That the Council -

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- (1) notes with concern the negative impact which the Ikhwezi Quarry Mine has had on residents in Mpindweni, in the Nyandeni Municipality, in the Eastern Cape;
- (2) further notes that the Ikhwezi Quarry is a holder of mining rights for stone in Nyandeni, which was issued on 22 March 2007, and the mine started to operate in August 2009;
- (3) recognises that Ikhwezi Quarry has not undertaken any corporate social responsibilities and has not engaged in any acts which prompt local employment and procurement, or community development and that instead, the owner of the project has employment their own children for bricklaying employment opportunities;
- (4) recognises that blasting quarry operations are generally notorious for their negative effects on the environment and its community;

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- (5) acknowledges that the negative impact with the Ikhwezi Quarry has had on the community and homeowners near the blasting quarry operation as there are toxic fumes, dust, burial sites have been drowned as a result, as well as reported cases ...
[Time expired.]

[No audio recording available.]

**DA GETTING SUPPORT FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF SOCIETY FOR ITS
SERVICE DELIVERY**

(Draft Resolution)

Mr N GOTSELL: Hon Chair, I move without notice:

That the Council -

- (1) notes and welcomes the decision of a former ANC councillor in the City of Cape Town to join the Democratic Alliance, reflecting growing recognition of the DA's proven record in clean governance and effective service delivery;

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- (2) further notes that this reflects a broader trend of leaders across society aligning with a party that puts people first and delivers where it governs;
- (3) also welcomes a group of respected religious leaders who have declared their support for the DA, recognising their vital role in shaping the moral and social fabric of our communities, often serving as first responders to hardship and voices for unity and peace;
- (4) commends the courage of all individuals who choose to stand for what is right and contribute to building a capable, accountable and honest state;
- (5) affirms the essential work of religious workers in fostering hope, dignity and social upliftment, often in the most difficult circumstances;
- (6) calls on this House to affirm the essential contribution of religious leaders in fostering hope, compassion and social upliftment; and

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(7) notes that this commitment to service is in line with the spirit that there shall be peace and friendship and that the people shall govern, principles that call for inclusive participation in building a better South Africa and a new society rooted in the ideals of the Freedom Charter ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Gotsell, your time is up. Your motion will be printed in full in the next Order Paper.

Mr B J FARMER: Hon Chair, on a point of order.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Farmer, on which rule are you rising?

Mr B J FARMER: Chair, I'm just seeking clarity as to whether or not that was a motion with notice or without, because ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: We are on motions without notice, hon Farmer.

Mr B J FARMER: Then the PA objects, Chair.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The next speaker will be hon Molokomme.

**NO ACCOUNTABILITY FOR BUILDING COLLAPSE IN GEORGE WHICH
CLAIMED 34 LIVES**

(Draft Resolution)

Ms K R MOLOKOMME: Thank you, Chairperson, and good evening to hon members on the platform and fellow South Africans. Chair, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council—

(1) notes with dismay that as yet no one has faced the wrath of the law for a building that collapsed in George on the 6th of May 2024;

(2) further notes that this tragedy claimed 34 lives and no one has been held accountable;

(3) acknowledges that according to ... into the incident, it found that while the material used in the

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construction – Sorry, Chair – was of good quality, the building's structure was not designed to support the weight of the building and;

- (4) calls on the Minister of Human Settlements to release the full report and police to act against all who are criminally liable.

Sorry, Chair, I lost my close friend who has just passed on. I'm sorry for the emotional reaction, Chair. Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Molokomme. We are so sorry for your loss and may her soul rest in eternal peace. We sincerely sympathise with you.

Hon members, there is a motion without notice that has been tendered by hon Molokomme. Are there any objections? Pardon? Okay. Thank you very much. We'll now move to the next speaker, hon Britz.

Mr J H P BRITZ: Thank you, hon Chair. I yield my opportunity. I will not table a motion.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Was there a motion without notice, hon Britz?

Mr J H P BRITZ: I've yielded my opportunity. ... no motion.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Okay, thank you very much. We'll now move to hon Nonkonyana.

Mr M P SIBANDE: Thank you, Chairperson. Hon Chairperson, I rise on behalf ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Sibande, I have not received any request ... that you will be standing in on behalf of hon Nonkonyana. So, as a result, we'll afford him another opportunity to convey his motion without notice. I now invite hon Makesini.

CITY OF TSHWANE APPROVES POLICY RECOGNISING UKUTHWASA

(Draft Resolution)

Ms M MAKESINI: Thank you, Chair. I rise on behalf of the EFF to note that the City of Tshwane has taken a progressive and

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commendable step by approving a policy that grants special leave to employees who undergo ukuthwasa.

This policy affirms the dignity, cultural identity and spiritual responsibility of African people, which has long been undermined and marginalised under colonial and capitalist systems.

The Traditional Healers Organisation has rightfully welcomed this decision and has called upon organs of state and private institutions to follow suit.

Cultural and spiritual practices such as ukuthwasa are not only legitimate but foundational to the identity and well-being of many African workers across the country.

The EFF notes that it will applaud the City of Tshwane for leading with revolutionary consciousness and affirming African spiritual practices in the workplace.

We call upon municipalities, provincial governments, national departments and the private sector to adopt a similar approach to make sure that this policy is implemented.

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We reaffirm the importance of traditional healers, African spirituality and the decolonisation of workplace policies across ...

I so move, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OIF THE NCOP: Thank you very much. Are there any objections? None. The motion is agreed to.

**UPGRADE OF ROAD AT NALEDI INDUSTRIAL PARK IN METSIMAHOLO LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY**

(Draft Resolution)

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

That this Council—

- (1) applauds with appreciation the significant contribution made by local businesses and stakeholders toward the repair and upgrade of the road at Naledi Industrial Park in Metsimaholo Local Municipality;

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- (2) notes that despite ongoing service-delivery challenges and inadequate road infrastructure in Metsimaholo, this civil society action shows again that, regardless of the failures of the ANC-EFF coalition in Metsimaholo, the residents stay committed to make their town work;
- (3) acknowledges that the total cost of this project amounted to 300 000 of which 220 was generally donated by local businesses, demonstrating that eendrag maak mag [unity is strength];
- (4) the DA in Metsimaholo congratulates the businesses and community members who stepped up forward to support this initiative, showing leadership, civic pride and a commitment to economic development and safer roads in our community;
- (5) calls on Metsimaholo to stop wasting ratepayers' money and prioritise sustainable investment in infrastructure.

I so move, Chair.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Are there any objections?

An HON MEMBER: Yes, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The motion stands defeated. Hon Peter?

**GRADE 12 LEARNER SEVERELY INJURED AT KWAKOMANI TECHNICAL HIGH
SCHOOL**

(Draft Resolution)

Mr M M PETER: Thank you, hon Chair. The UDM moves without notice:

That the House—

- (1) notes with deep concern the tragic incident that occurred at KwaKomani technical High School, where a Grade 12 learner suffered severe injuries during a woodwork class, resulting in the loss of three fingers, highlighting the serious failure in ensuring learner safety in technical education;

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- (2) further notes the critical importance of technical education in South Africa, as it forms the foundation of a skilled force necessary for economic development and that learners must be properly safeguarded to succeed in these environments;
- (3) UDM condemns the failure of the Department of Basic Education to ensure the proper vision of safety measures and equipment in technical schools, and the lack of adequate supervision and oversight which put the life and future of the learner at risk;
- (4) UDM calls on the Department of Basic Education to urgently investigate the incident, equip all technical schools with the necessary protective gear and tools, implement robust safety protocols, provide immediate and ongoing medical care and psychological support to the injured learner, and ensure adequate academic support to allow him to complete the final exam.

I so move.

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

WORLD HEALTH DAY

(Draft Resolution)

Ms M M BAINS: Thank you, Chairperson. I hereby move ... notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council—

- (1) notes that 7th of April, which was yesterday, marked World Health Day with a focus on maternal and newborn health;
- (2) further notes that this annual event, marking the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organisation in 1948, aims to raise awareness about critical health issues and to promote health equity globally;

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- (3) acknowledges that this year's theme: Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures, launches a year-long campaign dedicated to improving the health and well-being of mothers and their newborns;
- (4) recognises that globally, approximately 300 000 women die annually due to pregnancy or childbirth, while over two million babies die within their first month of life and around two million more are stillborn; and
- (5) calls on the Department of Health to increase access to essential maternal and child health.

I so move.

Motion agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution

WESTERN CAPE GOVERNMENT UNVEILS R918 MILLION LEEULOP PRECINCT

(Draft Resolution)

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

That this Council—

- (1) extends congratulations to Premier Alan Winde and the provincial Minister of Infrastructure, Tertuis Simmers, for unveiling the Western Cape government's first inner-city mixed-use affordable housing development, the R918 million Leeuloop Precinct;
- (2) this bold initiative is a significant step in correcting spatial apartheid and advancing dignity through ownership;
- (3) notes that this is not just a bricks-and-mortar project but it is a model of forward-thinking governance built on partnership, sustainability and economic inclusion;
- (4) situated in the heart of Cape Town, the Leeuloop Precinct will yield more than 840 housing

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opportunities with 350 affordable units, made possible through cross subsidisation;

(5) this means the open-market units will directly finance housing for working-class South Africans;

(6) this is innovation in action;

(7) acknowledges that it's built to 4-Star Green Building standards with a net zero carbon certification target;

(8) this is not just about building homes, but it's about building sustainable, inclusive cities;

(9) with 18 to 20 levels of high-rise living, integrated social amenities and modern infrastructure, this is the kind of future-focused development our country so desperately needs;

(10) further notes that beyond this catalytic project, Premier Winde and Minister Simmers went further by handing over some 71 title deeds to financially distressed homeowners;

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(11) in partnership with First National Bank, these families who once feared losing their homes now own them outright.

I so move.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Is there any objection, hon members?

An HON MEMBER: ... object.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The motion stands defeated. I now invite hon Zulu. Order, hon members. Hon members, order.

CHALLENGES WITH E-HOME AFFAIRS PORTAL

(Draft Resolution)

Mr S A ZULU: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. I hope this one I'm about to give will be progressive as well.

IsiZulu:

Ngifuna ukuzwa usho njalo.

English:

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Go straight to your motion.
You've lost 30 seconds already.

Mr S A ZULU: I move without notice on behalf of the MK Party:

That the Council—

- (1) notes with concern the ongoing technical challenges affecting the functionality of the e-Home Affairs portal, including frequent system crashes, slow processing times, inadequate security measures and insufficient user support;
- (2) here are some Home Affairs locations in Mpumalanga that have faced challenges with e-Home Affairs services;
- (3) *Emalahleni* experiences bank technical issues with the online booking system, *Mbombela*, Nelspruit faces the challenges of long queues and waiting times, and Secunda has issues with smart ID card and passport applications;

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- (4) further notes that these persistent issues significantly hinder citizens' access to essential services such as identity documents, passports and other critical civil documents.
- (5) acknowledges the importance of a reliable and secure digital platform to enhance service delivery and promote public trust in government systems; and
- (6) therefore calls on the Minister of Home Affairs to take urgent and effective steps to resolve the technical problems affecting the e-Home Affairs portal and to ensure the system is secure, efficient and accessible to all citizens.

I move that this motion be adopted by the House ...

[Inaudible.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Your time is up, hon member. Your motion shall be put on an Order Paper. So, I didn't have an opportunity to say whatever you wanted me to say.

Mr S A ZULU: ... biased.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The next motion is from hon Ndlangisa-Nodada. We are moving to hon Fienies.

WORLD AUTISM MONTH

(Draft Resolution)

Ms D W FIENIES: Thank you, Chairperson. I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the House—

- (1) notes that April is observed as World Autism Month, which is a month dedicated to increasing understanding, acceptance and support for the autistic community;
- (2) further notes that the 2nd of April is observed as World Autism Awareness Day and is recognised by the UN, and that this year the theme is, Advancing New Diversity and UN Sustainable Development Goals;

(3) acknowledges that autism spectrum disorder, ASD, is a developmental disorder that affects social interactions, communication and behaviour, and

(4) therefore calls on the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to continue with their plans of including matters of new diversity conditions and new logical disorders in the new legislation.

I so move.

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

**KLERKSDORP-TSHEPONG TERTIARY HOSPITAL RECOGNISED AS BEST
PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL FOR NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY NURSING STUDENTS**

(Draft Resolution)

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Hon Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the DA:

That this Council—

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- (1) notes with pride that Klerksdorp-Tshepong Tertiary Hospital in the North West province was recognised as the best provincial hospital for providing exceptional practical training to nursing students of the North West University, which was awarded on Friday 4 April 2025;
- (2) further notes that in addition to this accolade, sister Lesedi Taunyane from Klerksdorp-Tshepong Tertiary Hospital was honoured as the best professional nurse for her outstanding contribution to the nursing profession; and
- (3) calls on this House to commend these efforts to uplift the standard of health care, training and service delivery in South Africa.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Is there any objection? The motion stands defeated. Order, hon members. I'm now moving to hon Medupe.

CONTINUED SUCCESS OF OPERATION SHANELA

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(Draft Resolution)

Ms O D MEDUPE: Thank you very much, hon Chair. I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

- (1) notes that Operation Shanela continues to make commendable progress in the fight against crime, with 13 633 suspects having been arrested through multidisciplinary operations;
- (2) further notes that a number of takedowns and major drug busts were recorded, which include the confiscation of R50 million worth of crystal methamphetamine during an intelligence-driven operation in Aliwal North in the Eastern Cape;
- (3) Council acknowledges the major successes that have been made in the interception of a truck and vehicle car-hijacking syndicate, in which four suspects were arrested; and
- (4) calls on the police to continue with this operation to ensure that we deal with crime decisively.

I so move.

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

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOPL Thank you very much, hon members. That was the last motion without notice, which was rendered by hon Medupe. We now move to the next item on the Order Paper, and I would like to take this opportunity to invite hon Badenhorst, the chairperson of the Select Committee on Public Infrastructure and Ministries in Presidency, to present the committee's report. You've got 10 minutes, hon Badenhorst. You can start. I will let you know when your time is up as I'm timing you.

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
INFRASTRUCTURE AND MINISTRIES IN THE PRESIDENCY - OVERSIGHT
VISIT TO KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE FROM 23 TO 25 OCTOBER 2024**

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chairperson, hon members, and fellow South Africans, the Report on the Select Committee on Public Infrastructure and Ministries in The Presidency on the oversight visit to KwaZulu-Natal province from 23 to 25

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October 2024. The full report was published in Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports and was circulated to all the members. So, it is not my objective to verbatim parrot-read the Report to the House today. I will do an executive summary. The Select Committee on Public Infrastructure Ministries in The Presidency undertook an oversight visit to the KwaZulu-Natal province, specifically the Ugu District and the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality from 23 to 25 October 2024.

The primary objective was to assess the effectiveness, co-ordination, and capacity of national, provincial, and local governments in delivering critical public infrastructure and transport services. The visit encompassed a broad range of site inspections and stakeholder engagements, focusing on road infrastructure, social infrastructure, transport networks and port operations. The findings revealed significant progress in some areas, such as the completion of the Port Shepstone magistrate's court and rural access roads. However, systemic challenges persist, including poor contractor performance, budgetary constraints, infrastructure vandalism, delays caused by so-called construction mafia, and disputes between

municipal and national authorities on transport operational models.

The committee highlighted the need for stronger intergovernmental co-operation, enhanced oversight mechanisms, and sustainable project planning to ensure long-term infrastructure resilience and socioeconomic development.

The select committee operates in accordance with the section 41(1)(h)(ii) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, which mandates co-operative governance and intergovernmental relations amongst spheres of government. Infrastructure and public transport systems are central to economic development, social cohesion, and service delivery.

The committee's oversight was framed by the need to understand both the successes and failures within KwaZulu-Natal in the context of national infrastructure development. The delegation included Members of Parliament from across the political spectrum and provinces, reflecting a unified commitment to accountable governance. The visit was structured to allow for high-level briefings, community interactions, and direct

inspection of infrastructure projects, providing a comprehensive overview of regional challenges and successes.

Here are the key findings - and I will do this by theme - firstly, the road and transport infrastructure: the Sanral reported varying conditions of roads within the province, with 78% deemed good or exceptionally good, while 4% remained in poor or extremely poor conditions. Key upgrades are scheduled for the commencement in 2025, pending tender finalizations. The provincial Department of Transport outlined a robust pipeline of road projects. However, progress is constrained by budget shortfalls and ageing infrastructure. Local municipalities are implementing periodic road maintenance and upgrades, but these efforts are hampered by limited financial resources and delays linked to community unrest and procurement inefficiencies. Concerns about interference by the construction mafias were raised. Local facilitation and subcontracting to legitimate local businesses have mitigated some issues, though further security and oversight are needed. The GO!Durban Integrated Public Transport Network Infrastructure is at risk due to an impasse between the municipality and the Department of Transport over the

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operational model. The delays threaten R400 million in contractual settlements and jeopardise public trust.

On the social infrastructure, the Port Shepstone magistrate's court stands as a model of dignified, secure, and modern justice delivery. The project, however, faced legal and logistical hurdles, including a contract dispute that cost the department R62,5 million. Community halls in Frankland and Dlangezwa have been completed, but maintenance, security and utility challenges undermine their full utilisation, poor workmanship, and lack of equipment hinder effective service delivery. Municipalities have made headway in the electrification and public facilities, including sports centres and community markets. Nonetheless, gaps in security, quality assurance, and service delivery co-ordination remains.

On water and sanitation, the Ugu District Municipality is currently reliant on outsourced water tanker services due to the destruction of municipal assets during unrests. This has imposed a significant financial burden, the exact cost of which is to be clarified.

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On the port and rail infrastructure, Transnet presented a comprehensive master plan for the Durban port, including upgrades to terminals and the installation of a new dry dock. Operations are hampered by ageing equipment and staff shortages, especially within tugboat and pilot boat services. Trucks turnaround time remains a serious bottleneck, with delays of up to 277 minutes. An online booking system and an improved customs clearing have been introduced to improve efficiency. Freight rail capacity is being restored through repairs to flood-damaged locomotives and partnerships with industry showing year-on-year improvement in tonnage transported.

On the rural infrastructure and economic inclusion, the Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme is behind schedule, with only four of 13 planned bridges completed. Challenges include lack of lab testing, protective equipment for workers, and municipal service support. Municipalities are encouraged to leverage community infrastructure for local revenue generation through public-private partnerships and hire-for-function models.

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Our recommendations: under intergovernmental co-ordination, the Department of Transport and eThekweni Municipality must resolve the GO!Durban operational dispute. Both the department and the municipality have been informed that the follow up briefing will be scheduled to track the resolution of the matter between the two entities. The Sanral is urged to resume negotiations with provinces regarding the transfer of strategic roads. On infrastructure quality and accountability, implementation of the Construction Management System, CMS, as a mandatory tender requirement for contractors across the Sanral, the Department of Transport, and the Department of Public Works projects. Municipalities must submit detailed reports on project costs, progress, and reasons for variance.

On monitoring and oversight, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure must report back within six months on the resolution of the Welisizwe Programme challenges. Transnet was informed to submit the performance report for the Durban port for the 2024 festive season. The select committee will conduct a follow up engagement with Transnet on all port operations.

On community infrastructure management, the municipality should standardise maintenance and security frameworks for

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community halls. Local government should explore revenue generating strategies and Corporate Social Responsibility collaborations with contractors. On public safety and procurement integrity, national government to develop a co-ordinated strategy to address disruptions by the construction mafia with the SAPS support. All infrastructure departments must include social facilitation and community liaison roles in project planning.

In conclusion, KwaZulu-Natal remains the province of great strategic importance for South Africa's socioeconomic development. While progress is evident, long-standing issues require decisive action and political will. The select committee remains committed to supporting all spheres of government through robust oversight and enabling intergovernmental collaboration to achieve inclusive infrastructure growth and service delivery. I so move the Report. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Declarations of Vote:

Adv Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chairperson and hon members, first and foremost, I must apologise for arriving to the session late, although I connected on time. The Eastern Cape, the

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province of legends is very pleased to hear that our colleagues visited our province and tried to promote provincial interests as well as local interest. As the Eastern Cape, we are very pleased and hope that their recommendations will be taken seriously and implemented. Thank you, Chair.

Mr P NOE: Hon Chair, the Free State province has nothing to declare.

Mr M G MODISE: As the Gauteng province, the home of champions, let's marry ourselves to the views of the province of the legends and welcome the report. Thank you.

Mr M BILLY: Chair, on behalf of the KwaZulu-Natal province, we commend the work that has been done by the committee, and we certainly welcome the content of the report. I'm not sure of the other spokesperson of the province. [Interjections.]

The Chairperson of the NCOP: Hon members, can we please allow the speaker on the floor an opportunity.

Mr M BILLY: We support the report, Chairperson.

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Mr M F MOKWELE: Hon Chairperson, hon members, greetings to you. The Limpopo province has nothing to declare.

Mr M P SIBANDE: Chairperson, as the province of the rising sun, we agree.

Afrikaans:

Me D W FIENIES: Voorsitter, as die Noord-Kaap verwelkom ons die verslag. [Chairperson, as the Northern Cape, we welcome the report.]

Ms S L SITHOLE: Chair, the North West welcomes the report.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Madam Chair, the Western Cape welcomes the report. It commends the committee for all their hard work especially the committee chairperson for the eloquent delivery of the report. Thank you very much.

Debate concluded.

Question put: That the Report be agreed to.

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

Report accordingly agreed to in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

**DEBATE ON 31 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY: COMMEMORATING 31 YEARS OF
COLLECTIVE EFFORTS TO BUILD A NEW SOCIETY ROOTED IN THE IDEALS
OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER**

Mr B A RADEBE: Hon House Chairperson, hon Ryder, the presiding officer, the Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Mtsweni Tsipane, the Chief Whip of the Council, hon Maimane, Ministers and MECs present, permanent delegates and special delegates of the NOP, the representatives of the local government, fellow South Africans, comrades and friends, it is with deep humility and profound sense of pride that I rise to participate in this important debate, a debate that honours and commemorates 31 years since the dawn of democracy and our collective journey in building a new, inclusive, just society rooted in the timeless ideals of the Freedom Charter. I feel excitement and pulsing in my heart. This moment is not just about history. It

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is about the future. For me, as the member of the ANC, this day rings with the voices of our great leaders who came before us. These men and women shaped our path to freedom. They stood firm when darkness threatens to swallow our dreams. I'll quote one leader, Nelson Mandela, who has inspired us with his lasting words and important words when he said, I quote: "A nation's true wealth lies not in material possessions like gold or diamonds, but in the harmony and happiness of its people". I heard this message, and it gets deeper in the depths of my soul. It teaches us the value of unity. So, without unity there is no possibility to work things out. With unity, we can change the world, and this is also affirmed by the late President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, when he said, I quote: "It is our responsibility to break down barriers of division and create a country where there will be neither Whites nor Blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity".

And we swiftly celebrate the victory of such labour of people like Mandela and Tambo. Our democracy stands as a testimony to the sacrifices made by men and women of freedom. For more than just an expression of commitment to liberate this nation, Walter Sisulu stands as a fulfilment of his own words when he

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said, I quote: Together, we have the power to transform society and reclaim our dignity as a people. In parliamentary literature in law and policies his dreams grow by day. It is here in this Parliament.

Hon Chairperson, today, we stand in the shoulders of the giants, who in 1955 gathered in Kliptown and boldly declared that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white and they made a clarion call that no government will justify its existence unless it is by the will of the people. That's why the first one in the Freedom Charter is very clear. The People Shall Govern. The Freedom Charter was not just a document. It was and remains a blueprint for a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous South Africa. As we engage in this debate, we should remember Solomon Kalusha Mahlangu, a prominent South African freedom fighter and uMkhonto weSizwe operative who was a stout supporter for the Freedom Charter and dedicated his life to the cause of liberation ultimate dying a martyr for the course he believed in. His last words before he was executed on 6 April 1979. We commemorated him on Sunday. It was the 46th Anniversary of his death, he said, I will quote: My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I

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love them. They must continue the fight. That was a young man who was facing the galosh, who made that clarion call. But this issue that we must continue struggle didn't end up there even after we've attained democracy, it is the struggle of everyone in this House to ensure that South Africa becomes a prosperous country and a unified country. This clarion call of Solomon Mahlangu echoed towards Steve Biko also said before he passed on. He once said, it is better to die for an idea that will live than to live for an idea that will die. So, the idea of the Freedom Charter which Solomon Mahlangu died for is living. How do we know that it's living? Because when we look at our Constitution of the country, our Constitution of the country is a mirror image of the Freedom Charter. Those people who fought against Solomon Mahlangu, right now, they're embracing this Constitution of the Republic because Solomon Mahlangu, he preferred to die for an idea that will live than to live for the idea that will die. So, we must honour such heroes.

The Freedom Charter emerged from a deeply oppressive socioeconomic and political environment marked by social segregation, economic exclusion of the black majority and denial of basic human rights. At the time, apartheid policy

had entrenched systematic inequalities and stripped non-white South Africans of land, political representation and dignity. The Charter boldly articulates a vision for a non-racial, democratic and just society and consummated into its opening declaration, The People Shall Govern. It significantly and frankly influenced the ideological framework of the ANC and the other liberation movement, laying the foundation for the eventual constitutional democracy established in 1994.

Since 1994, under the leadership of the ANC, we have worked tirelessly to give practical expression to the Freedom Charter. We expanded access to education. The doors of learning and cultures shall be open. We brought basic services to the people, the right to health. We brought basic services to the people and enshrined human rights in our Constitution and open the doors that we once fought for the majority of the people.

Section 1 of the Constitution speaks of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom. Section 9 affirms the right to equality while section 10 to 35 provides a comprehensive framework to safeguard the rights and freedoms of every citizen. Hon

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members, these constitutional guarantees are directly aligned with the strategic vision of the ANC, that of building a national democratic society, a society where the legacy of apartheid is decisively broken and where all South Africans can live with dignity and opportunity. But to truly realize the society, we must give practical meaning to social justice. This means addressing structural inequalities that persist in access to education, healthcare, land and economic opportunities. It means transforming institutions and informing and fostering an economy that benefits all the people, not just the few.

In the spirit of the Freedom Charter, we must recommit ourselves to the progressive realization of socioeconomic rights, including access to housing, water, education, healthcare, electricity that are not luxuries, but constitutional entitlements.

Chairperson Rider, the NCOP as the voice of the provinces plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the policies and laws reflect the lived realities of the people on the ground. It is here that we must amplify the voice of the rural people, the elderly and those who remain in the margins of democracy.

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Chairperson, the progress we have made is not accidental. It is the result of intentional, sustained and collective efforts by government, civil society, labour, business and ordinary South Africans, all committed to dismantling the legacy of apartheid and building a new society grounded on equality, justice and shared prosperity. But we must be frank, the work is not done yet. Inequality persists; poverty still holds many and the promise of true economic emancipation is not yet realized. This moment calls not for complexity but for renewed commitment to the founding principle of the Freedom Charter that the land shall be shared by those who work on it and that the people shall share the wealth of the country, it cannot be that 2025, the face of poverty in South Africa, is still a black African woman. It cannot be so. It is the responsibility of the institutions like this to ensure that that legacy is eradicated forever.

Hon members, 70 years later, the relevance of the Freedom Charter has not diminished. It continues to guide South Africa's transformation agenda and provides a moral compass for addressing the challenges that persist in our democracy. It reminds us that while political freedom was achieved in 1994, the work of economic emancipation, social redress and

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inclusive development is far from over. The Charter envisaged a South Africa where the national wealth shall be restored to the people, and we shall all enjoy equal human rights. These ideals must remain. These ideas remain embedded in our Constitution and inform the National Development Plan and the government policy as we speak today.

Hon members, as we mark the 70th year Anniversary of the Freedom Charter, we must ask ourselves, are we living up to the spirit and the ladder of the Freedom Charter? Are we dismantling the structural inequalities of the past, or are we merely managing them? As representatives of the people, we must recommit to the Charter's values. We must ensure that the land reform is accelerated, education is transformed, inequalities is reduced, corruption is eradicated because these are not just policy imperatives, they are promises we made to the people in 1955 and these for all the generations to followed them. Today, we reflect not only on the progress, but also on how we are deepening our democracy, make it more participatory, more inclusive and more transformative. That's why at the heart of the vision of the national dialogue is the platform that seeks to engage all sectors of the society, from the grassroot activists, communities to policy makers to

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businesspeople, to the clergy in a meaningful conversation about our collective future. Remember that even the Charter itself to have those 10 points there, it was those 10 points we canvass throughout the country. No village was spared. The people were canvassing for those ideas, went throughout the country. Now again, 70 years later, we're still faced with that dilemma. We must now go to all out and ensure that all South Africans participate in the national dialogue so that they can express their aspiration so that we can see that as the state what can we do to ensure that there are vision and values are going to be implemented.

Chairperson, democracy does not drive on elections alone. It is nurtured through ongoing engagement, deliberation and public perception. The national dialogue gives the voice to ordinary citizens, especially who feel marginalized by political processes. It is a tool to strengthen the legitimacy of our democratic institutions by incurring them in the will and experiences of their people. Furthermore, through dialogue citizens are not just spectators but active participants, identifying challenges, shaping policies and co-creating solutions. As custodians of this democratic project, we, the parliamentarians, we must not take freedom for granted, let us

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embrace the national dialogue as a vital instrument to heal the divisions, build the trust and chart a more equal society just and united South Africa. Let us use it to ignite hope, especially among the youth. We know very well that our youth are badly affected. The highest rate of unemployment is the segment of the youth. So, it's high time that we bring them in so that we can also heard their voice in chanting the vision of South Africa.

Chairperson, as we reflect the journey we have travelled since 1994 let us not confront the road ahead. Let us also confront the road ahead with clarity and courage. Let us strengthen our democratic institutions, deepening our constitutional democracy, be South of that lives up to the ideas of the Freedom Charter, the Constitution and the National Democratic Revolution.

Over the past 30 years under the leadership of the ANC, we have steadily translated the noble aspirations of the Freedom Charter into tangible change through progressive legislation, bold policy reforms and a meaningful economic and social interventions - such intervention like the National Health Insurance, the Expanded Public Works Programme, the National

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Minimum Wage, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, the no-fee school policy, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, land reform laws and social grants now reached over 18 million people. This is the practical expression of what the Freedom Charter is expecting us to do. We are already doing it, but what we must do is that we must do more. We together, we must do more because a lot of people are still outside the net. In celebrating Freedom Day, let us remember that freedom is not a destination but a continuous journey. It is only to the attainment of the National Democratic society that we will say with confidence that freedom and democracy are not merely commemorations, but celebration of a just equitable and human society we continue to be. Let us continue to build South Africa, where they shall be houses, security and comfort. A country where opportunity is not a privilege of the few but the right to all. The Freedom Charter is a road map, and our response is to walk the road with courage, purpose and integrity.

I urge all of us to harness this debate and transform it into a call for action. I'm making that appeal because we need each other more than ever, because if we don't unite as South Africans there are eagles out there who can take us out at any

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time. So, it's very critical that the very same Constitution we are celebrating in his first founding foundation is very clear. He said that South Africa would be a 1 sovereign state. So, when you speak about the sovereign state, you speak about a state where there is a national flag, where there's a nation anthem, where there is a national emblem, where there are national symbols, where all the people have got the right to participate in elections. So, we must ensure that it is done no matter what differences we have as the South Africans, we cannot run outside the country and go and request audience from other countries out there because if we can do that, they'll see that as a weakness on our side and they'll come and charge. The very same people who went out and requested support from people from exile they are crying today because what they have done has backfired, is affecting everyone negatively. So, that's why with this debate today, let us harness the energy of South Africans and ensure that as a united nation, we build a better South Africa for all the South Africans as the Freedom Charter said in 1955. South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white.

Afrikaans:

Baie dankie, Voorsitter. [Thank you very much, Chairperson.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): House Chairperson Radebe, thank you very much for introducing the debate to us. Good afternoon, hon members, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us today. Special thanks to the people in the gallery. I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Mr Sifiso Shabangu, who's an English teacher from Salt Rock in KwaZulu-Natal and to Mr Nicholas de Jager who is a geneticist from Cape Town, on his way to share his knowledge in Spain fairly soon. Hon members, with that I'd like to invite hon Gotsell. If we can ask hon Gotsell to take his place at the podium and further the debate.

Mr N GOTSELL: Hon Chair, hon members and fellow South Africans. Last week, after the debate on the Fiscal Framework, I had a brief but revealing exchange with an ANC NCOP member. During that debate, someone made the sweeping statement that, those who do not understand poverty should not profess to act on behalf of the poor. I asked the member respectfully whether she had ever considered that some of us, despite not fitting her stereotype, may have in fact lived in poverty, that we may have firsthand experience. No pause, no reflection. Her answer was chillingly blunt, "I don't have to", because she said she knew where I came from because I'm white.

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There was no inquiry to my background, my principles or my values. She didn't care what my parents stood for, what they taught me, or even what I do and why I do it. All that mattered to her was the colour of my skin. Hon Chair, that moment hit me hard, because in that member's eyes, my story, my voice and my views did not matter. All because of the colour of my skin. The irony is that the ANC brings a debate to this House to commemorate 31 years of collective efforts.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chair, I have a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Please take your seat Mr. Gotsell. Yes, hon Badenhorst, what's your point of order?

Mr F J BADENHORST: Rule 68(1) Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Please continue.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Chair, no delegate may interrupt another delegate while they speak. It's obvious that the truth is hurting these delegates and so that they are not allowed to speak while not allowed speaking.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon member ...

[Inaudible] ... order, please. Order! Order members! Hon members, please let's have due regard for the people at the microphone. You are welcome to take up your comments with them when it's your turn to debate, but let's not drown out the speaker while they're standing at the podium. Hon Gotsell, please continue.

Mr N GOTSELL: Proves my point. So, the ANC brings this motion to commemorate 31 years of collective efforts to build a new society rooted in the ideals of the Freedom Charter. But what collective effort is there when some citizens are told that their voices do not count? And yet, here we are 31 years into democracy and a member of this House openly says that some people based on the colour of their skin should not speak, should not be heard. Because what this member said, and what so many others in the ANC, the PA, EFF and MK Party say flies in the face of the very soul of the Freedom Charter.

As hon Radebe has just said that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it's based on the will of all the people. These were not just words; they were lived values

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paid for in sacrifice. Oliver Tambo gave his life to fight for freedom and exile, never once wavering in his vision of a united, non-racial South Africa. Helen Suzman for 30 years, the lone voice in Parliament against apartheid. She stood with principle and integrity, opposing injustice no matter where it came from. Their struggle was for a country with dignity, equality and voice would never again be determined by race. Yet today some members in this House betray that legacy.

Hon Chair, we all know what's coming. Some will deflect from their failures with tired racial rhetoric, claiming once again that the DA doesn't care for the poor and no doubt, hon Farmer from the PANC shared on by the ANC for every tirade against the DA members will do the same. He'll sing for his PANC president's supper, even if it means selling out his own voters to higher VAT and more taxes.

So, let me say this clearly, that accusation is not only false, but also offensive to every single DA councillor, mayor or public servant who wakes up every morning to serve all South Africa's communities with integrity. We don't speak for the poor with slogans, we serve the poor with action

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regardless of the colour of their skin, because the DA is the most diverse political party in South Africa.

Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chair, on a point of order. Chair, on a point of order: May the member take ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Sorry hon Nonkonyana I haven't noted you yet please. But please proceed since you've taken the stand. Thank you, Sir.

Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chair, I was rising to ask if the member would take a question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Gotsell, would you like to take a question?

Mr N GOTSELL: I told the hon member before; I don't have enough crayons. We may not be perfect, but where the DA governs, we deliver. In the Western Cape more homes have clean water, flush toilets and working sanitation than anywhere else in the country. Unemployment is the lowest, schools function, clinics stay open, and roads are maintained. That's not a promise, it's proof. Not because we profess to be perfect, but

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because we work. Because we care. Because we govern for the people and not for the politically connected and ...

Mr B J FARMER: Chair, on a point of order.

Mr N GOTSELL: ... we don't tax more to steal more hon Farmer.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Gotsell, please take your seat. Hon Farmer.

Mr B J FARMER: I stand on Rule 61(b). The hon member is making a deliberately making statement which the member knows is false. They are not protecting the poor.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Farmer, that is a point of debate. Your point of order is out of order. Hon Gotsell please continue.

Mr N GOTSELL: Now the hon Farmer doesn't even know the difference between a motion of notice and notice without motion. So don't take that from him. Yes, hon members and, yes hon Radebe, we fully acknowledge the atrocities of apartheid. A brutal system that dehumanised, excluded and oppressed

millions of people based solely on the colour of their skin. Does that sound familiar? But let's be honest Chair, the ANC has not spent 31 years building the ideals of the Freedom Charter, it has spent 31 years building an elite club for comrades, cronies and for the connected. While the people suffer, the rich get richer. Not by innovation, not by merit, but by corruption.

We all remember the Guptas, the Zumas, and yes, even still members sitting here on the precinct, like hon Gigaba considered one of the chief architects of state capture. Let us not forget our current Deputy President, once implicated in the same web of looting that hollowed out our state. Even then ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Gotsell, please take your seat. Hon Nonkonyana.

Adv Inkosi M NONKONYANA: I don't know whether the hon is aware that there's a sewer in Gugulethu.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): That's not a point of order hon member. Hon Gotsell please continue.

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Mr N GOTSSELL: Shame, man the truth hurts. Let us not forget about Fikile Mbalula, the Secretary-General of the ANC who sails luxury yachts and campaigns in armoured Mercedes G-wagons and was connected to bodyguards who are accused of fraud and corruption. Meanwhile, the DA's Secretary-General drives herself in a Toyota Yaris. It's easy to play the role of the people's champion when you never carry your own bag like the EFF's commander in chief, whose Louis Vuitton backpack has its own staff member. It's easy to speak for the downtrodden when you live in palaces, like the MK Party's disgraceful president who lives in luxury of the taxes of the very people who he claims to fight for. What? Does your Louis Vuitton bag not have its own staff member? You hide behind racial rhetoric. You cry foul every time someone wants to expose the rot.

Mr V GERRICKE: Chair, on a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Gotsell, please take your seat. Please take your seat, Mr Badenhorst. Mr Gericke, your point of order, please.

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Mr V GERICKE: Chair, can I ask the member whether he will take a question, please. Thank you very much.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): I believe he's ...

[Inaudible] ... to the contrary. Hon Gotsell will you take a question?

Mr N GOTSELL: We all might need less crayons ...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Please take your seat again hon Gotsell. Hon Gotsell, please take your seat. Hon Badenhorst, you are next.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chair, Rule 68. Nobody will get the answer to the question if they don't stop babbling at the back while he's speaking. Can you please ask him to keep quiet.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon members, again, due regard for the speaker, please. Hon Gotsell please continue.

Afrikaans:

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Mr N GOTSELL: Dit lyk vir my daai Louis Vuitton sakkie maak baie amok! [It looks like that Louis Vuitton bag is causing a lot of trouble!]

English:

Anyway, you hide behind racial rhetoric. You cry foul every time someone exposes the rot. But after 31 years of power, what kind of country have you built where taps run dry, and millions live in darkness without electricity or hope? That's why the electorate took the power from you. You turned hope into disappointment and instead of taking responsibility, you divide, and you deflect. If that is how you see your fellow South Africans, then the ANC is no better than the racist EFF and MK Party. In their hatred and hypocrisy, they deserve each other.

This is not justice. This is not freedom, and it is certainly not the vision of the Freedom Charter. The Charter says: "South Africa belongs to all who live in it." Until that is truly embraced, we are not building a new society. We're just repainting some old walls.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon members, I do wish to remind you please. The scope for disagreement in the House, there are Rules that promote hackling, but please don't drown out the speaker. It is inappropriate to hold a monologue ... [Inaudible] ... of the speaker's speech. [Inaudible] ... we are all in a debate. Let's try and be nice to each other. Hon members, we now invite the Minister of Human Settlements to participate in the debate. Hon Simelane.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, Ryder, hon Chairperson of the NCOP, Minister Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane, hon Deputy Chair, Mr Govender, hon members, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. Firstly, thank you very much for affording me the opportunity to participate in this important debate. We enter this debate as Human Settlements family to give a detailed account and muse of progress made in creating integrated human settlements to regress the legacy of apartheid spatial development and ensure that the people of South Africa have access to housing.

This timely debate coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter since its crucial adoption in Kliptown in 1955 by the people of South Africa, and it succinctly articulates

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the hopes and aspirations of our people. It aspires in ...
[Inaudible.] ... expression that there shall be houses,
security and comfort.

One of the defining tasks of the democratic developmental state is to systematically undo the legacy of apartheid spatial settlement - a legacy that continues to exclude the majority from opportunity, mobility and dignity. But it also forces us to look into what did we do in the past 30 years? In terms of the creation of human settlements, we moved from 30% of electrical connection to our residents to 97%. Over 60% of our communities, particularly Africans, saw electricity for the first time in their household under the leadership of the democratic dispensation as led by government of the ANC. For the first time under the democratic dispensation, our African elderly were also called and afforded the dignity they deserve through an increase in the social wage - an initiative we continue to carry forward today through the Department of Social Development. What they were given in life before that were places as backyard dwellers in towns and kitchens where they used to work, sometimes even given food shared with the dog for them to be able to live. But this government brought dignity to those people.

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Let us explore why development has not happened in the past 30 years. Who has been against the policies of ensuring that we pay our workers well? It can only be the DA. Who is afraid of democratic dispensation in terms of economic empowerment policies of broad-based economic development? We may talk about the elites and the people who are supposed to be developed in this country, but who would oppose the inclusion of economists who are dedicated to improving the lives of their people? It is a defining task to ensure that their voices contribute to the safety and wellbeing of all.

We all took part in the struggle. Others fought for freedom. It cost them their lives, tears, sweat, and blood. Who did the system favour? Today, they come and come and stand for those whom the system never favoured. Even if you joined Beyers Naude, you still had white privilege for the very same fact that you are white. Even if Margaret Thatcher stood in that Parliament and fought, there are privileges which she still had because she was white.

We are refining the White Paper for Human Settlements of 2024, which states that for decades, the poor and the working class of South Africa have lived on the margins, spatially,

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economically and socially disconnected from jobs, education, health care, and social services. Today, who speaks against the Basic Education Laws Amendment, Bela, Bill which ensures that all our children are educated in the same space, equally and with equal share and without favouritism? We all know who. We want National Health Insurance to cover all our Africans as part of the delivery of what primary health care has been promised in this country and is championed by the ANC. We know who voted against the budget which promotes that. They can come here today and tell us how much they love us. We know who supports Israel against the people of Palestine who are murdered every day. This is a policy that our ANC leads, ensuring that the people of Palestine shall be free, just as we are.

So, you claim to have joined us. Why don't you join those who are struggling today in trying to face their issues? We are striving for inclusive, integrated, and sustainable human developments. Who has the High Court of South Africa - the apex court, and the Constitutional Court of this country found incrementally as departments of human settlements in the provinces have been fined for allocating people to 30 kilometres away from all the residences? Is the DA's City of

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Cape Town? Have you forgotten what you did to the City of Tshwane and deliberately demolishing it?

Mayor Brink has been recalled precisely because he couldn't leave. What is he doing now? He is dealing with the very same ActionSA-led mayor who is assisted by us to turn the situation around for the people of Tshwane. As a bold and strategic intervention for the seventh administration, 136 priority areas have been developed - one of which is the National Spatial Development Framework, aligned with the integrated development plans of municipalities to create geographic zones and to ensure that there is no longer fragmented and racially segregated inefficient urban areas which were inherited from our past. Who is against the expropriation of land that is supposed to be given spatially to people who are segregated and are still far-flung? People are still waking up at 4 a.m. to travel from KwaNdebele to Tshwane just to work - still dispossessed of land, still carrying the burden of apartheid spatial planning. How many hectares of land do we pass as we enter areas and cities governed by those who failed to ensure that the black and white people are treated equal today? We are therefore consolidating this social and spatial

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investments to ensure that integrated planning is co-ordinated.

This is not about housing only. The spatial instrument has to catalyse transformation. The alignment of Human Settlements Development Grant and the Informal Settlements Upgrading Partnership Grant funding for the priority development areas, PDA, is essential. While this alignment will ensure a shift from fragmented projects, our focus is on investments to ensure that we create well-planned and complete areas. In line with the White Paper, there are three areas that the Human Development Agency, HDA - as we normally call it, will focus on in collaboration with provinces and municipalities: identification, acquisition and release of land.

We are committed to promoting the compact connectedness of urban areas, improved access to economic opportunities, long-term sustainability and efficient infrastructure use. This we are going to enforce in all the areas, including expropriating pieces of land that are not being utilised in the city centres to ensure that we house our people so that they can be closer to their workplaces and where it is convenient and clean - rather than being forced to travel into far-flung villages

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where they are supposed to be staying. Recognising that these dynamics are constantly evolving, a national process is underway to review and update all the PDAs as they have been. So, this strategic policy shift includes that White Paper emphasis I've been talking about.

We are addressing again our 2024 to 2029 Medium-Term Development Plan commitments, which includes, amongst others, developing master plans for all the metros in a comprehensive way. We are also ensuring that the districts and their locals live up to the three PDAs fundamentals to ensure that the 23 districts that have been mapped already encompass intermediate cities, so that such an approach will work in the development of our grand plans. We just handed over a Grand Central building in the city centre of Midrand, and 990 rental units were handed over, predominantly to people who fall within the income bracket of R3 500 to R22 000. Why are we targeting such areas? So that people could be centrally located. Who said this is happening only in the City of Cape Town? Yes, informal settlements and the upgrades, even in other areas in the City of eThekweni, for example, you find many of such. Currently, we are working together with the City of eThekweni, KwaDukusa Municipality, and the province to be building the same

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integrated settlement to ensure that we deliver more in what the city centre, the land is in Ballito. Yes, we are having challenges with neighbours who do not want people who look like me, but the integration and the intention of social cohesive is to bring those who have been marginalised into areas where they are all interested in staying. So, Oliver Tambo remains very relevant, even in 70 years of what they dreamed about in 1955. There are specific spaces of what has been donated by Public Works - 2 500 hectares and more. We are also looking into initiatives of purchasing land in towns and expropriate hijacked buildings.

Tomorrow, the department will be delivering the outcome of what caused the collapse of the George building. You will see the good implementing municipalities under the nice-led party - a party which has no mistakes, and which is led by individuals who do not create mistakes. But 34 people lost their lives because corners were cut, processes and procedures were not followed - all in the name of delivery and the promotion of capitalism, instead of ensuring that you secure and safeguard the lives of our people. Were those workers properly remunerated? No. Were those workers properly registered? No. Is it difficult for the Department of Labour

to pay them today and trace them, even when some have lost limbs, legs, arms because of a caring, democratic-led municipality? Tell us. We will tell you back, because ...

Sepedi:

... tša rena di a patwa, tša ba bangwe di a pepentšhwa.

English:

As I conclude, let me hasten to indicate that, as Human Settlements, we are committed to give strategic, forward-looking policy foundations to ensure that our plans include the safety and security of our people. This also includes ensuring that our instruments to spatial transformation are embedded on aspects of integration. In the same space, funding, land, and partnerships remains our key levers. On 28 March, we launched a programme with NFHC to ensure that we fund small and emerging developers so that they could be the ones who develop on behalf of our people. Because by choice, those who inherited wealth from their great-grandfathers, while our fathers had nothing and still have nothing today, choose to develop land for big and commercial business rather than for the settlement of African people. We intend to incubate this jointly with the National Home Builders

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Registration Council, NHBRC, and the SABS - which is the SA Bureau of Standards, to assist them to credibly renovate all buildings in city centres and accommodate our people at an affordable rate.

If you look into our First Home Finance programme, which the National Housing Finance Corporation, NFHC, runs well, is well beyond us. We closed the financial year, and all the money that was allocated has been paid out. What does it do? It caters for all Africans - blacks and coloureds who are neglected and rejected by commercial banks. Don't give them money, even if they work. Don't give them bonds. We are giving them over R5 000 in this financial year that we are closing. The department is trying to double the money to ensure that we increase between R10 000 to R15 000. African children who have fought themselves out of poverty are the first ones to work in their household to try and develop themselves. It is difficult. What does the capitalist bank do? It shuns them out and denies them access to a life closer to where they want to live. Seventy years on, we will continue on the ideals of what O R Tambo mandated us to do and declaring them while the sun shines beamingly on the face of an African child to ensure that life becomes better and desirable.

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It is our firm commitment to prioritise the legislative and policy amendment and intensify our implementation, scale up innovation, and close the savings delivery gap. Let us move forward boldly with unity, focus, and agency to create integrated, inclusive, and future-ready human settlements to restore the dignity, foster opportunity, and write spatial legacy of our past. We know those who loved us before. We know those who were on our side then. We know who will vote for us. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Ms L H ARRIES: House chairperson, greetings to the commander in chief, Julius Sello Malema, officials of the EFF, commissars and ground forces of the economic emancipation movement in Africa, good afternoon.

It is important to note from the backdrop of the existence of the EFF, that notable efforts would have been cited in relation to this debate, had the emancipation movement not existed to begin. It is important to note that we exist as the EFF because emancipation does not.

Thirty-one years of democracy, we find ourselves a hopeless nation, not because we are a hopeless people, but because we

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have hopeless leadership. This crisis continues to ache the fibre of the true make of democracy in many countries across the continent.

We are plagued with liberation movements that have failed to see past the moment of oppression. In fact, we are ached with liberation movements that have sought to take over the seat of the oppressor - that's the reality - under the guise of progressive leadership when it is far from that.

The Freedom Charter boldly states that the rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex. However, this isn't the reality in South Africa as our courts are not a place of justice and refuge for the poor and black people.

White criminals aren't treated the same as black criminals. White suspects aren't treated the same as black suspects. A point in case is the tragic rape of Cwecwe which has three suspects one of whom is yet to be treated as such. And of course, he is white.

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The Freedom Charter asserts that all national groups shall be treated the same and protected by law against insult to their race and national pride. However, the Khoi and the San cannot claim this dignity embalmed in the Freedom Charter. To date, their histories, language and culture have been isolated, and settler culture and language preserved and upheld with more dignity and pride than them. That's the reality.

The Freedom Charter states that all apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside. This isn't the case; we have retained the apartheid make of carving this racialised society. The economics, land ownership and general hierarchy still rests on the legislative efforts implanted by the apartheid government.

The apartheid government gave their people land, the ANC did not. The apartheid government gave their people economic opportunities that continue to linger generations down the line, the ANC did not. Even more depressive, the GNU is far from engrafting a direction as decisive and protective of our people as the apartheid government has been over its own.

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The Freedom Charter states that the land will be redivided amongst those who work it. This isn't the case. Farm workers continue being treated like the scum of the earth whilst a minority boasts supremacy and threatens the sovereignty of this nation due to their arrogance. We do not own the land; settlers do. Beneficiaries of settlers own our land. That is our reality in this country. How do you celebrate the Freedom Charter when you fear everything monumental about it?

The Freedom Charter bestows labour dignity that we have not seen or touched in this nation. In the Freedom Charter, the state will recognise all work, yet sex workers don't share in this declaration. Their human rights triumphed and continue to face abuse from the big guns and owners of industries who don't want to see an end to human trafficking and sex trafficking because they benefit.

The Freedom Charter states that all races shall receive equal pay for equal work. To date, remuneration in this country has an apartheid sight. Black people continue to earn lesser than their white counterparts. That's the reality. Black women taking the harshest make of this reality by being at the

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bottom of the food chain - earning less than those with lesser qualifications and experience than them.

The GNU government via the DA strengthens this crisis by employing unqualified people in the offices of Ministers. The ANC making a laughing stock of education by employing unqualified people in municipalities that then go on to crumble due to these discrepancies.

You have betrayed the Freedom Charter. You did so in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, CODESA, negotiations after you chose civil rights over economic freedom for our people. You continue to do so by failing to implement, initiate and support progressive laws introduced by the EFF to right your wrongs. You deny us the protection of ensuring that land is brought back to our people by rejecting our Bills, and criminalising land occupation programmes.

Our children don't get to experience free education. Some are withering at home after having completed their qualifications and degrees but have not touched the sweat of their work with their own hands because they owe fees.

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Over half of our population lives in absolute poverty, no food security and comfort as purported by the Freedom Charter. This a blatant failure on your behalf as the ANC. You have not only turned against our people, but you have also turned against yourselves and the very fibre of what some of your comrades lost their lives in pursuit of.

Today you are the people that celebrate value added tax, VAT, hikes. Today you are the people that lie to victims of rape. Today you are the people that steal monies meant to build schools and hospitals. You are not only an enemy of our people, but you are also an enemy towards your own selves as an organisation.

Exit your agreement with oppressors by ending this fake GNU. You have no business forming alliances with oppressors when the progressive caucus exists. You have no business governing with the murderers of Solomon Mahlangu when a black progressive government that caters for all races exists.

Expropriate land without compensation. Now you are suffering the tantrums of Donald Trump for a fake expropriation of land. Suffer for the real thing; take the land, seize the economy,

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do justice upon the people of our nation, save the black banks, pay the debt of education by supporting the EFF Student Debt Relief Bill and protect infant industries and invest in efforts by young people - true investment.

As the EFF we will continue to raise the flag and take on the baton until total liberation of our people. As the EFF, these freedoms we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty. Amandla!

Mr R B MAKAMU (Limpopo): House Chair, greetings to the Chairperson of the NCOP, our Ministers who are here in the platform, Minister Simelane, Minister Kubayi, MECs present here, colleagues from other provinces, members of the NCOP, both permanent and special delegates and fellow South Africans, it is an honour to speak today as we remember one of the most important moments of our struggle for freedom, the Congress of the People in 1955, where the Freedom Charter was born. This document became the foundation of our democracy. The Freedom Charter declared, I quote, "there shall be houses, security and comfort." Also, our Constitution says that housing is a basic human right. Since 1994, the ANC-led government has built over 3,5 million houses for those that

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are in need. However, homelessness is still a big problem in South Africa.

A recent report from Statistics SA showed that homelessness has grown from near 13 000 people in 1996 to over 55 000 in two in 2022. The main reason are unemployment, substance abuse and family conflicts. Just like the Freedom Charter, it doesn't come overnight, fixing homelessness and inequality will take time and hardwork. We are committed to making the vision of the Freedom Charter, as the Minister of Human Settlements said here, to become a reality in South Africa. In Limpopo, we are showing what the Freedom Charter truly means. Over the past 31 years of democracy, we have worked hard to break apartheid spatial divisions by building houses closer to the areas that were once for whites only. House Chair, in Limpopo, in areas which are the local municipality where we turned Masakaneng informal settlements just outside a white exclusive town which was called, or is called, Groblersdal, into a proper modern township, helping close the gap between the urban and the rural.

In Giyani in the Mopani District, we have opened the services to all races in Grementat, a suburb that was meant only for

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white people, that's where I come from, hon Chair. During apartheid, the area did not run short of water. There was not even a single day where the entire community around Giyani could not have access to water. Today, everybody can be able to access water in that particular area. Hon Chair, Limpopo is becoming a leader in ending mud houses. If you travel across our province, you will see a place that is changing every day, even in the deepest rural areas. We are bringing real freedom by giving proper homes. You won't see mekhukhu or shacks along our roads anymore because we have made it our mission to provide dignified housing to all the people who are here in South Africa and Limpopo, in particular. The principle of "the people shall govern," has been included in the traditional leadership institution in our province. We are making great strides in democratisation traditional leadership, working with the Limpopo House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders.

We have successfully elected traditional councils as the law requires, with 60% traditional leaders and 40% community members, where community take part in decision-making of their traditional communities. I'm proud to say that in Limpopo, these elections and workshops have been completed smoothly, to the co-operation of our respected traditional leaders who

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participate and embrace that clause that "people shall govern." Under the Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba's leadership, the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has a strategic plan for 2025-30. Our goal is to ensure that we build 20 000 new houses in the next five years, hand over title deeds, especially to women, youth, people with disabilities and elders, upgrade the informal settlement and create a better located communities with jobs and services. Hon Minister was talking and giving example about people from KwaMhlanga going to Tshwane to look for jobs and commute every day.

As a province, we are busy upgrading informal settlements where people are staying next to towns. They will have proper places to call home, based on what the Freedom Charter says. We will work with contractors, developers and communities to make sure that there is no corruption, no delays in building the houses and every cent must help our people. I must confirm that, as a province, for human settlements, we have displayed that using everybody else, we should be able to complete houses, hence we could get additional 200 million to continue with the Human Settlements Development Grant, HSDG, for everybody in the province to put government in efficient way,

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using every resource which is provided for under this country. South Africa does not need heroes, just honest capable leaders who put people first, that is what we must be as leaders of this country, making sure that we work for our people so that the ideas of the Freedom Charter should be able to benefit all and sundry. With those inputs, hon House Chair, I want to thank you for the opportunity to represent Limpopo in making sure that the ideals of the Freedom Charter as enshrined in 1965, we still live for and want to better our communities. I thank you, hon Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Indeed, thank you very much, hon Makamu. Hon members, the hon Motara from Gauteng is pulling a double shift today, she just finished answering questions in the House there, but I see she has joined us now to participate in our debate. So, the Gauteng MEC for Human Settlements, hon Motara, if you can continue.

Ms T MOTARA (Gauteng): Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson NCOP, Chief Whip of the NCOP, hon members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is both an honour and privilege to stand before you today as we commemorate 31 years of collective effort to build a new society rooted in the

principles of the Freedom Charter. A society where the promises of equality, justice and opportunity are not just aspirations but living realities for every South African.

As we reflect on the strides we have made, we also acknowledge the path that remains before us. The Freedom Charter, borne out of struggle and sacrifice, was a vision of hope for all South Africans - a vision of a society built on human dignity, equality and shared prosperity. Today we stand as witnesses to the progress we have made but also as individuals committed to ensuring that the promises of 1994 are fulfilled for all South Africans, especially those still waiting for the benefits of our democracy.

In the 31 years since we embraced democracy, much has been achieved, yet we cannot ignore the fact there are still communities whose hopes and dreams, as articulated in the Freedom Charter, remain just that, hopes and dreams. Let us reaffirm today that the work is not yet complete. We owe it to the generations before us, to the Freedom Charter itself, and to our children to continue our march towards a society that reflects the vision of equality, justice and opportunities for all.

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The advancement of human rights in our country since 1994 remains one of the most significant achievements of our democracy. The Freedom Charter laid the foundation for a human rights framework that would guarantee dignity and justice for all South Africans. The Charter called for a society where everyone regardless of their race, gender or background would have access to basic human rights and opportunities.

Today I am proud to say that our Constitution reflects this vision, enshrining a comprehensive Bill of Rights that protects the most vulnerable members of society, including women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly. Through legislative reforms, we have ensured that the human rights of millions are respected and upheld. We have worked tirelessly to foster a culture of human rights and build institutions meant to safeguard and enforce these rights. Yet, we must face the truth that while we have made tremendous strides, inequality and exclusion continue to persist. In many parts of our country access to basic services such as housing, education and health care remains a distant dream for far too many. We must ask ourselves, has the protection of human rights been fully realised for every South African? The answer is no, not yet.

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While we have established human rights frameworks that are among the most progressive in the world, we have not succeeded in ensuring that these rights are equally accessible to all. Many still live in conditions inconsistent with the dignity that the Freedom Charter promises. The challenge before us is not just about writing laws or creating institutions. It is about ensuring these laws translate into real, meaningful improvements in the lives of ordinary South Africans.

We must ensure the promises of human rights are fulfilled, especially for those who have been historically excluded and marginalised. One of the most central pillars of the Freedom Charter is the vision for an inclusive economy and an economy that distributes wealth, resources and opportunities fairly across society. The Charter's call for redistribution of land, wealth and resources has guided South Africa's economic policies since 1994. While significant strides have been made in enacting policies to achieve this vision, the reality is that we still live in one of the most unequal societies in the world. Since the dawn of our democracy, we have worked to transform our economy by introducing policies such as black economic empowerment, BEE, land reform and support for small

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businesses and entrepreneurs. We have made it our mission to address the economic imbalances created by apartheid.

But let us be clear, the challenges we face are enormous. Despite our best efforts, millions of South Africans remain excluded from the fruits of our economic growth. High unemployment rates, inequality in wealth distribution and barriers to access for low-income communities continue to stifle the growth potential of our society. In addition to addressing structural barriers to wealth creation, we must shift our focus towards empowering South Africa's small businesses, youth and women entrepreneurs.

The government has a crucial role to play in facilitating an enabling environment where all South Africans, irrespective of their background, can access the resources and support they need to create sustainable livelihoods. Our economy must evolve to ensure that the historical advantages of a few do not continue to dictate the opportunities available to the many. Only through such transformation will we begin to realise the true promise of an inclusive and equitable society. The Freedom Charter famously states, "There shall be houses, security and comfort." This is a promise that we as a

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government are committed to fulfilling. In the 31 years since 1994, South Africa has made significant strides in addressing the legacy of apartheid spatial planning. We have worked tirelessly to ensure that access to housing is no longer a privilege for the few, but a right for all South Africans.

Through initiatives such as the Reconstruction and Development Plan and Breaking New Ground, we have provided millions of South Africans with access to affordable housing. Yet despite these achievements, the reality is that millions of South Africans still live in informal settlements without access to the basic comforts and security promised by the Freedom Charter. The challenge of housing remains one of the most pressing issues facing our nation.

The issue of housing is not just about building houses. It is about creating integrated, sustainable human settlements. This is where the principles of the Freedom Charter are most evident. We must create communities where people have access to safe and secure homes, but also jobs, education, health care, and transportation. We must integrate our settlements in a way that promotes social cohesion, economic opportunities, and access to services.

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It is not enough to simply provide housing. We must ensure that every South African has access to a community that offers the full spectrum of opportunities that a dignified life requires. The Freedom Charter's call for education for all remains one of its most important principles. Education is the key to unlocking opportunities, and it is the foundation of a better future for all South Africans.

Since 1994, we have made significant investments in education, ensuring that millions of children, particularly from previously disadvantaged communities have access to quality schooling. However, as we all know, much work remains to be done. South Africa's education system continues to grapple with significant challenges, including high dropout rates, unequal access to resources, and the underperformance of many students.

These challenges disproportionately affect children from low-income communities, particularly in rural areas. We cannot afford to allow these barriers to persist. Every child in South Africa, regardless of their background, must have access to the education they need to succeed in life. The government remains committed to reforming the education system, expanding

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access to quality education, and ensuring no child is left behind.

We are investing in education infrastructure, teacher training and curricular development, but we also need to look beyond formal education and invest in lifelong learning, skills development, and opportunities for young people to transition successfully into the workforce. Only through such comprehensive efforts can we create an educated, skilled, and empowered population capable of driving the future of our nation.

In conclusion, as we commemorate 31 years of our democracy, we recognise the progress we have made and acknowledge the challenges that remain. The Freedom Charter continues to be a guiding light, a blueprint for the South Africa we aspire to build. But it is not enough to simply reflect on the promises of the past. We must renew our commitment to realising the goals of the Freedom Charter for all South Africans.

This is a collective effort, one that requires us to work together, the government and citizens alike, to ensure that the vision of equality, justice, and prosperity becomes a

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lived reality. I stand here today, not just to celebrate what we've accomplished, but to call on all of us to intensify our efforts. Together we can create a South Africa where the promises of the Freedom Charter are not just ideals on paper, but the lived experience of every citizen. It is time for us to commit with renewed vigour to realise this vision. I thank you.

Mr S A ZULU: Hon House Chairperson, hon members of this august House and fellow South Africans watching across the nation, today, marks 31 years of democracy. However, we do not rise from these benches to celebrate and acknowledge the progress or to repeat empty victories. Instead, we stand to confront a painful truth. The Freedom Charter has been betrayed. After 31 years of promises the poor remain poor, the hungry still suffer from hunger and those in power continue to govern against the will of the people rather than for their benefit.

The Freedom Charter was not a suggestion, but it was a contract, a solemn commitment by the people of South Africa adopted 70 years ago in Kliptown, and it said, the people shall share the country's wealth. Yet 31 years 80% of South Africa's land remains in whites' hands while 60% of black

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South Africans live in poverty. The rich have grown richer, and the poor have grown poorer.

It said, there shall be work and security, yet we live in a country where over 41% of the youth is unemployed and 32,1% of the total population sits idle while a neoliberal government tells them to tighten their belts as VAT is increased. Food prices sour and jobs disappear.

There shall be houses, security and comfort. Today, more than 2 200 informal settlements across the country still have no proper sanitation, no reliable water and no basic dignity. How dare we call this freedom?

It said there shall be peace and friendship, but the people live in fear. Political assassinations continue unabated, especially in KwaZulu-Natal where crime is rampant. Our streets are warzones, and our communities are left defenceless while the State Security Agency scramble from within.

Hon House Chairperson, the ruling party has not created a new society. Instead, it has built a fractured one, one where inequality is worse than it was in 1994. This situation is not

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merely a failure of service delivery, it is a betrayal of the ideal of liberation.

Let me be straightforward. The ANC has abandoned the Freedom Charter period. They promised land yet hunger for land remains widespread. They promised equality, yet black women are still paid 38% less than a white man. They promised free quality education, yet schools in townships struggled with overcrowding and lack of funding. Now they have formed a government of national unity, GNU, driven by desperation. This coalition of the elites is ununited not by principles but by fear of people's power and fear of accountability. This government of national unity is not a coalition of the oppressed, instead it represents the unity of capital, the unity of the compromised and the unity of cowardice. It will not deliver land reform, it will not build the industries, it will not reclaim the wealth of the mines, of the banks or of the monopolies that still strangle this economy.

What have we witnessed since the formation of the GNU? Food prices continue to rise and there are threats of increase in VAT. Townships and rural areas remain without water, safety and basic dignity. The worse of all hope is fading among our

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people. We are witnessing a slow collapse of faith in this system because those in power have profited from suffering of the masses.

Hon House Chair, this is the purpose of the MK Party. We are not here for positions, but we are here for justice. We are not here to join the ranks of the elites, but we are here to dismantle that structure so that the people can thrive.

In 2017, President Jacob Zuma, our commander general, stated that we need a two-third majority to change the Constitution to address the real issues of inequality, poverty and unemployment. The MK Party is the only political organisation that has never abandoned the principle of the Freedom Charter. We remain committed to reclaiming the land and mineral resources for our people, building an economy that is owned by the people and not by monopolies, ending hunger not just through grants but by establishing food storage, providing quality housing, free education and the health care for all. We do not aspire to mere reforms. We prepare for revolution not through violence but through political power build from the ground up. Let us be led by workers, the poor, the youth and the dispossessed.

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Hon House Chairperson and hon members, we cannot sugarcoat failure. That must be clear. This is not the time to light candles and sing songs. This year while others light candles and sing songs celebrating democracy, we are reminded of the betrayal of the Freedom Charter. The MK Party rejects the betrayal of the Freedom Charter. We reject the government of national unity for the elites, and we rise to complete the mission of liberation. We do not reject democracy, we reject the fraudulent democracy that has been sold to our people as liberation. The MKP stands ready to complete the mission. Land shall be shared among those working. There shall be work and security. The people shall govern truly and entirely. The people shall govern. Amandla. I thank you very much, hon Chairperson. "Gwaza mkhonto, gwaza!" [Stab spear, stab].

Dr I SCHEURKOGEL: Hon Chairperson, fellow members, my fellow South Africans, goeie middag, good afternoon, dumelang. As we gather to commemorate 31 years of democracy – 31 years since all eligible South Africans walked into voting booths and cast off the chains of racial oppression. It is a moment to reflect, to remember and above all, to be honest with ourselves.

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We know what apartheid did. We still see the pain of oppression under apartheid. We know that laws allowed the apartheid government to take land and redistribute it, that ultimately divided our people. We know that our people were displaced, impoverished, segregated and broken. We know that spatial injustice wasn't a byproduct – it was the point. That schools for black, coloured, Indian children were built not to educate, but to control. That, hospitals were separated, unequal, and deliberately under-resourced. We know all of this. Because millions of South Africans lived through it. We still feel it.

The aftershocks in every rural village, in every informal settlement, and every overcrowded classroom and collapsing clinic. But if we truly want to honour the pain of our past, we must ask the right question: What have we done in the 30 years since liberation – to correct what apartheid deliberately broke? Because that's what this democracy was for.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Scheurkogel, please take your seat. Hon Nzimande, what is your point of order?

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IsiZulu:

Mr E NZIMANDE: Ngiyabonga Sihlalo, ngicela ukubuza ukuthi usezoshona yini? Sengathi uvuma izono. [Uhleko.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Please take your seat, hon Nzimande. Continue, hon Scheurkogel.

Dr I SCHEURKOGEL: That's why we said:

The people shall govern. That's why the Freedom Charter was written and clearly says there shall be houses, security and comfort for all. That the doors of learning and culture shall be open. That the people shall share in the country's wealth.

And yet, three decades later, what do we see? We see more than 2 million people still waiting for basic housing. We see RDP houses built with crumbling cement. We see clinics without medicine, hospitals without beds, teachers without training, and learners without hope. We see some villages with no water, no roads, no jobs – just as it was 31-years-ago. So, the question is not: What did apartheid do? – This is much, we clearly know already. The question is: What did the governing party do to fix it?

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Mr B J FARMER: Hon Chairperson, hon members and fellow South Africans. It has been 31 years since we started the exciting but difficult process of creating a society based on the principles of the Freedom Charter. It is a day to commemorate, think back on and most importantly, renew our commitment to the principles that drew us together during our liberation struggle. Our vision for democratic South Africa is based on the Freedom Charter.

We declared that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. We demanded shared governance, equality and dignity. However, we were not given these ideas. With the bravery and lives of men and women who resisted injustice, they were fought for, killed for and funded. One of those heroes was Ashley Kriel. A young man who fought for the liberties we have today because of his unshakeable faith in the Freedom Charter. Ashley sacrificed everything for the goal of a fair and equal South Africa. Just like countless other coloured soldiers. His life serves as a reminder that the fight was an all-encompassing endeavour that drew power from our variety and solidarity transcending all racial and ethnic borders. Ashley is not the

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only unsung hero for every community that we commemorate today. We also own individuals such as Allen Boesak, Patricia de Lille, Alex La Guma, Adam Small, Basil February, Cheryl Carolus to name just a few who risked their lives, organised covertly, and dared to hope for a better South Africa. The legacy must endure in all deeds, and their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

We applaud our government's accomplishments over the past few decades, including reforms in health care, housing and education that have enhanced the lives of countless people. However, we must also push you to go further as allies and patriots serving this country. Not all the Freedom Charter's promises have been fulfilled. Unemployment still plagues our neighbourhoods. Inequality still separates us, and many doors are still barred to those who need them most.

We encourage you to take the helm with the bravery and foresight that our departed heroes exemplified. Keep in mind that the Freedom Charter is a living commitment, a promise to all South Africans that their potential will be realised. Their voice will be heard, and their rights will be upheld. We are prepared to join you in this endeavour as a patriotic

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partnership. Let's take proactive measures in the present to rectify the injustices of the past. Let us abolish the narrative for black in general and Africa in particular. Let's make sure Ashley Kriel and other liberation fighters didn't make their sacrifices in vain.

Let this day serve as the reminder that with co-operation, the principles outlined in the Freedom Charter can become attainable aspirations rather than unachievable ideals. Not to be able to look is the chart timeless truth South Africa belongs to all who live in it. We have a long path ahead of us fellow South Africans, but we are not alone. We bear the aspirations of the future generation as well as the expectations of our predecessors. We can work together to develop a society that embodies the dignity equality, and just we promised ourselves. Salute!

Mr M KHAWULA (KwaZulu-Natal): Hon House Chairperson and hon members of the NCOP, today we gather to mark and celebrate a milestone in the history of our democracy – the 31 years of collective efforts aimed at building a new society rooted in the principles of the Freedom Charter.

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The principles of the Freedom Charter formed the bedrock of our democracy. However, 31 years later, we must recognise that economic exclusion and other challenges still remain a harsh reality for many of our citizens.

Millions of South Africans still find themselves on the margins of economic participation. The *government of provincial unity*, GPU, has made a commitment to work together towards a common goal, creating a South Africa that upholds the dignity of every citizen.

The ethos and principles of the Freedom Charter challenge the leaders of the time in our country to imagine a South Africa where every citizen can proudly say that they own a home, where families can build their future without fear of economic instability. This is a vision and a promise that the political leaders of our time have a duty to fulfil.

Our founding fathers of this democracy laid solid foundations for the leaders of the present time to solidify the principles of the Freedom Charter. Amongst them, the late Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, founder and president emeritus of the IFP, established a financial institution, Ithala bank, in

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order to ensure the steady financial emancipation of our oppressed black communities in KwaZulu-Natal. This institution was established with the noble intention of serving the needs of ordinary South Africans, especially those in marginalised communities. Ithala is a matter of economic sabotage and has to be resolved speedily.

It cannot be that we are seen to be second-guessing the critical role being played by our traditional leaders in our communities. These Amakhosi and Izinduna leaders are the first line of leadership in our rural communities. They have proven their worth by withstanding the harsh tests of time during the very difficult times of colonial oppression. They are the custodians of our culture and the guardians of our heritage. They stand at the forefront of our fight against social ills such as crime, gender-based violence, GBV, and femicide.

In rural areas, our traditional leaders are more than mere figureheads. They are the voices of the people, the conduits of hope and the embodiment of respect. Our government must protect, appreciate and recognise the essential role they play. By affording Amakhosi the dignity they deserve, we send a powerful message that our government respects their

contribution to social cohesion and stability within communities.

In the domains of the power lines of our democratic institutions, we can create a society where the wisdom and insight of our traditional leaders contribute towards shaping policies that resonate with the lived realities of our citizens. We need to put an end to situations where, between government and traditional leadership institutions, a perceived view of them and us remains.

In KwaZulu-Natal, a strong bond and partnership exists between government and traditional leaders. These are the partnerships that we need to harness and grow, instead of destabilising.

As we celebrate 31 years of our democracy, the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal calls upon all the citizens of our province to rally behind and support our King, His Majesty King *Misuzulu ka Zwelithini* and the royal family in these trying times in the history of our existence.

One of the major setbacks that undermine the strides and gains of our democracy is the high levels of unemployment,

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especially amongst the youth. KwaZulu-Natal is hard at work with our national counterparts in trying to ensure that we increase our potential to grow the economy and attract much-needed investments.

Our mayors in eThekweni, uMhlathuze and elsewhere in our big cities have turned the province into construction sites. The KwaZulu-Natal GPU is a beacon of hope to many of the potential investors and citizens of our province.

What we need is political stability and a measure of hope that equates provincial efforts to also resonate from our national government. KwaZulu-Natal boasts two major harbours that influence both the national economies of our country, and the international economies of the world in general and Africa in particular. Actually, both our Durban and Richards Bay ports hold the trump card for the speedy economic upheaval of South Africa.

We are excited that national government is injecting financial resources into the infrastructural upgrades of both the Port of Durban and the Port of Richards Bay in order to deal with the unnecessary long wait for ships to dock and offload. This

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strategic positioning allows us to harness opportunities that can change lives, create jobs and enrich our communities.

Another threat to the sustainability of our democracy is the unwelcome levels of crime in our communities. KwaZulu-Natal is blessed to have one of the most dedicated, most efficient and passionate members in the SA Police Service, *Lt-Gen Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi*. *Mkhwanazi* and his dedicated team of women and men in blue in KwaZulu-Natal are doing everything that it takes, hon Zulu, to up the game in fighting criminal activities in our province. You can only be their adversary, you can only be their opposite on the opposite side, if you are one of the criminals that *Mkhwanazi* and his team are fighting to extinguish.

It worries the province of KwaZulu-Natal that occasionally *Lt-Gen Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi* seems to have attracted personal enemies to himself and to his members just for their dedicated service in eliminating criminals. Our public servants must not experience hardships and threats for just performing their duties well and for touching the untouchables.

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At this juncture, KwaZulu-Natal reiterates its call for policing powers to be devolved to provinces so that as provinces we can be more effective, more tough and more focused in fighting crime without fear or favour.

Since South Africa has assumed the chairpersonship of the G20, KwaZulu-Natal is honoured to be a crucial player in the successful hosting of G20 activities. KwaZulu-Natal has full confidence in our President, His Excellency C M Ramaphosa, that he will lead a successful and prosperous G20 during South Africa's tenure as its chairperson.

As a province, we are fully behind our national government and all its programmes. We will do everything in our power to ensure that South Africa projects well at this world stage and beyond. This platform allows us to showcase our nation's potential and to engage with our international counterparts on shared challenges. We are not just spectators in this global dialogue. We are champions of solutions that can bring about positive change.

In conclusion, as we celebrate 31 years of freedom, we must not lose sight of the fact that the foundations of this

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democracy was intelligently laid by our great leaders who saw the need to choose peace over confrontation as the best solution for our country. We must look to the spiritual guidance of our leaders like Nelson Mandela, Inkosi Buthelezi, Robert Sobukwe and others. We must learn from them how to bury our differences and work together to implement programmes of action that have been agreed upon by the government of national unity and the GPUs at provincial level.

Our people need our collective wisdom and the force to drive economic growth, reduce unemployment, fight crime and GBV, encourage social cohesion and achieve economic emancipation for the citizens of our country. We must inspire new hope for the people of South Africa.

The IFP has arrived to put back on track that which was going off track. Trust us to carry everyone on our shoulders to greater heights. Together, let us build a KwaZulu-Natal and a South Africa that is a safe, just and prosperous one. I thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, House Chairperson and greetings to all

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Presiding Officers, Ministers, Deputy Ministers, MECs, hon members and councillors - good afternoon. We come from a past in which the apartheid system - the system of racial segregation - had stripped the basic human rights of the majority. The human rights violation committed against the majority were committed with impunity because of the minority.

There was no equality before the law. The laws were discriminatory, and courts were partially in favour of one race over the other. Not only were the majority denied the basic rights, but they were also denied access to justice. The democratic breakthrough of 1994, which came at a considerable human cost, was water shared moment that enabled the development and adoption of the 1996 Constitution, which is now the supreme law of the country.

As part of the effort to bury the demon of racism, in September 2001, we hosted the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and related intolerances in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The outcome document of the 2001 conference was the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, a comprehensive framework for addressing racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia related intolerances.

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It encompasses far reaching measures to combat racism in all its manifestations, calling for tougher anti-discriminatory laws and administrative measures for better education, access to health and administration of justice and human rights. The outcome document remains A defining framework for the global fight against the race.

As we move towards a significant 30-years-plus milestone in our constitutional democracy anchored on human rights, it gives us an opportunity to reaffirm and recommit ourselves to strive towards our Constitution's promise. Our constitutional dispensation is guided by the Freedom Charter, which was adopted 70 years ago in June of 1955. It proclaimed that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, and that all shall be equal before the law.

The clauses of the Freedom Charter were later codified in the Preamble of the Constitution, which says that:

We, the people of South Africa, recognise the injustices of our past, honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land, respect those who have worked to build and

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develop our country, and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

We, therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic.

Chapter 2 of the Constitution contains the 27 rights that are collectively called the Bill of Rights. Everyone in this country is entitled to the rights in the Bill of Rights by virtue of being human and are born with these rights. To ensure that rights are protected, section 34 of the Constitution creates a right to have threats to rights, violation of rights and disputes determined fairly before independent bodies, such as courts.

Hon members, we are all collectively striving towards the attainment of social justice that provides everyone with equal economic opportunities, political and social rights. All of us have to ensure that the efforts are aimed at ensuring that there is just distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges within our society.

Through our Constitution and legislative measures, we are taking the approach of social justice as a core value and principle, by placing an emphasis on securing the basic needs for all most. Most notably, has been the signing into law, measures that seek to ensure equitable access to land, clean water, education and medical care.

To demonstrate some of the accelerated efforts undertaken by our government, the President recently ascended several transformative legislations into law, such as the National Health Insurance Act, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act and the Expropriation Act, as well as ongoing preparations for their imminent implementation.

In efforts to ensure the protection, promotion and respect for human rights, there is continued support for Chapter 9 institution, mandated to ensure that organs of state live up to the ideals of the constitutionalism and are held to account for their action or inaction. These institutions remain a key pillar of our democratic order, hon members.

This year also marks 30 years since the establishment of the SA Human Rights Commission and 30 years of our Constitutional

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Court, since it has been established. We have been devoted to the establishment of key institutions and legal framework to enable enjoyment for our rights. For example, in 2023, President Ramaphosa signed it into law the Land Court Act, which led to the establishment of the Land Court. The Land Claims Court, together with the Commission for Land Restitution are instrumental in facilitating land reform in alignment with section 25 of the Bill of Rights.

Thirty years into our democracy, we continue to stand firm in this commitment to build a culture of human rights and to reverse the centuries of gross violation of human rights, inequality and indignity suffered by the majority of the population. To enjoy their rights and to protect themselves from violation of their rights, people must enjoy access to justice. Great strides have been made in the past 30 years to ensure that justice is accessible for all, especially for the poor and the vulnerable.

In 2021, Minimum Standards for the National Strategy on Reasonable Accommodation to Access Justice for Courts Users with Disabilities were developed and approved to provide reasonable accommodation and disability-centric support

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services, which includes sign language interpretation; private testifying services; private waiting room services; a dedicated space for guide dog; dog bed mat; and dog water bowl.

Information products are accessible to different types of disabilities, including brain light; sprint information; booklets; audio visual and audio information products; code preparation services; intermediary services; and physical accessibility in forms of ramps and wheelchair-accessible ablution.

This is the work that has been done. Each disability-centric court has attained reasonable accommodation co-ordinated tasks to ensure compliance with minimum standards. The department has so far upgraded 266 lower courts in line with these minimum standards, to ensure that people with disabilities do not feel like they are visitors in their own country.

Hon members, gender equality has been advanced for African women to inherit under the African Customary Law of Interstate Sessions. An appointment of female chiefs by customary institutions is now permissible. In any eviction of residents

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from their home, the state bears a duty to engage meaningfully with them about possible steps that can be taken to alleviate their homelessness.

Core minimums have been set out in ensuring equitable access to healthcare. HIV and AIDS treatment, housing, education, water and all other social economic rights are being experienced and accessed by South Africans. Ladies and gentlemen, the Freedom Charter was a visionary document that outlined a vision of a South Africa, in which all South Africans enjoy the wealth of the land, with equal rights, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or risk.

Indeed, the enjoyment of human rights cannot be divorced from material conditions necessary for a dignified life. The state has a responsibility to create enablers for everyone to enjoy their rights, to put mechanisms and institutions in place to prevent human rights violations. We have made great strides, and we continue to work. We are not saying there are no challenges.

I think I want to edge the hon members, as we go to our constituencies, as we do our work, let us ensure that people

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understand where this country comes from. Those who spread lies about our country must be isolated. Those who want to take us back to the demons and the painful parts of apartheid, where we were segregated on the basis of race, must be isolated in our communities.

We have committed ourselves to working together to building a nonracial and democratic South Africa. We have got to ensure that we are creating this conducive environment that we enjoy today for our future generations to enjoy. Ladies and gentlemen, it is upon us to ensure that we build the South Africa that we want, and the future that our children will be able to enjoy - free of all the injustices of the past, but also, ensuring that all of them are equal before the law. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Ms M M BAINS: House Chairperson, the people shall govern, strengthening democratic governance by building a capable developmental and ethical state to faithfully and diligently serve the people.

House Chairperson, in 1955, June, in Cape Town, our people from all walks of life, race, class and gender made to adopt

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an important document called the *Freedom Charter*. The *Freedom Charter* laid down the foundation of the society, our struggle was about. From exclusionary policies, the *Freedom Charter* sought to build a unified South Africa, that belongs to all.

The National Action Council, which was established to carry out campaigns throughout the *Freedom Charter*, produced many leaflets. The dominant theme became: That we call the people of South Africa black and white, let us speak together of freedom. It is out of these strong words that the South Africa we have today is underpinned by freedom.

House Chairperson, fundamentally, the *Freedom Charter* set and made a commitment that the people shall govern. That was to say, me, you and all of us, and all the other public representatives will strive to work for the people, we will give ourselves to the service of the people.

We know that in South Africa, institutional exclusion of blacks and women throughout colonialism and apartheid resulted in social disparities that persisted throughout society, ranging from economic and political exclusions.

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South African society is being and continues to be shaped by social, political and economic inequalities of all sorts of class, race and gender. These challenges were inherited from the previous oppressive regime that operated without accountability. It disintegrated communities through *Bantustan*, skewed patterns of service delivery and an inconsistent justice system that only favoured a certain few.

As a mission of intent, the ANC led-government had a vision to redress the polarization of society and build a non-racial, non-sexes and prosperous South Africa, espoused by the *Freedom Charter* as a bulwark of all of our policy trademark.

And in 1992, *Ready to Govern* document the ANC committed itself, broadly to build a government that: Firstly, strive for the achievement of the right of all South Africans as home to political and economic self-determination in a united South Africa.

Secondly, to overcome the legacy of inequality and injustice, created by colonialism and apartheid in swift progressive and principled way; to develop a sustainable economy and state infrastructure that will progressively improve the quality of

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life of all South Africans and lastly; to encourage the flourishing of the feeling that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, to promote a common loyalty, to ... and pride in the country and to create a universal sense of freedom and security within its borders.

A democratic South Africa ushered in by the ANC government in 1994 has consistently committed and has acted on these policy priorities. We ... [Inaudible.] ... introduce a Constitution with the doctrine of separation of powers. We understood that even though we governed, we're governing the people, not ourselves, and therefore power ought to be exercised in a manner that is consistent with the law, unlike under the white rule.

Moreover, one of the ANC led-government's introduction, where the mass celebrated the Chapter 9 institutions. This was done to strengthen the democracy we enjoyed today, as a support instrument for state accountability and build the people centred government.

The apartheid system, systematically displaced people in the homeland, to alienate them from the economic heartbeat of South Africa, without power service deliveries.

The introduction of cooperative governance by the ANC led-government has brought a much-needed platform for the local sphere of government to operate in the cold face of society.

Although some municipalities cannot govern their affairs appropriately, the government has put its hands on deck to strengthen their capacity in terms of revenue collection, governance and stability in administration.

Hon Nelson Mandela once said:

After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I can rest only for a moment. For with freedom, comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger for my long walk is not yet ended.

It is profoundly these moments that we realized the long journey we have travelled as a country, but yet still find

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obstacles towards accomplishing the journey towards the total emancipation of our people. The major obstacle towards our perceived society, was derailed by the silly season of the state capture. The era that must never be repeated.

This era marks a setback in our development paradigm, eroding the gains of government parastatals, corrupt procurement systems and almost bringing the government to a standstill.

Another set back the government is facing is a widespread service delivery protest. Emanating from a lack of responsiveness by local authorities to assist citizens.

The Auditor General has recently painted a bleak picture of the administration of local governments; 54 out of 257 local governments are non-compliant with serious reports of malfunction, a lack of revenue generation and involvement in corrupt activities. This results in a lack of service delivery to our people.

Hon members, the ANC led-government since 1994 has always understood the need to build a capable ethical developmental state. Responding to the challenges facing local government,

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at the ANC's 54th Conference observed that the issue of underperforming municipalities lies in the inability to coordinate their work with another sphere of government, such as overcoming the skills deficit in local municipalities.

Therefore, to solve these issues and promote better coordination and integration, we implemented the DDM, the District Development Model, aims to strengthen local governance by moving away from silo-based planning, budgeting and implementation. The DDM enables us to achieve socioeconomic and spatial transformation by establishing a more practical, unified vision for national development.

By taking a long-term perspective and integrating local economies, we may reimagine a better community, district, and nation. We may overcome our current restrictions by capitalizing on the endowment structure that each district possesses.

All of these will necessitate a developmental and adequately resourced local government. To that end, we are hiring talented workers for the ... [Inaudible.] ... so that we can use and shared talents that local municipalities may lack. In

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so doing, we will be able to drive social and economic growth, to drive service delivery and job creation.

Hon members let's take advantage of Parliament as the people's tribune and enhance the development of the oversight and accountability model that is informed by Parliament's strategic vision of building an effective people's Parliament, that is responsive to the needs of the people. And that is driven by a desire for a better quality of life for all the people of South Africa.

The moral is one of the tools Parliament will use to strengthen its oversight over the executives and organs of state.

In the post-election state of the nation address on June 20, 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa reminded the nation of the importance of a capable, ethically developmental state, to achieve their goals. In support of this, the President announced the reconfiguration of several government departments to enable them to deliver on their mandates through efficiency, cost containment, cooperative governance,

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strategic alignment and a restructuring of the service delivery model to best serve our country's citizens.

We are committed to building an ethical state in which there is no place for corruption, patronage, rank seeking and plundering of public money. We want a corps of skilled and professional public servants of the highest moral standards and dedicated to the public service.

Hon members, finally, this year we marked the 70th anniversary of the *Freedom Charter*, which compels us to develop a people centred local government, in the spirit of 'the people shall govern'.

Therefore, all of us members, must live by the pledge that was a rallying call for those who adopted the *Freedom Charter*, when they placed the following; noted that we should pledge also: We pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength or courage until these reforms set out here have been realized and citizens experience better and quality services. I thank you.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon members, we're going to try now again with Cllr Marakalala, representing SA Local Government Association, Salga. Councillor, are you able to unmute now?

Cllr C N MARAKALALA (Salga): Chair, I am able to present my debate. Hon Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Ministers present, MECs present, Chief Whip of the NCOP, hon House Chairpersons, hon members, greetings to you all. It is both an honour and a responsibility to participate in this significant discussion, marking 31 years since the advent of democracy in our great nation. This occasion calls for celebration, but also for solemn introspection about the journey we have travelled, the advancements we have achieved, the challenges we still face, and the future we must create together. The theme, "Commemorating 31 Years of Collective Efforts to Build a New Society Rooted in the Ideals of the Freedom Charter," reminds us of the political and moral compass that continues to guide our democratic struggle.

The Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955, which boldly states, "The People Shall Govern." Thirty-one years ago, those words

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became more than a dream, they transformed into a living truth. Millions of South Africans, many for the first time, lined up to cast their votes in the landmark democratic elections of 1994. This pivotal moment irrevocably changed the course of our country and heralded the dawn of a new South Africa. Hon Chairperson, the advances we have achieved since 1994 are not merely theoretical. They are evident in the lives of millions who now have access to clean drinking water, electricity, sanitation, housing, education, healthcare, and democratic participation.

While national and provincial governments have played significant roles, it is at the local level within our municipalities where these advances are most keenly felt. Local government, as the level of government closest to the people, has become a fundamental component of post-apartheid development. It is within the confines of council chambers, ward committees, integrated development planning forums, and community outreach initiatives that the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter are transformed into reality. Over the past 31 years, municipalities have endeavoured to bridge the gap between aspiration and reality, and between constitutional rights and the everyday existence of citizens.

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Local government has evolved into a machinery for integrated development and a platform for public participation. It is at this level that citizens engage with democracy in its most immediate and tangible form. Through local government, efforts have been made to restore dignity to historically disadvantaged communities overlooked by apartheid planning, empower women and youth, and foster social cohesion. Hon members, while we acknowledge these successes, we must do so with honesty and humility. Our democracy is robust, but it is not infallible. The very municipalities that have succeeded in providing water, electricity, and infrastructure are also grappling with severe governance and financial challenges.

The list of issues is well known, financial distress coupled with unmanageable debt, poor institutional capacity and a shortage of essential skills, inadequate oversight, political interference, and, in some instances, outright corruption, infrastructure backlogs and unforeseen urban migration, the strain of uncontrolled immigration on service delivery systems; and growing public disillusionment reflected in protests and disengagement. These challenges should not define us, but they should concern us. They ought to motivate us to take actions. The Freedom Charter envisioned a society built

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on collective effort, sustained by the work and sacrifice of all South Africans united in the belief that democracy is a living, dynamic force, not merely a set of rules.

Therefore, as we celebrate 31 years of independence, let us reaffirm our commitment to renewed transformation, efficient service delivery, and accountability. Let's join hands to strengthen ethical leadership and governance at the municipal level. We need effective leaders who serve the people, not themselves, enhance local fiscal health by ensuring equitable funding and investment in revenue instruments aligned with local economic performance, address corruption with determination, maintaining a zero-tolerance policy for those who steal from the populace, improve planning and maintenance of infrastructure, prioritising resilience, sustainability, and long-term development, increase citizen participation in local processes and creating forums that are not only symbolic but also have genuine policy and service delivery influence.

Chairperson, the story of our democracy is not inscribed in the records of Parliament or state laws, it is embodied in the lives of ordinary men and women, the health worker in the clinic in the township, the school child who once studied in a

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mud-walled classroom but now learns under a roof, and the young entrepreneur who starts a small business, thanks to accessible roads and electricity. These narratives weave the fabric of a democratic nation in progress. Let these daily victories inspire us. It is crucial to remember that the work of democracy is never complete, it requires constant defense, perfection, and fulfilment. The next 31 years will demand even more from us, more honesty, more courage, more creativity, and more solidarity. As the custodians of our democratic experiment, we have a duty to those who come after us to remain faithful to the founding principles of our liberty. As I conclude, as the Freedom Charter envisioned, South Africa is a nation belonging to all its people, regardless of race. We must strive to establish a system of local government and a country that makes this dream a reality. Thank you, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Councillor, indeed, thank you very much. Hon members, as I relinquish the Chair in favour of hon Modise in terms of Rule 12 of the NCOP Rules, I will be calling the MEC for Education in the North West, hon Motsumi. Hon Motsumi.

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Ms N V MOTSOMI (North West): Hon House Chair, apologies. Allow me to extend my revolutionary greetings to all the hon members present in this sitting. It is both a privilege and responsibility to present to you today, as we commemorate the 31 years of our collective journey defined by sacrifice, resilience, and unwavering commitment to building a democratic South Africa rooted in the values of the Freedom Charter.

Throughout this debate, I will argue that the last three decades have been nothing short of transformation. Education, as the Freedom Charter declares, shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children. These words have not remained empty promises.

They have found expression in all endeavours to open the doors of learning and culture to all. It is a well-documented fact that before the dawn of democracy in 1994, education in our country was deliberately used as a tool of oppression. Under the apartheid regime, black South Africans were subjected to an inferior education system, designed not to empower but to suppress them.

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Opportunities were limited by design and potential was stifled by law. The Freedom Charter stood in direct defiance of that reality - an education system that would uplift, enlighten, and enable. And in 1994, with the ANC-led government, we began turning that vision into a lived experience for many.

Over the past 31 years, we have made measurable strides. Through the introduction of free and compulsory basic education, regardless of race or background, more children enter our classrooms each year. The implementation of pro-poor programmes such as the no-fee school policy, national school nutrition programme, scholar transport, sanitary dignity programme, to mention but a few, have been very significant in turning the tide towards the realisation of the declaration of the Freedom Charter.

Through the implementation of the no-fee school policy, one must indicate and confirm that, under the ANC-led government, 80% of the learners from poor backgrounds have access to free basic education in our public ordinary schools, where they are also given free stationery. And as the department, we ensure that they are actually being provided with educators who are being trained by the Department of Education. The South

African National School Nutrition Programme feeds over 700 000 learners daily, ensuring that hunger does not stand in the way of learning. Over the past two years, we have introduced breakfast to some primary schools as a pilot. And one must confirm that attendance in those schools improved.

We have now expanded it to all primary schools in this financial year. This means that we have taken a stance because we have realised that, through this programme ... Initially, we used to encounter challenges whereby we were experiencing a high rate of dropouts from our schools. Now, we are no longer experiencing that because of these interventions.

And by the way, one must also indicate that, yes, as a sector, we are challenged. We are experiencing challenges of overcrowding. As much as it has a negative impact in terms of learning and teaching, one must indicate before the House that it has a positive sign to show. As a sector, as a government, we have managed to retain our learners. This means that each and every learner now has access to our schools. We provide scholar transport to needy learners in rural areas because we view it as a necessary and integral part of the right to basic education.

We provide sanitary towels to our girl learners in Quintile 1 to Quintile 3 public ordinary schools. And one must indicate that we also have 32 special schools in our province as one of the means to enhance their self-esteem, keep them attending school regularly, as well as to restore and protect their dignity.

We also conducted the infrastructure condition assessment, which provides us with valuable information regarding the current state of infrastructure assets, including their operational status, performance levels, conditions, and potential future risks to inform maintenance, planning, and resource allocation.

Over the previous 31 years, we have built new schools and replaced dilapidated schools, buildings, and those which were built of improper material, such as mud and asbestos with modern buildings. We further provided perimeter fencing to improve safety and security in our schools. Our school governing bodies are empowered to use 10% of their section 21 allocation.

In our endeavour to further restore the dignity of our learners, we have eradicated traditional pit latrines and replaced them with modern sanitation facilities. As provincial government, we have thus far established six mega farm schools to improve access to basic education for learners with indigent family background, particularly those who reside in deep rural farm areas. By the way, those particular schools are considered no-fee schools, and we are providing them, by the way, with hostels.

In further resourcing our employees with tools of the trade, we have provided cell phones with airtime and bundles to all 1 463 school principals in our province, because we want quality education – those who are delivering services on our behalf. Therefore, we saw it fit that they be provided with the resources. Hence, all our principals in the North West have cell phones and bundles.

We further provided managers with cell phones, laptops, to enable them to support our schools on a regular basis. That is why, in most instances, if you look at where we come from as a province, we have improved in terms of delivering quality education to our learners.

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The department has ensured that all primary schools do introduce Grade R. To date, only 13 primary schools do not have Grade R. With the transfer of ECD functions to the department, we are improving access through provisioning of resources and training of practitioners. The quality of our matric pass rate in recent years is on a consistent rise, which is a fair reflection of the health condition of our education system. This is testament to collective efforts of educators, parents, community, business, and government working together to fulfil the promises made in Kliptown in 1955.

We are not blind to our persistent triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Unemployment is still rife among the youth in our province. To mitigate its impact, the department has been creating employment opportunities for the youth through internships and mentorships in collaboration with the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority ETDP Seta, as well as through the implementation of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative. And appreciation must be given to our President, Cyril Ramaphosa, for this particular initiative, which is now being labelled as the Basic Education Employment Initiative.

Despite our commitment, inequality in particular continues to exist between urban and rural areas. We are also still grappling with infrastructure backlog. As we reflect on the past 30 years, let us also look forward. A society rooted in the ideas of the Freedom Charter is one where every child has access not just to schooling, but to quality inclusive and empowering education.

Our task is now to reimagine the classroom to ensure that it is a place of safety, of curiosity, of excellence and of opportunity. We must infuse our curriculum with African values, technological skills, environmental awareness and the spirit of ubuntu.

As the Department of Education, one must indicate that, in terms of our curriculum, one can proudly indicate that, in the department, we have transformed our sector by implementing three-stream model schools where we have agriculture-focused school, technical-focused school, vocational-focused school.

We commit together to build a society where the child of a domestic worker and the child of a farmer sit side by side in

the same classroom, learning the same curriculum with equal access to opportunities.

As the Department of Education in the North West province, we say with pride and humanity, we will continue side by side in the spirit of unity and progress to transform South Africa through education for today, for tomorrow and for generations to come. Thank you very much.

Ms T BREEDT: Acting House Chair, ...

Afrikaans:

... hierdie jaar is soos elke ander jaar met 'n soortgelyke debat. Ek het net nie geweet dat dit so erg gaan wees nie, waar die ANC die goeie storie het om te vertel, en ons kwansuis inlig oor vordering in menseregte. Ek gaan egter moet verskil en sal selfs so ver gaan as om te vra: Het Suid-Afrika nie net bloot die een onderdrukkende regime met 'n ander vervang nie?

English:

We are too busy fighting against 31 years of ANC-led failure, mismanagement, and broken promises, to celebrate our so-called

democracy. South Africa is not a shining example of the Freedom Charter's ideals; it is a cautionary tale of what happens when corruption, race-based policies, and state capture replace true democracy. When going down to the ground, which I am sure many of my ANC colleagues are not doing, reality paints a very bleak picture.

The Freedom Charter says: "There shall be work and security." Yet, today, after 30 years under ANC rule, the unemployment rate has risen to 31,9 %. Despite the hopeful promises of the Freedom Charter, the unemployment rate has risen by nearly 12 percent since 1994.

According to Statistics SA, homelessness has risen by 324,2% from 1996 to 2022. This figure has undoubtedly risen since then. If you just look at the streets around Parliament, and the inner city, those figures are a lot more.

According to The National Food and Nutrition Security Survey, 63% of South Africa's households are food insecure, and at least 17% are critically undernourished. Some research centres in their surveys say that 73% of respondents were considered to be food-insecure and 38% were experiencing severe food

insecurity. Twenty-seven percent of children under age five suffer from stunting, due to malnutrition and hunger, according to studies done by UNICEF.

Afrikaans:

Maar moenie bekommer nie; die ANC het 'n plan. Hulle gaan BTW nóg meer verhoog, internasionale handelsvennote nóg meer kwaad maak, en nóg meer wette onderteken, wat ekonomiese groei stuit. Dit is Ekonomiese 101 volgens die ANC.

Die manifest sê verder: "Daar sal behuising, veiligheid en gemak wees." Vandag, 31 jaar later, is daar 'n geraamde 4 297 informele nedersettings in Suid-Afrika onder die ANC. Ons gesondheidstelsel is in sy maai in. Ons kinder sterfteskoers is bo die wêreld gemiddeld. Gesondheidsfasiliteite en hospitale is totaal oorlaai, met tekorte aan hulpbronne en dokters.

By die Vrystaat Psigiatrisiese Kompleks word verplieërs verwag om alleen na 'n saal van 16 gestremde pasiënte om te sien, hul te voed, bad en te versorg. So ook, dis voorheen genoem, het die meeste van die klinieke in Suid-Afrika nou aan die finansiële jaareinde uit kroniese medikasie gehardloop. Dit is

elke jaar 'n problem. Nogsteeds kry ons dit nie aangespreek
nie.

So kan ek aangaan oor die toestand van ons paaie en so meer.

English:

And perhaps the most blatant contradiction of the 1955 ANC and the current ANC is the following: "All shall be equal before the law." and then it further says: "All laws, which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed."

Since the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa has ironically seen a 141 race-based legislation making its course. That is almost half of all racial-related statutes since 1910.

Afrikaans:

Julle is toe nie soveel beter as die NP-regering nie, lyk dit my. Die realiteit is dat miljoene Suid-Afrikaners nie vandag fees vier oor 31 jaar van demokrasie nie, want hul realiteit is ver van dit wat die ANC propageer. Ek dank u.

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Mr S K MASHILO (Mpumalanga): Hon Acting Chairperson, Chairperson of the NCOP, Mme Mtshweni-Tsipane, Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Govender, Chief Whip of the NCOP, hon Mmoiemang, Ministers and MECs, hon members of this august House, ladies and gentlemen and indeed, South Africans, good afternoon. Hon members, the debate in commemorating 31 years of collective efforts to build a new society rooted in the ideals of the Freedom Charter is taking place two days after our commemoration of our hero, Kalushi Mahlangu, who was brutally murdered. We all know the details. He said:

Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue to fight, my blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom.

Indeed, he has loved us so much. We love him too. He was only 22 years old. He could not see the path to be taken by our country towards a democratic, prosperous and united South Africa where all people shall be entitled to take part in the administrations of the country. Where the rights of the people shall be the same regardless of race, colour, or sex. Where all bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and

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authorities have been replaced by the democratic organ of self-government.

On 04 June 1948 until 09 May 1994, the National Party led this country for almost 46 years with the only 36% victory they had. The ANC with the 40% victory decided to make what we referred to as the Government of National Unit, GNU, informed by the Freedom Charter Clause: "South Africa belongs to all who live and work in it". That is what we have done. The ideals of the Freedom Charter were nearly thwarted on 10 April 1994 at the brink of our democracy. Because of the ideals of a democratic and free society in which all people live together in harmony and with equal opportunities cherished by Nelson Mandela, for which he hoped to live for and to achieve, and for which he was prepared to die, if it needs be.

The people of this country joined hands and marched together, despite the killing of our comrade, Chris Hani by the right winger, as we all know. Indeed, we shall be celebrating the assassination of Chris Hani on 10 April, two days from this debate. Hon members, it is by no mistake that 31 years of democracy will be celebrated in the province of the rising sun, in Msukaligwa Local Municipality, Gert Sibande District

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Municipality, the lion of the east. We are looking forward to receiving the President, His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa to be joined by many of you, hon members in this House.

Today is indeed an important day for the NCOP to able to organise such a relevant topic, especially as we are also celebrating 70 years of the Freedom Charter this year. Hon Chair of the NCOP, South Africa of 2025 is different to the one that we had before 1994. We can safely indicate without any shadow of doubt that the contributions of the Freedom Charter have contributed significantly to the achievement we are witnessing today. None of us before 1994 were here. Only the few minorities were in this House. Despite we are South Africans. We are, of course, mindful of the challenges still faced by our people in the country.

As Mpumalanga, we can confirm that we have already aligned our policy position to the priorities of the Medium-Term Development Plan of the GNU of 2026 annual performance plan, as well. We have a strengthened integrated planning in the province, to ensure that the plans are aligned to the plans of the national government. As Mpumalanga, hon members, we are aware that the performance of the provincial government will

be measured through our ability to meet and exceed the priorities of the growing of our economy through the implementing robust programme.

Tata Nelson Mandela, the father of our nation, as the first President of the democratic South Africa after the breakthrough of 1994 once said:

What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.

I must indicate Chairperson, three days ago I met some farmers, white farmers, to be particular, and one asked me a question. Is there a reason for them to consider the offer made by Donald Trump? One responded immediately and said, no, do not do that. Here in South Africa, we live like kings. It is so nice. Indeed, my response to these farmers was that when you become a foreigner or you become a refugee, you will be put in Texas. That is the farming area in America. No other people will just accept any foreigners to come to their land and in the city centre and enjoy. You must work equally for

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it. So, there is no reason and therefore I agreed with the other farmer.

We are about to conclude another boarding school, amongst many that are meant to address the plight of the children of the farmworkers in the province. Since 1994, we have built hundreds of new schools, added many new classrooms to hit the call of the Freedom Charter that, "The doors of learning shall be opened for all". We understand very well that it is through education that some of our worse historical challenges can be addressed.

We appreciate the Minister of Finance, Godongwana, for passing the budget and making sure that they allocate the money to us. Thanks to all members who voted for this budget for our people. The challenges that we are faced with are far more than what we referred to as VAT increase. We had got more problems in the past, but we managed to resolve them. We shall overcome this one, too.

Last month, we had a programme called Taking the Legislature to the People in Victor Khanye Local Municipality where the hon premier handed over a very important and a beautiful

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community hall, including child healthcare centre to the people of Victor, Kanye local municipality in Delmas. All our people deserve adequate and top of the range medical attention. For that reason, we are building and still planning for more new hospitals, including my Mapulaneng, Middleburg, Witbank, Lenah Malatjie, Bethal and many other primary healthcare facilities to practically respond to the ideals of the Freedom Charter that demanded that:

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all.

Therefore, the National Health Insurance, NHI, is the road to go. Having noted the population growth in Mpumalanga, we are launching massive water and sanitation project including Loskop Regional Bulk Water Supply Scheme which originally, was only providing water for few farmers, whereas our people around Motse and Thaba Chweu Local Municipality were struggling water. The water supply schemes, like the Driekopies Bulk Water Supply and the Rust de Winter Bulk Water Supply Schemes are indeed underway and we are determined to get these projects concluded as soon as we can.

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The District Development Model, DDM, highlights participatory democracy. It is mandatory for our government to work well with the key stakeholders. Amongst them, includes traditional leaders, our private communities and including progressive forces. The role of our traditional leaders is key as the custodian of our cultural heritage, serving as a bridge between the past and the present ensuring the continuity of traditional pass through our generation. We count on them all the time and hence we work very well with our traditional leaders in the province of Mpumalanga. We have given them the tools of trade and will continue to do so because we value them.

The issue of gender-based violence and femicide are being dealt with holistically. Hon Chairperson, in Mpumalanga, the place of the rising sun, when the sun rise, we work very hard as we do all the time. We have launched the gender-based violence council comprising of traditional leaders and civil society to make sure that we fight that scourge which became the second pandemic after the COVID-19.

This is better explained by the ideals of the Freedom Charter that, "All shall enjoy the equal rights". One of the several

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leaders of the African liberation movement and one of the most ... Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

IsiXhosa:

Mnu. M M PETER: Mandibulise kuSihlalo wale Ndlu nakuMbhexeshi oyintloko.

English:

Hon Acting Chair, the UDM acknowledges the progress made in the past 31 years of the South African democracy. It is clear that the vision of the Freedom Charter remains far from being realised fully. The Freedom Charter and envisions a South Africa where all people shall govern. Where all shall be equal before the law and where all shall enjoy equal human rights. However, the reality for many South Africans, particularly the disadvantaged majority, is one of the deep and entrenched inequality. While political freedom was gained in 1994.

Economic freedom remains a distant dream for millions. Today, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world.

IsiXhosa:

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Sihlalo namalungu ale Ndlu, thina sizwe esintsundu silibele kukhukhumala libe ilizwe lisimka ezandleni zethu. Silibele kubukela abantu bethu belamba. Siye sithethe ngemithetho xa kufuneka sinike abantu bethu ukutya, sibe sicaphula kuMgaqosiseko kodwa abantu beli lizwe bayaphela yindlala. Masikhumbule ukuba kukho amadoda afayo, ebulawa ngurhulumente wengcinezelo phambi kwe1994. Babebulawelwa ntoni ooVuyisile Mini, ooSteve Biko, Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu, Griffiths Mxenge, Sparrow Mkhonto nooRuth First? Bafela ntoni xa kanti abantu bakuthi baza kulamba abanye bafele ematyotyombeni?

Namhlanje, sithetha ngelizwe elidlakadlaka, ilizwe elingahoyanga mntu. Sithetha ngabantu bamandulo kodwa iintloko zabo asikazifumani kunanamhlanje. Iinkosi zethu zabhaca zalishiya ilizwe lazo. Asizange sabakhuza mhla sathathela ulawulo kuthi ngowe1994. Zange sigcwalise amabala okudlala (stadia) sikhuze abantu bethu abasishiyayo, sibulele kuMvelinqangi, uThixo wookhokho. Asizange sibulele nakomnye singxengeze ngeentloko zabo esingazange sizifumane.

Namhlanje, sijikelwa ngabantwana bethu. Anicingi na ukuba zizikhalo zabo sabashiyayo abanye bayalamba nanamhlanje sibe

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thina sonwabele ukuba lapha kule Palamente nokukhusela izidima zethu? Enkosi.

English:

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): Thank you so much, hon Peter. You are very disciplined, hon Peter. You left some few seconds on your clock. We will move along to the province of the Western Cape and invite to the podium hon Allen.

Mr R I ALLEN (Western Cape): Hon Acting House Chairperson, esteemed members of the NCOP and fellow South Africans, I'm, indeed, honoured to be standing here today. Acting House Chairperson, this will be my official first engagement and debate in person that I partake here in the NCOP. Born and bred around Mitchells Plain and, if I remember correctly, my mom told me that the United Democratic Front, UDF, also adopted the Freedom Charter. It was during the launch of the UDF that I was still in utero. My mom told me that I was still in my mom's stomach, I was still in the womb when she attended the launch of the UDF, which was approximately 400 metres away from our house in Rocklands. It was also during that particular engagement that the hon Rev Frank Chikane indicated that the launch of the UDF was a turning point in the history

of our society. It's a turning point in the struggle for freedom and, indeed, Acting House Chairperson, that struggle continues today. It's against that backdrop with a sense of profound reflection and determined optimism that I stand before you today representing the Democratic Alliance in the beautiful Western Cape.

Today we commemorated 31 years of our democratic dispensation, and this milestone offers us an opportunity to not only celebrate our hard-won freedoms, but also to have a deep introspective look of where we are. Definitely, we have seen that the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter has not been fully realised, and that particular document that envisioned a South Africa where all shall have equal rights, where the peoples are governed, and we all shall enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Acting House Chairperson, over the last 31 years, South Africa has achieved much. However, we must be honest, we have been on a journey that is extremely uneven, where many parts of our country have been dragged down by corruption, maladministration and wasteful expenditure, cadre deployment and the erosion of accountability. Here in the beautiful

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Western Cape, we have chosen a different path. We have demonstrated that good governance is not a luxury, but it is, indeed, a necessity that we have spent public money and that we have made commitments based on merit.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): Hon Allen! Hon Allen! Hon Allen, hold on. Hon members, can you be kind enough to allow hon Allen to make his maiden speech? Please let's not drown him. Let's not disturb him, please.

Mr R I ALLEN (Western Cape): We have prioritised service delivery and safety to uplift our communities. That means that we have given the ideals that is enshrined in the Freedom Charter actual reality here in our province. We have not fully arrived as a country, and we all know that the struggle continues. However, it's not against a mere oppressive regime, it's against poverty. It's against unemployment. It's against inequality. It's also against crime that robs our communities of their peace. It's against the slow erosion of public trust in public institutions, and we continue here in the Western Cape to build, guided by the values of freedom, fairness, opportunity and diversity.

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Here in the Western Cape, Acting House Chairperson, under the leadership of the Democratic Alliance, we have strived to build a province that embodies the spirit of the Freedom Charter through a steadfast commitment of good governance, the rule of law and the efficient delivery of services to all our residents. Our guiding principle is that of a just and equitable society that can build the foundation on sound financial management and relentless focus on the needs of our people. We have displayed this less than a day ago that during the budget estimates of the provincial revenue and expenditure for the year 2025-26, that reflects our unwavering dedication to these principles.

It was developed within a constrained fiscal envelope and our budget prioritises the efficient allocation of limited resources to address the increasing social demands and the imperative for economic growth, recognising the interdependence.

Acting House Chairperson, several key aspects to our R269,5 billion budget was to step up for growth and jobs. This was adopted in our Parliament yesterday directly to support the aspirations of our new society that we wish to see be

embedded in our communities. What this means is that we will continue to invest in our people through education, recognising that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened. I'm recognising that the doors of learning and cultures shall be opened is fundamental to the empowerment of progress.

In the Western Cape, we continue to allocate the larger share of our budget to education. This investment aims to provide quality learning opportunities to every child in every classroom, and in every school in our province. This commitment is crucial to breaking the cycle of poverty and enabling all citizens to participate fully in our society. We have also seen that a school in the heart of Khayelitsha, most recently got a 98,3% pass rate. All their learners ultimately wrote mathematics. All their learners wrote physical science, and they had the highest bachelor pass rate for that particular area. It was even higher than a school called Milnerton High School. The school I'm talking about is called Centre of Science and Technology, Cosat, in the heart of Khayelitsha.

We will further promote health and well-being because our budget allocates significant resources to health and wellness, striving to provide equitable access to the quality health services for all citizens. This aligns with the inherent right to well-being and a healthy life a cornerstone of a just society.

Acting House Chairperson, we will further continue to support vulnerable and empowering communities. The Department of Social Development's budget focus on providing a comprehensive network of social development services to empower the poor, the vulnerable and those with special needs. This commitment seeks to ensure that there shall be houses, security and comfort for all, particularly those most marginalised in our society.

We will further continue to ensure that we strengthen governance and public engagement. The provincial Parliament's budget underscores its commitment to deepening democracy in the Western Cape. Its priorities include being a credible, transparent, accountable, responsive and citizen centric Parliament. Initiatives aimed at enhancing public participation and leveraging technology are crucial for

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ensuring that the people self-governed in a meaningful and effective safety of our residents and businesses ...

[Interjections.]

Mr B J FARMER: Acting House Chairperson, I'm rising on Rule 61(b) which says that no delegate may deliberately make a statement which the delegate knows to be false. The speaker knows that what he's saying is false, Acting House Chair.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): Okay. Hon Farmer, oh, oh, e-e, e-e! Is it a correct rule? Okay. Hon Farmer, let's do this, the House has agreed that soon we will debate service delivery in the Western Cape, and you will make that issue there. Continue, Chair.

Mr R I ALLEN (Western Cape): Acting House Chairperson, the safety of our residents and businesses is a fundamental priority. We will thus over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, allocate R3,95 billion to safety programmes, and this includes R1,311 billion for our law enforcement advancement programme, LEAP, programme where we have placed additional boots on the ground to compensate for the lack of resources that we have here in our province.

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We have further allocated to our K9 units because we have systematically seen over the last five years a 28% reduction in the K9 units as supplied by the SA Police Service. Our K9 units are found in the Swartland area across the Mossel Bay area as well as over Strand together with our law enforcement reaction units, because we believe that the lack of safety can deeply affects our residents' life, how they play and how they ultimately live their lives in our communities.

Therefore, we are wanting to ensure that we can create safer communities, whether it is in Sea Point or in Khayelitsha or in Mitchells Plain. As we reflect on the past 31 years, we acknowledge that the journey towards a society fully aligned with the ideals of the Freedom Charter is ongoing. Challenges such as inequality, poverty and crime persist demanding our continued and intensified efforts. The Western Cape government, together with our Parliament through this budget and its strategic priorities, remains committed to addressing these challenges with innovation, determination and a deep sense of responsibility to all our residents.

Acting House Chairperson, as I conclude, let us recommit ourselves to the collective effort of building South Africa to

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where the principles as enshrined in the Freedom Charter are not just aspirations but lived realities for every citizen. The Western Cape's 2025-2026 budget is a testimony to our dedication to this cause, reflecting our commitment to creating a more just, equitable and prosperous society for all. Thank you.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Acting House Chair, hon members and my fellow South Africans, good day. So, here we have it. The Freedom Charter declared boldly in 1955, that the people shall govern, that there shall be work and security, and that the doors of learning and cultures shall be opened. Today, 31 years into ANC rule, and it's only just now, might I remind you of the 39%. Those promises lie in tatters. They betrayed not by time, but they are betrayed by the very custodians who were entrusted to realise them. Did it speak plainly?

The people do not govern when municipalities are hijacked by cadre deployment. Service deliveries outsourced to comrades and community voices are drowned out by turn deaf politicians peddling empty promises on the eve of the election in the form of T-shirts and bread. This is not democracy - it's decay. They should be working security. Unemployment today, as has

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been mentioned earlier, now sits at over 41% in expanded terms. Millions of young people are without work, without training and without hope. Instead of economic freedom, they are shackled by a state that has failed to create an enabling environment for growth. Corruption, policy uncertainty and crumbling infrastructure are not the result of bad luck. There are the fruits of 31 years of ANC misrule in this country.

The Freedom Charter says that the land shall be shared among those who work it. However, what has the ANC done? They've failed to support emerging black farmers. They mismanaged land reform. They weaponised the issue to distract from their own incompetence. Instead of building a nation of owners, the ANC builds a bureaucracy of renters and dependents. The doors of learning and cultures will be opened. Tell that to the child that is still learning under a tree, to the student who must walk miles to school without textbooks or to the graduate with a degree and no job. The ANC has locked the doors. They've lost the keys, and they've outsourced the locksmith to the dodgy entrepreneurs.

Minister Simelane, it's a pity you are not in the House today because you're virtual based on skin pigmentation and I'm sure

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you will get some more of that just now, removes the shame of you being shuffled around in Cabinet. I wonder if it's because of the Venda Building Society, VBS, sponsored coffee shops - maybe in Santon and the Eskom over billing for ghost employees which were also looked in your past. Let me tell you something, Minister Simelane, when the DA took over in the Western Cape in 2010, they had to spend a billion rand on fixing crumbling Reconstruction and Development Programme, RDP, infrastructure left by the ANC party - fact.

Hon Arries, yeah, you can go ahead and call us names - that won't win debates. In fact, a nonpercent party won't win anything, not even a place in the Government of National Unity, GNU. The EFF arguments are so hollow, whether they use 10 minutes of their 15 minutes. I think last week they also left about 8 minutes on the table. I wonder if hon Gericke is being sidelined by, for some reason, the EFF, maybe they didn't want him to come and debate. Let's not get involved in any personal politics here.

Hon Zulu, yeah, thank you for the MK Party's contribution. You rejected everything today, but you forgot to mention that you

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also rejected the Constitution, which sometimes you remember, but then you forgot to mention it again.

Minister Kubayi, the biggest injustice of the post-31 years is the 39% ANC - they can't be a bigger injustice than that. Hon Bains, you referred to your ANC including the current President presiding over silly season - correct - that nine years of state capture the current President of the country was one of the presiding officers over those nine years of state capture. Where was he when Zuma was plundering this country? What did he do when the Guptas were running away with R450 billion of South African assets to the Middle East, and they are still sitting there.

It is very important to notice that the Patriotic ANC's hon Farmer sitting here today in this House with his despicable behaviour, prior to this debate, all he could do was to object frivolously to all the motions of value in this House today. That was his contribution. Everything to do with the PA that was about to merger with the ANC anyway, therefore, he's just paying the ANC's bidding now.

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Acting House Chairperson, for 31 years, the ANC has been given a chance of the chance to deliver on their promises of the Freedom Charter. However, instead of delivery, they've discharged decay. Instead of progress, they've presided over plunder from soaring hopes in 1994, to their shattered realities of the day. The ANC support has spiral downwards as trust has been eroded by corruption, incompetence and betrayal. The ANC has not just abandoned the Freedom Charter, they've shattered it. They've broken it, broken promise by broken promise. Out of all the plans they've finished up, they've got no more money, and they've got no more voters. I thank you.

Mr S A ZULU: I'm covered, Acting House Chair. However, this one should be debating.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): You are covered.

Mr S A ZULU: This one ... [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): Which one?

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Mr S A ZULU: Badenhorst should be debating. It's not a DA sponsored debate. It is the ANC's sponsored debate ...

[Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, Mageba, we don't work that way. No, no. If you ...

[Interjections.] ... Mageba. Hullo! I'm here. Ah, I'm here. I am here. We're not going to have fist fighting when I'm here. Mageba, that does not work. Please, that does not work. If you have issues, there's a podium here, come and debate. If you don't like what they're saying, it's okay, come and debate. There's no problem here. We're moving to North West. We have gone from Western Cape, and we're going to North West. Hon Medupe is already on the platform. Hon Medupe, I'll be generous, and I'll give you 900 seconds.

Ms O D MEDUPE: Thank you very much acting House Chairperson for affording me this opportunity. Let me also greet hon members of this House and those who have joined us on the virtual platform, the Ministers, MECs and Salga representatives. On the 27 April 1994, South Africa stood at the dawn of a new era. It was the moment of country transition from brutality of apartheid to the promise of democracy. Today

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as we commemorate 31 years of freedom and democracy, we reflect - not only on the passage of time - but on the collective effort of generations to build a new society deeply rooted in enduring vision of Freedom Charter, a vision that continues to inspire our journey towards democratic, just equal and prosperous South Africa. Over the past 31 years, South Africa made significant strides in giving life to those ideas.

The establishment of democratic government based on universal suffrage was the first historic achievement. For the first time all citizens could vote, participate in governance and have a say in shaping their future. The Constitution of South Africa, adopted in 1996, was direct realisation of Charter principle of enshrining human dignity, equality and freedom as non-negotiable pillars of society. In real social economic transformation, remarkable progress has been recorded. However, there is a still long way to go, unravelled centuries of imperialist and colonial oppression and apartheid legacies.

Setswana:

Mosekaphofu wa gaabo ga a swe lentswe. Re tla tswelela ka go gopotsa bao ba ikgatholosang kwa re tswang ko teng.

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English:

In terms of social injustice, our successive ANC government endowed that millions gain access to housing, water, electricity, healthcare, reflecting a deliberate attempt to redress the injustice of the past. Education has expanded with more young black South Africans entering universities and technical colleges than ever before. Are we still in denial? As we continue to build a society rooted in ideas of Freedom Charter, South Africans, especially the youths, need to continue to work on nation building.

We must actively defend democratic institutions, deepen social cohesion and drive inclusive economic growth. We must honour the sacrifices of those who came before us by ensuring that fruits of freedom are shared by all, not just the few privileged. In the spirit of the Freedom Charter, the task of building a new society is not the responsibility of government alone, it is a duty of communities, civil society, faith-based organisations, the private sector, every individual who call himself South African. Together, through partnership and collective action, we can move closer to South Africa, where the idea of Charter, freedom, dignity, justice and equality are lived experience for all.

The dawn of democracy in 1994 marked a fundamental shift in South African political and economic landscape. One of the central challenges facing the new democratic government was the need to dismantle the deeply entrenched economic inequalities created by centuries of colonialism and apartheid. In response, the democratic state embarked on series of reform aimed at restructuring the economic, promoting social justice, and ensuring inclusive development. This reform includes programmes such as Economic Empowerment Programme, land reform efforts and social grants.

The Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment was an economic empowerment programme that was introduced to promote participation of black South Africans in a mainstream economy. Over the years, it has involved and benefited a wider base, inclusive women workers, youth, and people with disabilities in rural communities. This policy has been quite effective in attempting to mitigate the inequality and poverty in our society.

Post 1994, land reform efforts were structured around three pillars of land restitution, land redistribution, and tenure reform. The aim was to return the land to those dispossessed

through discriminatory laws, and to provide secure tenure to people living on rural and communal lands. However, progress has been slow and often hindered by legal bureaucratic and financial challenges. As a result, land reform remains an emotional charge and unfinished priority in addressing historical injustice.

One of the most impactful redistributive tool post 1994 has been the expansion of social grants, which now reached over 18 million people. Grants for old age, disability, children and poverty relief has played a significant role in alleviating extreme poverty in improving living conditions, especially in rural and historically disadvantaged areas. While they do not eliminate structural poverty, grants have cushioned vulnerable population and contributed to household welfare economic participation. You can understand if only ...

Setswana:

... ko galona lo ipona lo dula ko mokhukung ...

English:

... for many years, ...

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Setswana:

... go sena sepe se se neng se diragala bagaetsho.

English:

So only people who lived in such conditions will understand where we come from. As South Africa reflects on 31 years of democracy, most urgent challenge confronting the nation is the need to accelerate exclusive economic growth and actively combat persistent triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. These interlinked problems are the most visible legacy of apartheid, and they continue to limit potential of millions of South Africans, particularly the youth, women, and those in rural areas. Poverty remains widespread with millions of South Africans living below the bound poverty line.

Inequality, especially in terms of income, wealth, and assets, amongst the highest in the world, it is important to underline that inequality, unemployment and poverty has gender spatial dimension which is stubborn legacy of discriminatory practices of evil systems of apartheid. Unemployment, especially amongst the youth, is at a level of crisis. Together this challenge from a cycle that traps families and communities in intergenerational deprivation.

Economic growth on its own is not enough if it does not reach the majority. Therefore, we need inclusive economic growth which benefit everyone, especially the historically disadvantaged. Inclusive growth should involve creating jobs, supporting small businesses, investing in rural development. In addition, to support co-operatives needs to be mainstreamed to build networks of network of collective in economic productive activities at larger scale and on sustainable basis.

The precondition of thorough growing economic progress includes an investment climate, enabling policy and regulatory environment, as well as enabling infrastructure. The process of reindustrialization of key industrial includes manufacturing-based industrial require major investment skills, innovation, and production capability to compete and thrive in a global competitive environment. It is unattainable to have market concentration and disinvestment in the productive sector by private sectors. They must come on board to intensify economic growth for shared prosperity.

To tackle the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty, South Africans must move decisively to unlock a

full potential of its people and resources by embarking on structural economic reform, industrial policy and localization, education and skill development support for SMMEs, infrastructure and investment, and social compact and public private partnership.

One of the most critical leavers of achieving inclusive economic growth in South Africa is alignment of skills development with economic development, particularly through education and vocational training. Importantly, a process of building entrepreneurial spirit amongst the youth and women are critical interventions for the country crippling with high unemployment, especially amongst the young bridging the gap between supply of skills and demand of economy. It is not just strategic; it is essential for national transformation.

The 2024 ANC manifesto state that ANC has vastly improved access to education, transforming lives of millions of South Africans. South Africa today enjoys higher levels of education and empowerment than during the apartheid era. From early childhood development centre to school colleges and universities, there has been a significant rise in enrolment

at educational institutions, many of which now offer free education to majority of learners.

According to 2022 census report, the percentage distribution of population aged 20 years older by educational attainment indicates that post school education improvement from 7,1% in 1996 to 12,2% in 2022. This shows our commitment to education and post schooling education at large. Are we still denying? The 2025 state of the nation address indicates that over 10,5 million learners attend no fee public schools, and that is the past year alone. More than 900 000 students from poor and working-class families were financially supported to pursue studies at universities and colleges.

The alignment of skills development with economic development is vital for unlocking South Africa's main capital potential and achieving high growth and job creation economy. Education and vocational training must become more responsive, flexible and future focused. This requires ongoing collaboration between state, businesses, labour, education provider, guided by accurate labour market intelligence and shared commitment to youth empowerment.

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As South Africa continues to commemorate 31 years of democracy, investing in South Africa through relevant education and political training remains the most sustainable way to overcome the legacies of past and build a more equal, skilled and prosperous nation. The future of any nation rests on the shoulder of its youth. In South Africa, where the majority of population is under 35, youth development is not just developmental priority, it is a national imperative.

Cultivating a generation of capable, skilled and empowered young people is essential to achieving social cohesion, economic transformation and sustainable development. To this end, several strategic interventions has been rolled out post 1994 to invest in young people with notable contributions from institutions such as the National Youth Development Agency, Expanded Public Works Programme, the Youth Employment Services and the Sector Education and Training Authority. These institutions are sacrosanct for our development as a society.

The National Youth Development Agency, NYDA, as a central driver of youth empowerment, focusing on improving access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunity, plays a critical role in business funding and mentorship for youth

owned enterprise. Support for the National Youth Service Programme in career guidance and skills development initiatives that reach schools and communities nationwide.

The Expanded Public Works Programme, EPWP, has provided millions of short-term work opportunity, not jobs, job opportunities, particularly targeting unemployment, youth, women and people with disabilities. Beyond income support, it plays a developmental role by offering skills training and on job experience in sectors such as infrastructure, social services, environmental management and creating pathways for young people to transition from temporary work to permanent employment on entrepreneurship.

The Youth Employment Services, Yes, programme, which has launched in 2018 as a partnership between business and government and labour focuses on creating quality work experience on unemployed youth. Its successes include providing 12 months' work placement in both the private and public sector, giving the youth first time experience that increase their employable and integrating digital platform for job matching, tracking and skills assessment.

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As a product of the fight for democracy, I am able to proudly advocate for fruits of it where equality, equity, are in the forefront of all conversation now, as the ANC. We recognise the fight has not been won as yet; however, we applaud the state of resilience to ensure that the Freedom Charter is achieved at its 100% target to ensure that generation to come reap the benefit of democracy. I thank you.

Mr B A RADEBE: Hon Acting Chairperson, this is the greatest honour for me indeed, and I'd like to thank all the participants in this debate. This debate was robust and what came out of it is that people were speaking from the bottom of their hearts, but what is critical is that as they speak from the bottom of their hearts, they cannot revise history, they cannot turn a blind eye to the progress that has been made in South Africa throughout the first 31 years.

I will just make an example, in 1990, South Africa was a pariah state. The ANC had more international offices than the apartheid government. It was the ANC. But fast forward now, in 2025, the country with the highest diplomatic representation in the world is South Africa after the United States. So, it shows that South Africa has made great strides in integrating

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South Africa with the world. What is also very critical out of that is when you look at principle 10 of the Freedom Charter, "There shall be peace and friendship."

I would like to ask a simple question. Everyone must be honest here. Which country in the world has hosted three different World Cups? It is only South Africa. Where is South Africa? South Africa is in Africa. That is why when ...

IsiZulu:

... uMama uNkosazan Dlamini-Zuma ...

English:

... came with Agenda 2063 to the African Union, AU, it was clear about certain aspirations which we wanted, we wanted to integrate Africa as a big economy. What has happened out of that? Through the ANC and the leadership of ...

IsiZulu:

... uBaba uMatamela Ramaphosa ...

English:

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... we have what is known today as the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement. That agreement means that it's opening opportunities for South African business to interact in the African continent because, before 1994, all infrastructure projects in the whole African continent were developed towards the harbours because the Western countries came and took the minerals out of Africa and went to develop the other side. So, the ANC has done that.

Africa has the possibility of integrating. What is also very important, is the very same South Africa was able to intervene, ...

IsiZulu:

... Mageba ...

English:

... when principle 10 says, "There shall be peace and friendship." Read it further. It is clear. It says, "South Africa will be a sovereign, independent state and will respect the independence of other states." That is what South Africa has done. Instead of the apartheid regime, which was going to

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make coups in other African countries, South Africa has helped South Sudan to stabilise and to become a country.

South Africa has helped to resolve conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC.

South Africa has helped resolve conflict in Mozambique. So how can you say that we have abandoned the Freedom Charter? Those who say the ANC has abandoned the Freedom Charter, again, let's go to the G7, the biggest economies in the world. When coming to the issue of the doors of learning and culture shall be open, go to America, China, Germany, and India, all those countries, provide loans for their students at a higher education level, and they have to pay those loans back. Is that happening in South Africa? No, because the principle of the Freedom Charter is clear, "The doors of learning and culture shall be open." That is why we're not only open at the primary school level, but we're also opening up at the tertiary school level. So how can they say that we have abandoned the principles of the Freedom Charter? Let's go to the other one.

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The DA has just said here we just introduced VAT in the Fiscal Framework because we wanted to loot, it's not true. When you look at that Fiscal Framework, it's empowering the SA Revenue Service, Sars, Sars is going to be able to collect enough money to transform the state, to bring a better life to all. Number two, the very same Sars is going to collect enough money so the frontline services in various departments are executed. So how can you say the ANC has abandoned the Freedom Charter? It is not true.

The practical programmes we are having on the ground are the ones which are bringing a better life for all. Someone said here there were more jobs before during apartheid. Let us be truthful. What type of jobs were there? Let us go to Gert Sibande, ...

IsiZulu:

... uBaba ...

English:

... the Lion of the East had to go and fight for the workers who were being killed ...

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IsiZulu:

... begqitshwa laphaya amabhunu. [Ubuwelewele.]

English:

So, ... [Inaudible.] ... the ANC has not abandoned. [Time expired.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Mr M G Modise): Hon members, on behalf of the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, I would like to thank all the permanent delegates for the debates and special delegates and Salga representatives for availing themselves for this sitting, especially to you. I always fight with members from the Western Cape who are unable to be here, so you came. Maiden speech, you are in the House. I respect that and thank you very much. Hon members, this brings to an end the debate for today. The House stands adjourned. Thank you very much.

The Council adjourned at 18:16.