

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

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PROCEEDINGS OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:03.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, before we proceed, I would like to inform delegates of the rules relating to virtual and hybrid meetings and sittings, in particular sub rules 21, 22 and 23 of Rule 103, which provides as follows:

The hybrid sitting constitutes a sitting of the National Council of Provinces.

Delegates in the hybrid sitting enjoy the same powers and privileges that apply in a sitting of the National Council of Provinces.

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For purposes of the quorum, all delegates who are logged-on the virtual platform shall be considered present.

Delegates must switch-on their videos if they want to speak.

Delegates should also ensure that the microphones on their electronic devices are muted and must always remain muted unless they are permitted to speak.

All delegates in the Chamber must use the floor microphones.

All delegates may participate in a discussion through the chat functionality.

Hon delegates, I would like to request delegates who experience connectivity issues to use a still photograph for identification on a visual platform.

In addition, that delegates on the virtual platform log-on with one device only, as logging-on with two or more devices further lowers bandwidth.

Further, kindly note that the interpretation facility is active.

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Permanent delegates, special delegates, members of the executive and SA Local Government Association, Salga representatives on the virtual platform are requested to ensure that the interpretation facilities on their electronic devices are properly activated to facilitate access to the interpretation services.

Permanent delegates, special delegates, members of the executive, Salga representatives in the Chamber should use the interpretation instruments on their desks to access the interpretation facilities.

Hon delegates, I have been informed that there will be no notices or motions without notice.

We welcome to the House, hon Minister Majodina and hon Hlabisa. We take this opportunity to congratulate them on their appointments as Ministers and we hope that you will change the lives of South Africans through effective and efficient service delivery.

These two portfolios, hon Ministers, are very critical in a sense that without water there's no life. Therefore, hon Majodina, our survival lies in your capable hands.

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We hope that, hon Hlabisa, you will also enforce co-operation through the District Development Model, DDM, of the three spheres of government and ensure that traditional leaders are an integral part of our institutional arrangement.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Policy debate on Budget Vote 3: Co-operative Governance:

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE & TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS:
Hon Chairperson, thank you also for the remarks that you have made, the Chairperson and members of the committee, members of the Provincial Executive Committees, fellow Cabinet members, Deputy Ministers of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, CoGTA, Chairperson of the National House of Traditional and Khoi-San leaders, Chairperson of the Municipal Demarcation Board and its members, President of the South African Local Government Association, Directors-General of Department of Co-operative Governance and Department of Traditional Affairs, Chief Executive Officer, CEO of Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent, MISA, CEO of Municipal Demarcation Board, MDB, organised labour - Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union, IMATU, and SA Municipal Workers' Union, SAMWU, hon members and fellow South Africans.

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Together with Deputy Ministers, Dr Dickson Masemola and Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe, I have the privilege of tabling the budget votes for CoGTA.

From the outset, I thank the former leadership for their achievements, for it is on this foundation that we build.

Before I address this budget, however, I must speak on a very present crisis. Yesterday my team and I visited disaster sites in the Cape Metro where we witnessed the painful impact of prolonged severe weather.

Tomorrow we will be visiting KwaZulu-Natal, where fourteen people have lost their lives in raging infernos. One, on Stirling Farm, not far from Mpophomeni township, which claimed the lives of six firefighters, some of whom were volunteers. These brave men and women paid the ultimate price to protect communities.

On behalf of CoGTA, I extend sincere condolences to all who have lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods. Times like these demand our swift intervention and CoGTA will respond swiftly.

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Hon members, the triple challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality demands a people's budget, taking the needs of all communities into account across South Africa's 257 municipalities.

The allocated budget for Vote 3: Co-operative Governance for the medium-term is R395,7 billion, with 95,9% designated for transfers to municipalities and affiliated entities. Primarily for the local government equitable share, disaster relief grant and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, MIG.

For Vote 15: Traditional Affairs the appropriated budget amounts to R187,3 million, a R5,8 million reduction from the previous year due to mandatory budget cuts implemented by National Treasury.

Details of these budgets and projected expenditure are well elaborated in the departmental plans.

Let us, therefore, speak to the details of this budget. The theme of our 7th Administration is "Every Municipality Must Work".

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This is a clarion call to action, to build a functioning, community-centred local government which is responsive to the needs and aspirations of our people.

As per the State of Local Government, SOLG, report, some municipalities are in severe financial and governance distress which has adversely impacted service delivery.

Some have struggled to pay salaries over the past three to six months. Some have debts that seem insurmountable as well as prolonged and expensive litigation.

These municipalities include: Ditsobotla, Kopanong, Mafube, Emfuleni, uMkhanyakude, Ugu and Umzinyathi Districts and Sekhukhune District and Thabazimbi.

The SOLG, therefore, offers actionable proposals for the 7th Administration, emphasising differentiated support across provinces. It proposes rigorous planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation to improve oversight, accountability and evidence-based policymaking at all levels.

In this context, working with National Treasury, provincial COGTAs and Treasuries as well as sector departments and Salga,

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we will continue to implement and enforce compliance with Municipal Support and Intervention Plans in municipalities that remain distressed.

We, therefore request, provinces to take the lead in supporting these municipalities.

Whilst tangible progress has been made to fulfil our constitutional obligation to provide developmental and transformational local governance and visible service delivery, we admit there are still challenges in ensuring that our people's growing expectations are met and realised.

The District Development Model has brought to life the White Paper on Local Government which envisions a government characterised by working together, not unilaterally or in silos.

It is through the DDM that government planning and coordination will be realised, thus ensuring improved integrated planning and service delivery across the three spheres of government, including interventions by the private sector. It also promotes a more accountable and coherent

service delivery approach and implementation of solutions to address service delivery efficiently.

With the institutionalization and implementation of the DDM and One Plans across 52 Districts and Metros, we should be able to eradicate fragmentation in planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of government programmes. Our collective oversight and accountability across all spheres of government can have impact when we all work together as sectors.

On both section 154 and 139 interventions, the SOLG is recording progress in some municipalities, but we still need to intensify the implementation of Municipal Support and Intervention Plans, working closely with the affected provinces.

The Presidential Working Group in eThekweni as well as the section 154 intervention by the province of KwaZulu-Natal should begin to deliver tangible outcomes and benefit the communities of eThekweni.

There are more than 30 section 139 intervention in municipalities across eight provinces. Both KwaZulu-Natal and

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North West still account for the greatest number of municipalities under intervention.

The reasons for the intervention invoked by Provincial Executive Council are well-documented and known to the NCOP. This Council, through the relevant committees, undertakes an analysis of the reasons for the failure of some of these interventions despite the fact that some of these have lasted for as long as the full term of the municipal council.

Interventions invoked by the national executive remain three, namely: Lekwa, Mangaung and Enoch Mgijima. We will soon be taking a deep dive into the reasons why the turnaround has been slow, particularly in the areas of finance and service delivery.

To improve municipal service delivery, we have embraced the Results-Based Planning. This approach, spearheaded by the Results-Based Management Office, leverages skilled local government experts to collaborate with municipalities, provincial governments, institutions of traditional leadership and stakeholders across all nine provinces.

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With regard to water and sanitation, it is deeply concerning that several municipalities, despite support, have neglected repairs and maintenance.

The Blue Drop, Green Drop and No Drop Report released in 2023 demonstrated the need to support water services authority, municipalities to develop the necessary skills to manage water services.

We will, therefore, intensify the MISA programme whereby more than 100 built environment professionals, 86 of whom are engineers and town planners, have been deployed to support municipalities in nine provinces, in accordance with the District Development Model.

Working with the Department of Water and Sanitation, in the 2024-25 financial year we will address the challenges that led to 26 Water Services Authorities being criminally charged by the Department of Water and Sanitation. We will also accelerate the process of reviewing the Water Services Authority status of the more than 60 Water Service Authorities that obtained poor Blue, Green and No Drop Results.

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All Water Service Authorities that receive the MIG are now compelled to spend up to 10% of their MIG allocations towards repairs and refurbishment on infrastructure for the provision of water and sanitation services. This should result in the reduction of sewer spillages and water leakages.

We will convert funds from the MIG schedule 5b to schedule 6b grants.

The Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent will be the implementing agent for the MIG 6B Conversion Programme.

The National Treasury has approved implementation of two water and sanitation projects with a combined value of R90 million on behalf of uThukela District Municipality and Emfuleni Local Municipality through the MISA arrangement. We are engaging municipalities and National Treasury for extension of these services to other struggling municipalities.

Our intensive monitoring programme, implemented together with the provinces, has secured a massive decline in the number of MIG allocations stopped and reallocated by the National Treasury. We will now intensify this support until all municipalities spend their allocations efficiently.

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I am proud to report that the Municipal Demarcation Board achieved 100% of its performance targets for the period ending 31 March, thanks to the foundation laid by the previous board. This performance is remarkable, with the MDB having finalized municipal boundary redetermination proposals, handling an unprecedented number of submissions.

The implementation phase of the Eastern Seaboard Development is continuing with the engagement of various stakeholders including traditional leadership and the private sector.

Let me now address our key legislative initiatives. A comprehensive review of legislation to consolidate good practices and address challenges holistically has been undertaken, this include: the Local Government General Laws Amendment Bill, the Independent Municipal Demarcation Authority Bill, the Local Government Municipal Structures Amendment Bill, 2024, and the Intergovernmental Monitoring Support and Interventions Bill.

With regard to the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act Review, we will be publishing regulations in terms of section 47 of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act for the public to make comments.

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We have also initiated a review of the 1998 White Paper on Local Government which is a landmark document guiding democratic local government since 2000.

When it comes to the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act, this has been reviewed in line with the Constitutional Court judgement of 30 May 2023, which declared the Bill unconstitutional and invalid. The new Bill will be submitted accordingly to the Cabinet for approval before being submitting it to Parliament.

The Traditional Courts Bill, enacted as Act 9 of 2022, marks a significant step in formalizing traditional justice systems.

South Africa is experiencing number of disasters which have exposed our current disaster management system. The systemic and structural design of our disaster management delivery, as guided by current law, result in issues with timing and bureaucracy.

In response to these and many other challenges, we are proposing a new system for disaster management and fire services. We have developed a new model based on international best practice, emphasizing risk reduction and integrating

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disaster management into all levels of government planning to ensure adequate funding and focus on resilience.

With our constitutional democracy, the institution of traditional leadership is an integral part. We will work tirelessly to address issues raised by traditional leaders through the Inter-Ministerial Task Team led by the Deputy President, supporting the Office of the Deputy President in convening Ministries within the task team to ensure continuous attention to the concerns raised by Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders. These concerns include, amongst others, tools of trade, training and capacity building.

My first priority, however, is the safety of traditional leaders and councillors who have been a target of assassinations. This must be stopped. These lives must be protected.

The Department of Traditional Affairs itself has taken critical steps towards saving lives through interventions like the Customary Initiation Act, 2021, the establishment of the National Initiation Oversight Committee, NIOC, in 2022 and the formation of eight Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committees, PICC. We are committed to establishing the final

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PICC this financial year, ensuring comprehensive oversight across all provinces.

Tragically, even with these and many other interventions we are still experiencing loss of life at initiation schools. We commend provinces like Limpopo and Mpumalanga for exemplary initiation practices and we encourage others to learn from their successes.

Drafting of the Customary Initiation Act Regulation is nearing completion and we will engage stakeholders for the final consultations by the year end, inviting public inputs to refine these regulations.

In response to resolutions from the Cultural, Religious and Linguistic, CRL Rights Commission's Initiation Indaba in April 2023, our focus remains on upholding the rule of law and closing illegal initiation schools. Collaborative efforts with NIOC and stakeholders aim to enforce compliance and accountability, ensuring the sanctity of cultural practices.

In conclusion, we commit to working with all stakeholders and role players to secure good governance for all. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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The MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Thank you very much. Chair of the NCOP, the Deputy Chair of the NOP, the Chief Whip, the permanent delegates as well as the special delegates. It is so good to be in this House again. I served in this House 20 years ago as a full member, and I was conscientious when I was here. [Laughter.] Hon members, the Minister of Cogta, Deputy Minister Mahlobo and Deputy Minister Seithloho and Deputy Ministers of Cogta, allow me to greet you this afternoon in the wonderful name of water, which is life and sanitation, which is dignity.

Upfront, I must request this august House to consider passing this budget. From the upfront, let me request you, the House, to pass our budget. Without this House passing our budget, our people, the electorate, the citizens of South Africa, might not see water as life and they might not see sanitation as dignity. I also want to greet MECs that are here.

Hon members, ...

Sesotho:

Ke mona ho tla bua ka taba ya metsi; mme ke bue ka taba ya bohlweki. Bohlweki ke seriti; metsi ke Bophelo. Ke batla ho kopa hore ha re sheba tokomane ya Molaotheo wa naha, e a re laela hore batho kaofela ba tshwanetse hore ba fumantshwe

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metsi. Metsi ke karolo ya Tokomane ya Ditokelo. Ha re neha batho metsi, ha re ba etsetse mohau. Ntho eo e ngotswe Molaotheong.

English:

Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected.

IsiXhosa:

Isidima sabantu kufuneka sibuyiswe ingakumbi xa sithetha ngokuqokelelwa nokususwa kwelindle, nokuba abantu bafumane amanzi. Wonke umntu unelungelo lokuxhamla amanzi kunye neenkonzo zokususwa kwelindle.

English:

Section 27 of the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, is very clear on that. It guarantees the right to water, calls for government to take reasonable legislative and other measures within the available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of the right to water.

I stand before you here, today, hon members, to tell you that water supply and sanitation services are a function on which municipalities have executive authority in terms of section

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156, read with schedule 4 of the Municipal Structures Act. I'm happy that hon Hlabisa has already spoken on this matter.

Being that, as it may, we as the Department of Water and Sanitation, in line with the very Constitution, we have a responsibility and the requirement, that national and provincial governments must support municipalities and to intervene - not to take over - in municipalities where there is a failure of municipal water and sanitation services.

IsiZulu:

Ngihlushiwe Bab'uHlabisa abantu baseKZN. Selokhu ngangena ehhovisi bonke abantu baseKZN noMeya bakhona bathi sicela amanzi, sicela amanzi kanti ubani okufanele ahlinzeke ngamanzi.

English:

Schedule 4 of the Constitution says that the municipal water sanitation services are a functional area where the national and provincial must also assist on the concurrent legislative competence. That is what we are doing through the Water Service Act.

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Hon members, section 10 of the Constitution also provide that everyone must be able to access water for his or her own dignity. We don't take over municipalities and we don't jump and intervene; not unless proper processes have been done. With the experience of serving in this House, it is this House that initiates with Section 139 and Section 154. Therefore, once there is an intervention that has been agreed upon, then we come in and assist. However, at the moment we reinforce municipalities thought corporate governance.

Our responsibility as the Department of Water and Sanitation,
...

IsiXhosa:

... oo-babes bamanzi.

English:

With regards to water services, we oversight municipalities.

IsiXhosa:

Ngoko ke sinoxanduva lokubajonga ukuba benza le nto infanelekileyo kusini na, ukuze xa singenelela singenelele ngelithi, uMgaqo-siseko niye nawutyeshela ngoko abantu abanamanzi ngoko kufanelekile ukuba singenelele. Thina

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asithathi itephu siyifake emzini womntu. Thina sakha amadama sigcine amanzi. Umasipala nguye ekufuneka ethathe imibhobho ayidibanise nale ndawo igcina amanzi atsale amanzi awase ebantwini. Into esiyimeleyo thina kukuba sibancedise.

Kukho into ethi amadama awazange akhiwa oko kwaqala lo rhulumente. Loo nto asiyiyo inyani. Ndiyafuna ukuyitsho into ethi, akhiwe amadama ukusuka ngowe-1994 ukuza kuthi ga ngoku kwaye asakhiwa. Amanye amadama awakhiwa ukuqalela phantsi kodwa ayenyuswa.

English:

We raise dams in order to have lots of capacity, ...

IsiXhosa:

... xa kuziwa kumcimbi wamanzi.

English:

We regulated the quality of water; water use; as well as issuing water licenses. We take action to protect pollution of water.

IsiXhosa:

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... loo nto iza kusinceda ukuba singaphindi sidibane nale meko sithe sayibona yaseHammanskraal, phofu ingeyiyo yodwa.

English:

Water spillages, ...

IsiXhosa:

... nokungcola kwamanzi kuba kukho ilindle, yonke loo nto ichaphazela iimpilo zabantu. Ukuba asiyithatheli ngqalelo ...

Sesotho:

Ha re sa nke tema e bohlokwa ya hore re shebane le hore metsi a seke a kenya ditshila hobane a tla kudisa batho. Rona, jwalo ka lefapha, re re, ...

English:

... over years, the national Department has taken responsibility of building national water resource infrastructure, to ensure that there is sufficient supply.

Sesotho:

Re ka se fellwe ke metsi ka pele Afrika Borwa. Metsi re na le ona, empa re tshwanetse hore re lokise ...

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English:

... the decaying infrastructure - old and aging infrastructure!

Sesotho:

Metsi a a dutla, mme a itsamaela fela.

IsiXhosa:

Ayavuza amanzi ayaxhaxhaza. Loo nto ke ithi ibangele ukuba amanzi angakwazi ukugcineka ixesha elide.

English:

Given that we have already captured 75% of available surface water, hon Chair Of the NCOP, the members of the NCOP want to know exactly: What is happening in my province; get into our provinces; what are the profits that are there; and what are the planes?

We have established the Water Partnership Office in collaboration with the Department of Public Service and Administration, the DPSA as well as Salga, to provide support to municipality, to establish partnership within the private sector and to develop the local resource project. Currently the water partnership is present, and we are working very well

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with Ethekekwini, Mangaung, Buffalo City, Nelson Mandela and Tshwane Metropolitan Municipalities,

Sesotho:

Re sebedisana mmoho, ...

English:

... especially to close the leaks, to ensure that water is distributed safe, ...

Sesotho:

... a ilo fihla bathong.

English:

We are also aware that there is a concern around how we use water as South Africans. Our water usage is very high. We are one of the 30 most water-scarce countries in the world. Yet, the average of our usage of water is 218 litres per capita per day, as against the international standards, which is 173 litres per capita per day. Therefore, we have to use our water sparingly.

This House must also know that we have more plans for this year, 2024-25. The electorate is waiting out there. Major

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national water resources infrastructure is as follows: We have 14 major water resources projects under development across the country to a value of R100 billion. Some examples are as follows. I might not mention all, but it is important to highlight the following: The new R26 billion Umkhomazi Dam, to provide water for KwaZulu-Natal, especially around Ethekewini; the new Podihadi Dam as part of the R42 billion second phase of Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

There are provinces that are going to benefit once we complete this second phase. The Free State, Mpumalanga, North West, as well as Northern Cape. The R8 billion Ntabelanga Dam and a tributary of the Umzimvubu River are also in the pipeline. That part is in the eastern region of the Eastern Cape.

On the financial sustainability of the sector, the national government provided R61,7 billion worth of water and sanitation and related grants to municipalities, with the purpose of these grants being to enable municipalities to address water, sanitation and infrastructure backlogs and to provide free basic services to the indigent. We have since observed that the indigent people of our country are no longer receiving free water as they are supposed to.

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I also want to make a clarion call that the culture of paying for services received must also be inculcated in our country. It is also important to mention the following, that through municipal support and intervention, we are intervening in supporting municipalities in all provinces. We will also closely monitor the progress in the Gauteng municipalities, hon Mamabolo, to reduce the physical water losses in their distribution system.

In addition, the platform of Water Secure Gauteng, which was recently put in place by the department, in partnership with the World Bank 2030 Water Resource Group, Rand Water and Gauteng municipalities still work with civil society.

We will also continue to collaborate with the City of Tshwane and Magalies Water to complete the project to provide an alternative source of clean drinking water. Hammanskraal, by October this year, will have the phase one completed; while Rooiwal Waste Treatment Water Works is repaired and upgraded.

I don't want to create an expectation that we are going to deal with everything. We are intervening on what the Themba Project was supposed to do - the 80-80 megalitres. So, in October it will be 25; in February/March it will be another

25, because currently they are supposed to provide 80 megalitres.

Elsewhere, in KwaZulu-Natal, the Umngeni-Uthukela Water Board is assisting Zululand District Municipality to implement a R9,5 billion Mandlakazi Bulkwater Supply Scheme to benefit communities under Zululand District Municipality and Umkhanyakuse District, including Jozini and the Big Five, KwaHlabisa - ...

IsiZulu:

Ngowakini lo Ngqongqoshe!

English:

... as well as Kwamhlabuyalingana and Mtubatuba Local Municipalities. I could have jumped it. We are also supporting Ugu District Municipality to implement various projects.

Hon members, one of the water supply projects, which has been notoriously delayed and which has been subject to investigation by the SIU is Guyana Water Supply project in Limpopo. The former Minister, which I want to thank for having done a good work in this department, hon Mchunu, made good progress of unblocking these projects while the investigation

occurs. He let our people not suffer because of that. The Lepelle Water Board is implementing R4,7 billion of the R18 billion oliphants Ebenezer programme. Even on that one, we are intervening.

In the North West, the Bulela Metsi initiative project - a good project with a good name. Bulela metsi means, ...

IsiXhosa:

... vula amanzi!

English:

Open water!

Sesotho:

Empa, o ka se bulele metsi, ha metsi a sa tswe! O bulelang? O bulela moya? Pompo e tswa moya? Dipompo ha di tswe metsi! Modula Setulo, ...

English:

... in the Northern Cape, the department is providing the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality with water to a value of R1,5 billion, including providing funding to Kimberley Bulk Water Supply Project, to increase the water supply. The Chief

Whip of the NCOP, you've been asking about the Gamagara and how far are we on that. Again, you are in partnership with the mines, and that's one of the good stories to tell: When we engage in the private sector, they move with us and we can do better. However, the communities also become the main beneficiaries in that.

In Mpumalanga, we are implementing R1,7 billion Loskop Regional Bulk Water supply, which involves construction.

IsiXhosa:

EMpumalanga, ndiya ekhaya ngoku ...

IsiZulu:

... kungakini Sihlalo. Ngicela ulalele kahle!

English:

In Loskop Dam in Mpumalanga, in the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, for domestic water supply. The bulk pipeline also passes through Motse area under Sekhukhune District Municipality in Limpopo.

IsiZulu:

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Siyanihlanganisa! Sinihlanganisa nje ngamanzi thina. Uma ningahlanganiswa yithina ngamanzi, akekho umuntu onganihlanganisa. Sinenzela nje mahhala, nihlangane nibeyimbumba kanje!

English:

The Lekwa Municipality Refurbish Program is also on, with R350 million. In the Eastern Cape, ...

IsiXhosa:

... nimamele ke nto zakuthi.

English:

... the Amatola Water Board has been providing support to Makana Municipality. The Makana Municipality is always on the news for all bad reasons. Even on the National Arts Festival, people were saying, "We want to be there in Makana for two weeks, but there is no water." That reflects bad. So, there is support that is given there. The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality with development of phase three of Nooitgedacht Water Treatment, ...

IsiXhosa:

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... bendicinga ukuba uza kuqhweba lungu elihloniphekileyo
uPeter. Engqamakwe, ...

English:

... we provide water underserved communities through Ngqamakwe Regional Water supply. The Greater Imbizana and Ndlambe Water Schemes are also in our plan. On the intervention in the Free State -

Afrikaans:

Haak Vrystaat!

English:

The intervention in Maluti-a-Phofung and Matjhabeng Municipalities. Everybody knows that that there is no water in Matjhabeng Municipality. In Ngwathe Local Municipality, through Vaal Central Waters Supply, we are also making those interventions.

Hon members another Department of Water and Sanitation project which has been notoriously delayed is Bucket Eradication Program. Hon Mahlobo will go into town on this one, but the Minister of Cogta and the Minister of Education, yesterday, raised. There is lot of money that is scattered about water

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and sanitation. We need clear co-ordination of government, so that when we intervene, we will intervene and leave an impact in that intervention.

I hereby wish to request this House that, with our budget of R134,9 billion over the MTEF period, it is only this House that may assist us by not rejecting this budget here. Take us along. Let us have this budget. Let us go out to the people to deliver water through this budget. I would also want to thank the portfolio committee and the chair for having guided us yesterday on what they wish to hear in this Budget Vote.

I hope we have tried to do that - to unpack what this budget for Water and Sanitation is all about. However, the issue of floods is also impacting negatively on this department and on our communities at large. We must also ringfence the amount that is given to municipalities, especially on the Municipal Infrastructure Grant funding, MIG funding, because if the water infrastructure is not maintained, then we will not be able to supply water to people as expected. Also, if the money for the sales of water or electricity is not invested back to keep the infrastructure up to point, then it might not be able to assist us.

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IsiXhosa:

Ndishiya le mizuzu mibini ukuze ndikwazi ukuphendula eminye imibuzo. Mandiyivale kule indawo. Kushiyeke umzuzu omnye nemizuzwana engama-53. Mandiyivale ukuze ndibe nayo imizuzu. Enkosi

USIHLALO WENCOP: Siyabulela Mphathiswa. Sikuvile kaloku xa usithi awusenguye uDJ, sele ungu-*babes* wamanzi.

English:

Thank you very much, once again, hon Minister. Can we now move on to the next speaker, which is hon Kaunda.

Mr T M KAUNDA: Chairperson, the office bearers of the NCOP present. We also wish to greet the Deputy Ministers, Ministers, present Minister, Majodina, Minister Hlabisa and the Deputy Ministers Members of the Executive Council, MECs present, the members of this House, the South African Local Government Association, SALGA, leadership and all public entities, the director generals, DGs of the two departments which we are going to report about.

Hon Chairperson, we deliberated, we had a session with the Department of the Department of Cooperative Governance and

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Traditional Affairs, CoGTA. We had our own deliberations as a committee to determine our own stances on what department has presented before us in order for us to play our oversight role.

We have looked at the legislative framework, we also looked at the performance plan and budget for the 24/25 financial year for the department. We also looked at the program of administration, local government support and interventions program on policy, governance and administration.

We looked at program four, national disaster management centres. Program five, community works program and the overall budget that the department presented before us. We had the following observations as the committee:

The select committee has noted that the Departmental Annual Performance Plan is still informed by the government priorities which were developed during the Sixth Administration. These priorities include economic transformation and job creation; education, skills and health; consolidating the social wage; spatial integration, human settlements and local government; social cohesion and safe

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communities; a capable, ethical and developmental state and a better Africa and the world.

The select committee has also noted that the Department of Cooperative Governance is responsible for management and monitoring of the functionality and effectiveness of cooperative governance system and intergovernmental relations. The select committee has welcomed the ministerial executive commitments to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs in terms of sections 154 and 139.

The select committee has further noted and welcomed the departmental commitments to improve coordination across the spheres of government and to ensure that provinces and municipalities carry out their service delivery and developmental functions efficiently and effectively. Coordination and support are intended to lead to improved performance across the chain of policy and planning, spatial budgeting, and targeted implementation to ensure a positive impact on society.

The select committee welcomed the commitment contained in the Annual Performance Plan to improve integrated planning and

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delivery through coordination and across the spheres of government with district and metropolitan spaces as focal points for the convergence of government and private sector investment through the District Development Model approach which was adopted by government.

While welcoming the executive undertakings contained in the 2024/2025 Annual Performance Plan, the members of the select committee emphasised the need reduce the usage of consultants in the municipalities; capacitation of councillors on legislative frameworks, knowledge, compulsory training for all councillors, provision of report on functional and dysfunctional municipalities, skills transfer and training, review of guidelines for the appointment of municipal senior managers.

The members of the select committee urged the Department of Cooperative Governance to approach the National Treasury for additional funds allocation for community works programmes in order to improve, strengthen and promote local government, and also emphasize on local economic development and job creation as priorities

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The members of the select committee urged the department to develop absorption strategies for participants of community works programme, monitor the allocation and use of Municipal Infrastructure Grants, the MIG; ensure employment of competent and qualified officials, resolving political interference in administration, deal misconduct of municipal officials, management of sick leaves, municipal ghost workers and ensure implementation of spatial development framework in rural areas and municipal capacity to develop spatial development plans. As we are observing the new dimension, where in rural areas there are mansions that are being built as we speak.

Recommendation of the select committee are as follows: Having considered and deliberated 24th 25th annual performance plan and budget allocation of the Department of Cooperative Governance, select committee recommends as follows:

The Department of Cooperative Governance should provide under Policy Governance and Administration Programme lists of 60% of municipalities per province that are dysfunctional, and poor performing and would be provided with support by the end of 31st March 2025. The department should table quarterly reports to the select committee on the achievements and challenges related to the annual targets of programme.

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The Department of Cooperative Governance should provide under Local Government Operations and Support Programme, lists of the municipalities per province that the department would be supporting to implement the Integrated Local Government Capacity-Building Framework and intervention in order to improve governance responsibilities in line with local government: Municipal Structures Amendment Act 3 of 2021.

Thirty municipalities to be supported to ensure compliance with Special Planning and Land Use Management Act, SPLUMA, and Spatial Development Framework, SDF, 22 dysfunctional municipalities to be supported to increase revenue and 66 municipalities targeted to ensure that they would meet prescribed competency requirements for appointment of senior managers by 31st March 2025.

The Department should table quarterly reports to the select committee on the achievement and challenges related to the annual targets of programme 3.

The Department of Cooperative Governance should provide under National Disaster Management Centre Programme the lists of 10 municipalities that would be assisted to implement the

National Fire Safety and Prevention Strategy, 14 municipalities which are priority in this aspect.

The Department of Cooperative Governance should provide under Community Works Programme lists of municipalities per provinces that would be supported to ensure that 230 000 people are participating in the CWP sustained income model and 20 000 people in the new CWP sustainable exit strategies model by 31st March 2025.

The Department of Cooperative Governance should fast-track the process of tabling the Intergovernmental Monitoring and Support Bill, to Parliament, state of the Local Government Report, 21 Year Review Report on Local Government and gazetting of regulations in terms of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act by the 31st of March 2025.

The Minister of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs should consider tabling section 76 legislation in the NCOP in order to allow the provincial legislatures and NCOP enough time to facilitate public consultation and participation in parliamentary legislative processes.

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As part of strengthening parliamentary oversight and ensuring executive accountability, the Select Committee on CoGTA should conduct proactive oversight visits in selected local municipalities that have been identified. We need also to play a very close monitoring fire strategy that the department has presented.

The Select Committee to align its quarterly programs in line with annual targets that the department have scheduled the meeting to present to our select committee.

We also had the following observations on the number of issues which were presented by the department. The first one is that: the select committee has noted the Minister and Department of Cooperative Governments tabled their own budget on the 30th of April 2023, the 2024 Annual Performance plan of the Department of Traditional Affairs to the office of the Chairperson, National Council of Provinces.

The select committee has also noted that the 2024 annual performance plan of the Department of National Affairs will over the medium term, continue to focus on monitoring and implementation of Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act 2019

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and ensuring that customary initiation is practiced safely as guided by the customary initiation.

The select committee further noted the annual plan of the department, while welcoming the executive undertaking by the department to deal with illegal mushrooming of initiation schools, provision of tools of trade to traditional and Khoisan leaders.

The select committee raised concerns about deaths initiates, mushrooming of illegal initiation schools and the recognition of Khoisan leaders and traditional leaders. And the recommendations are as follows: Having considered all these, the select committee recommends the following to the department:

Department of Traditional Affairs should provide select committee with the provincial breakdown of the dispute claims of traditional leaders, including nature, challenges and progress. The select committee to align its quarterly program in line with annual targets of the department. The department also to provide quarterly reports in that regard.

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So, the recommendations were as follow. They further recommended having considered and deliberated that the municipality infrastructure support agent should provide under technical support services list of dysfunctional municipalities in the provinces. The municipal infrastructure should provide under infrastructure delivery and management support program, list of municipalities in the provinces that will be supported in this regard.

As part of ensuring executive accountability, select committee should conduct proactive oversight visit in selected local government and municipalities that have been identified. The select committee to align its quarterly programs in line with annual target of the department.

Hon Chairperson, let me then move to the report concerning water. The department held a session, a very successful session with the two departments and the following observations were made on Department of Water and Sanitation. That the select committee has welcomed the 2024-2025 annual performance plan and budget allocation of the Department of Water and Sanitation. The select committee has noted that the annual performance plan has been aligned and integrated with the medium term.

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The select committee has noted the introductory remarks of the Minister, which outlined all the programs and policy framework of the department. The select committee also noted the department has made progress in unblocking delays of major water infrastructure projects, which include implementation of phase two of Lesotho Highland Water projects that Ntabelanga Dam, Umzimvubu River and many other projects.

The select committee has further noted that the general municipal capacity challenges, needs to be addressed sooner. Therefore, the committee made the following recommendations:

Having considered and deliberated on the 2024-2025 annual performance plan and budget, the Department of Water and Sanitation should provide a provincial update report on the status of water and sanitation projects, including support provided to municipalities.

The Department of Water and Sanitation should provide progress reports on implementation of water on leaks program, groundwater use, financial recovery plan dealing with historical problems of corruption, consequence management, irregular expenditure, investigations by the Special Investigating Unit and plans to mitigate the impact of

vandalism theft, load shedding and water provision. The Department of Water and Sanitation should provide the National Council of Provinces with Progress report on directives issued in disparities in terms of section 62 and 63 of Water Services Act of 1997.

As part of ensuring executive accountability and performance oversight the select committee should align its quarterly report.

The select committee on Cooperative Governance and Public Administration should undertake proactive oversight visits during the 2024 parliamentary term to selected municipalities in Free State, Northern Cape and Limpopo and other provinces in order to assess the state of water treatment plant, sanitation programs, war on leaks, programs, water reticulation and turnaround time on the way and water licensing.

The Select Committee hon Chair, also recommend the following that the department should undertake a proactive oversight visit during the 2024 parliamentary term to selected municipalities which have been issued with the directives in terms of section 62 and 63 of water services.

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So, the committee having considered these two reports, hon Chairperson, we have adopted the report that I'm presenting on their behalf, and we are looking forward to the debate and we tabled these reports for the House to consider them. I thank you, hon Chair.

Mr I SCHEURKOGEL: Hon Chairperson, hon members and fellow South Africans, the fact that the Budget Vote for the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Cogta, for 2024-25 financial year is the first on our agenda, underscores the critical importance of ensuring that the three spheres of government work in co-ordination to leave a lasting positive impact on society.

As the Minister of Cogta rightfully mentioned yesterday, on May 29 South Africans reminded us that we can collectively rescue our country at the ballot box. These corrective states begin at our local government level. This is where the daily lives of our communities are shaped, regardless of race, gender, income status, or any other societal sphere.

The local government is the heart of our country. It is here that the delivery of basic needs determines whether individuals can provide for their families and live in a safe

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environment. Section 152 of the Constitution mandates that local government should ensure the provision of basic services to our communities and promote social and economic development.

Local government impacts every citizen in every aspect of their life. The roads we travel on, the local economic environment where our businesses operate, the public spaces that we live our lives in and the provision of basic services such as electricity and clean water are all functions of local government. However, many South Africans are denied these basic rights daily because local municipalities fail to implement necessary measures due to the lack of accountability.

Minister, we welcome the proposed procedures to ensure that senior managers appointed to serve in local government are competent individuals and not merely connected cadres, which has historically led to the deterioration of local government.

Having served in local government in Odendaalsrus, Matjhabeng Local Municipality in the Free State before joining this House, I can attest that the real-life experiences of most South Africans in local municipalities often do not reflect

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our constitutional ideals. For example, resonance of rural Free State municipalities like Muliti-a-Phofung and Mafube struggle to access clean water - a basic right that they were promised 30 years ago.

Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs must act as a implementing agent to ensure proper accountability and prevent political grandstanding. The continuous decline in the quality of municipal services and the rise of communities demanding accountability from failing municipality administrators calls for the direct intervention by Cogta.

Active participation through civil organisations can bring fundamental change to local government through embracing our core principle of public participation. Local government will truly reflect the voices of the people. The one-size-fits-all District Development Model, which aims to co-ordinate and integrate service delivery has not achieved tangible change across its pilot sites. The R103 million spent on its institutional ... institutionalisation ... you see, Minister, I fail; my English runs out sometimes, like yours ... has resulted in further deterioration of service delivery. This model risks becoming just another checkbox exercise like the

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Integrated Development Programme rather than delivering real change to South Africans in need.

The bleak state of local government is further evenness by poor municipal outcomes reflecting catastrophic government failures stemming issues such as the amalgamation of financially unviable municipalities, poor consequence management and political infighting.

Minister, we again welcome your commitment to prioritising interventions that provide assistance rather than punishment. This approach will help rebuild trust between local government and communities. As we enter this new chapter of governance united by the mandate given by South Africans on May 29, we must listen to our communities, learn from success models like DA governed municipalities which stand out for their good governance that can guide us.

According to Rating Africa, the top performing municipalities are Midvaal, Mossel Bay, Saldanha bay, Swellendam, Swartland and our host the City of Cape Town, the best performing Metro in our country. During this period of governing together, we should take inspiration from institutions that promote job creation and economic development. The Western Cape did see

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the largest increase in employment of any province, with just over 236 000 more jobs employed in 2023 than in 2018.

As the Government of National Unity, GNU, partners, our unified goal is to rescue South Africa, highlighting both the failures and the victories to serve to ensure that we represent the people effectively. The City of Tshwane is a trailblazer of coalition government and has improved their financial management and service delivery, winning awards for this effort. However, we must address the political instability caused by municipal coalition governments, which will escalate in 2026 if not addressed. With this insight, considering the already government gazetted Private Members Bill by now Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube, will ensure proper transfer of power in 2026.

The R1,3 billion cut to the Cogta budget will further limit the department's ability to reinforce the institutional capacity of local government. This will lead to the continuous failure to get basic services right and will leave residents of local governments and more important rate paying citizens to bear the cost due to poor political leadership and mismanagement of local administrations.

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Minister, while we understand that this budget you have inherited ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Can you wrap up, hon member?

Mr I SCHEURKOGEL ... we hope that what we have highlighted out of these matters today will better position you to create a budget that works for local government and the citizens of South Africa. I thank you.

Mr Z WILLIAMS (Eastern Cape): Hon Chairperson, greetings to you and the Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers, the Chief Whip, Chairperson of the Municipal Demarcation Board, President of Salga and all hon members of the House. It is my pleasure and delight to participate in the first debate of the NCOP, as we start the Seventh administration. Please, allow me to firstly congratulate you and your Deputy on your appointment in the positions that you are occupying in the House. I wish you well in your new endeavors. I would like to further congratulate my Minister of Cogta, Minister Velinkosi Hlabisa, and appreciate that he is in full understanding of local government because of his background. Congratulations, my sister, Ndlangisa, hon Pemmy Majodina, who is coming from my home region. I would like to

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congratulate her on her appointment as the Minister and also wish her well in her new job, together with the deputies, my brother, Deputy Minister Mahlobo. I really wish them well in their endeavors, as we begin to deal with the water business.

It is with a heavy heart that I report that the winter season for traditional circumcision has left us with unimaginable pain, as 13 young men lost their lives, due to a mismanaged sacred tradition, where unscrupulous, untrained individuals commercialised the tradition, resulting in regrettable deaths. A dysfunctional family structure, drug abuse and peer pressure are some of the reasons why we experience continued deaths of young men in traditional circumcision.

Against all our advocacy campaigns, monitoring of initiation schools, our young men still go to initiation schools unscreened by the doctors. They continue not to drink water for weeks before they attend initiation schools, and they are circumcised by untrained, traditional surgeons. And this is responsible for the deaths of these young men.

On local government, the local sphere of government as a whole continues to perform below expectations, due to the adopted fiscal model, which perpetuates the idea that local government

has perceived capacity to collect own revenue. This flawed and intransigent conservative understanding has been responsible for the continued challenges that municipalities face. Whilst we continue to deny this reality, I am fully aware and appreciative of the objective realities of the poor financial management of these limited resources by municipalities. This, however, does not cloud the reality that the sphere is grossly underfunded.

The impact of the court case by AfriForum on over 80% of our municipalities in the Eastern Cape, as it relates to electricity tariffs, has a direct negative impact on the credibility of municipal budgets, since their tariffs must be amended, resulting in immediate unfunded budgets. All of us are aware that municipalities depend on electricity in order to cross subsidise other services. And the outcome of that court case will jettison municipalities into financial disarray.

The recent national elections were mainly about the challenges our people had with the delivery of basic services like water, sanitation, housing, roads and electricity. The rural parts of the Eastern Cape still have areas that have not been served

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with clean, drinkable water, and are still without proper sanitation, and therefore their dignity is compromised.

Whilst our government has done much to change this situation, the poor expenditure of those allocated grants has been responsible for delays in eradicating this type of infrastructure backlog. The performance of especially the Regional Balk Infrastructure Grant requires scrutiny, and the agencies that are responsible for its implementation must be held accountable to perform as expected. There is no time for lame excuses when our people have no access to potable water.

The Umzimvubu Dam has experienced challenges of a construction mafia, which demands unreasonable approaches to the procurement of services, and this has been attended to with the political steering committee, to involve the MEC and mayors of beneficiary districts and local municipalities. The impact of this dam will affect communities, especially rural ones, in three districts of our province.

We need to get to clarify how we can make local government work better, to bring services to our people. I have witnessed that, being deliberate in implementing section 154 of the Constitution, to support municipalities before they collapse

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is the most viable approach in preventing dissent into chaos. This new administration must immediately work on the resolution of tools of trade for traditional leaders and finalise the work of the Deputy President in relation to concerns raised by traditional leaders. The nonresolution of these matters remains an albatross on our shoulders and perpetuates suspicions that there was no political will to finalise these matters.

We must close the gap on the maintenance of kings' palaces and clearly allocate this function to provincial Cogta or Public Works departments. The gap that is currently existent is creating confusion on who must perform this function. The continued confusion in this regard results in embarrassment, because this matter presents the government as uncaring for the kingdoms in our provinces.

Were finalised our road map towards the reconstitution of traditional councils. And we hope we will complete the process in the next four months.

In conclusion, we must be interventionist in providing services to our communities. Water is life and therefore we cannot fail to ensure that our people have access to clean

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drinking water. We understand that the dilapidated infrastructure continues to create challenges of service delivery and therefore, working together with the Department of Water Affairs, we can obtain greater achievements and we collaborate, to ensure our people are better served. Thank you very much.

Mr B S MABEBO: Chairperson, let me take this opportunity to greet all in the House. Greetings to the Ministers, Hlabisa and Minister Majodina; and the Deputy Ministers; hon members of the House, fellow South Africans, the ANC believes that the success of a developmental local government is crucial for improving the lives of South Africans and in building better communities. Local government is central to the delivery of services to the local communities. It Efficient and essential functioning is essential for the upliftment of our communities.

As the primary point of service delivery, local government is where most citizens interact with the government, making it vital for social partners to support participatory local governance. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Cogta, must address the major challenges affecting local municipalities with relevant well-tailored

interventions. These interventions should be customized to address the specific needs of each municipality. Whether financial resources or technical capabilities to manage allocated funds. The Cogta's interventions must be strengthened to help municipalities ... [Inaudible.] ... and deliver service actively.

Proactive mechanisms should be employed to respond to findings from the Reports like those from the Auditor-General of South Africa. These Report should act as warnings prompting agent actions from Cogta and other relevant departments. Placing struggling municipality under administration through section 139 or section 100 of the Constitution should be accompanied by additional measures to ensure effective interventions. The success of these interventions should be evident in intangible results, deploying skilled personnel and promoting the exchange of best practices between municipality and key to addressing root causes and preventing recurring challenges.

There is a pressing need to increase revenue allocation and develop a sustainable funding model for local government to enhance financial sustainability. The ANC recent 55th National Congress emphasised the need to review the equitable shares formula to address funding inequalities across spheres.

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Recognising that over 45% of developmental functions are delivered by municipalities rural municipalities tax bases required additional support. The 1% increase in the equitable shares for local government to 10% of the Division of Revenue is a step in the right direction.

The energy crisis has highlighted the reliance of local government on electricity sales as a critical revenue source. With the transition to upgrade electricity generation local government revenue will shrink necessitating reimagined financial sustainability model. The R8,1 billion allocation to cushion municipalities due to increased cost of bulk electricity and water is welcome. The municipalities must not underspend on grant allocation as these deprives communities of essential services. Enhancing the technical capabilities of planning, budgeting project preparations and project management is critical.

The municipal infrastructure support agent should support struggling municipalities effectively to unblock service delivery challenges. The Cogta must also help municipalities access and apply for existing grants such as the Municipal Support Grant and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant to ensure these funds benefits the most struggling and rural

municipalities and catalyze economic activities. The local economic development, LED, is crucial in local government. Its initiatives should create work opportunities and support local government and support local businesses.

Through the District Development Model economic development should be coordinated across the government's spheres. Local government must enable citizen to interact meaningfully with the state institutions and participate in decision making and planning through the integrated development plan, IDP. Local government must cushion poor households to receive basic services responding to the constitutional imperative in section 27 of the Constitution. Strengthening the indigent policy is essential to ensure all residents in need receive support. The department must enhance social awareness and create an accessible application process to increase uptake.

Municipalities have a responsibility to contribute to job creation particularly for youth, strengthening the community work programme, CWP. With the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and involving key stakeholders such as Sitas, and Tvets, can create sustainable livelihoods. The CWP should serve as a platform for participants to accumulate skills and

access further accredited training enabling them to transition from stipend earners to job holders or business owners.

Since the Sixth ministration the department has supported over a million community work programmes opportunities with 250 000 opportunities planned for the current financial year, the significant contribution aimed in poverty eradication and skills development. The national project must include local ... [Inaudible.] ... implementation to manage conflict arising from the communities feeling excluded. Project like the SA National Roads Agency, Sanral, roads and other infrastructure initiatives should consider locals, the unemployed, CWP beneficiaries, contractors and personnel.

Disaster management is another critical area requiring a concerted effort in an era prone to natural disasters due to climate change. Local government must have a capacity to respond swiftly and plan to mitigate negative impacts a coherent integrated approach from the state institution leveraging research and innovation is necessary.

Infrastructure development and land use planning should aim to reduce disaster risk and sufficient disaster response ...

[Inaudible.] ... response. I thank you.

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Ms T BREEDT: Hon Chairperson, I would like to start out by congratulating the newly appointed Ministers and Deputy Ministers and to welcome the reappointed Ministers. May the seventh administration be the change that we so desperately need to see in our local government sector.

Afrikaans:

Die Regering van Nasionale Eenheid, RNE, is 'n nuwe blaadjie vir Suid-Afrika en kan tot die herstel en bou van ons land lei. Gedurende gister se interaksie met die Ministers, Adjunkministers en hul spanne was dit asof om nuwe besems te sien wat die bul by die horings gaan pak om dienslewering te prioritiseer.

Dit is egter nie net maanskyn en rose nie want Suid-Afrika het vir 30 jaar gebuk gegaan onder die swak bestuur van finansies, hulpbronne en personeel. Ons elkeen wat vandag hier is dink natuurlik dit gaan swakker in ons provinsie as in 'n ander een. Ek dink natuurlik dieselfde. Wat egter deur die bank waar is, is dat jare se verwaarlosing van ons munisipaliteite en spesifiek hulle riool- en waterinfrastruktuur amper onomkeerbaar verwoes het.

Wat verder bydra tot hierdie uitdagings is, soos die Minister gesê het, dat ons 'n waterskaars land is en ons kan nie toesien dat hierdie skaars hulpbronne deur ons munisipaliteite besoedel word as gevolg van kwynende rioolinfrastruktuur nie.

As ons na my provinsie, die Vrystaat kyk, lyk die prentjie maar grou. Mees onlangs is Mafube Plaaslike Munisipaliteit geteister deur water probleme en loop daar gereeld riool in die Wilgerivier in.

In Ngwathe Plaaslike Munisipaliteit gaan dit nie veel beter nie en is die riool so erg dat dit die visse en die ekosisteem van die Vaalrivier alreeds onomkeerbaar verwoes.

So kan ons aangaan oor die Jaggersfontein slikdam krisis en hoe dit water hulpbronne besoedel het.

Een sukses egter is in Emfuleni Plaaslike Munisipaliteit in Gauteng waar die VF Plus 'n slag geslaan het deur die Groen Skerpioene te kry om navorsing oor die riool wat in die Vaalrivier loop te doen. Daardie saak is tans in die howe.

English:

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Minister, my counterpart in the other House made this request to you and I would like to reiterate it. Please be first in line to lay criminal charges against those officials who contravene laws and are responsible for the pollution of our natural resources.

Furthermore, the Free State has been tormented by corruption, maladministration and all the ills we have seen and recognise from the previous administration. A big issue – and Minister, I implore you and your department to look into this – is the manner in which municipalities spend the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant and the Water Services Infrastructure Grant.

I can tell sad stories but let me refer to the Moqhaka *Local Municipality* where R105 million was allocated to upgrade the wastewater treatment works. Deputy Minister Mahlobo, you were there in May of 2022 to see the operation of phase 1. Phase 2 was supposed to be completed in June 2022 but to date it is standing still. The screw pumps are missing, the sand pumps were removed, two flow meters are dysfunctional and one mixer and three aerators are also not working.

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Then we can look at Ngwathe Local Municipality where the water works is currently standing on contractor number seven, and you know there are certain issues that come with these changes in different contractors.

However, infrastructure is not the only qualm in this municipality and I would like to tell you a story. One of my councillors refers to his municipality as Hollywood and when you ask why he refers to it as Hollywood he says because we have acting municipal managers, acting managers and acting directors. We cannot continue to run municipalities with actors because they do not take responsibility.

And so we can continue. I would like to conclude by saying ... I can continue for a long time but I am not hopeless. Ministers, if you take the steps that you have indicated you will take we will be able to restore and rebuild South Africa together. I thank you.

Mr J MAMABOLO (Gauteng): Hon Chair, on behalf of the Gauteng provincial government and of course its residents let me take the opportunity to extend our sincere best wishes, regards and of course the weight of congratulations to hon Minister Hlabisa, to hon Minister Majodina and of course to our Deputy

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Ministers Mahlobo, Masemola and Seithholo. Let me also take the opportunity to extend our greetings to all MECs, to all hon members, to the leadership of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, to hon councillors, and also to hon Kaunda. As a province, we are deeply pleased to participate in this very important debate. Upfront, let me join the hon Ministers and assure them that as the province of Gauteng we fully support the budgets. We will appeal to hon members to do the same.

One of the most important things that we would like to do in our province, building on the strategic inputs and core messages delivered by our Ministers, is to get the basics right. I can assure you, hon members, that when the premier of the province delivers the state of the province address, he will further elaborate on these issues.

Now, one of the things that we need to get right as a basic ... and of course through building sustainable partnerships and improving co-operative governance with all spheres of government is to ensure that we get ... the cleaning of our CBDs, townships, informal settlements and hostels, and that we do that immediately.

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I'm very pleased to say that in getting this basic right, you will see hon Premier Panyaza Lesufi leading the provincial government and of course the municipalities in the province to launch one of the most decisive cleaning campaign projects in the CBD of the City of Johannesburg on Nelson Mandela Day this coming Thursday.

Hon members, we have formed a partnership with Pikitup in the City of Johannesburg and of course as you already know in the last administration we concluded a partnership with City Power to help us with energy challenges. We have also formed a partnership with the business community in the CBD of the City of Johannesburg but I must also say that the City of Johannesburg is very important to us as the provincial government because it is the seat of the provincial government and of course the Gauteng provincial legislature.

We believe that the success of this cleaning campaign to be launched on Mandela Day will serve as a very good pilot and a very best practice to extend to other areas and to other cities, CBDs and of course townships, hostels and informal settlements. We would like to assure you, hon members, that in taking up this campaign with Pikitup as our delivering agent we will make sure that we sustain the cleaning of the CBD of

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the City of Johannesburg and ensure that we improve this very important commercial city which is the global face of our country, and also ensure that we promote good investments and support local businesses in the CBD.

On a long-term sustainable basis we will be renovating and improving the departments, the buildings that are the seats of the provincial government and the legislature in the City of Johannesburg, focusing on its CBD. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to everybody to join the Gauteng provincial government led by the premier and the City of Johannesburg on Thursday as we will be kick-starting a major cleaning campaign which will extend to all townships, informal settlements, hostels and of course, CBDs.

One of the issues that we are also looking at, which is a very important basic that we need to get right, is that of efficient and effective delivery, and let me include maintenance, of infrastructure. I must say that in the province of Gauteng we are very glad that Premier Lesufi has correctly aligned the capacity that sits in the provincial Department of Infrastructure Development, of course with the infrastructure support to our municipalities.

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We are deeply concerned about the delivery of infrastructure that misses time or deviates from time, quality and of course cost. We need to make sure that in delivering infrastructure, we get these variables right. To that extent, as the provincial government we will be providing support to our municipalities to deliver new infrastructure and to maintain existing infrastructure because we believe that infrastructure is the backbone of service delivery. When we talk about service delivery, we are essentially talking about the quality of infrastructure. That is why we need to get this basic right. For example, we will be making sure that they build an environment ... professionals that we have, such as engineers ... are also made available to support infrastructure in municipalities through the partnerships that we're building.

Let me also take this opportunity to say that one of the basics that we want to get right is that of sustainable revenue generation for municipalities. We believe that unless municipalities can generate sufficient revenue, it will not be possible for them to provide sustainable services. To this extent, we will partner with the Department of Economic Development at all levels and work with municipalities to promote the investment climate in municipalities. We will make sure that we cut red tape and reduce the bottlenecks that

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affect the appetite for investment by local, national and of course international investors in our municipalities. We believe that unless we focus on revenue generation, municipalities will continue to have unfunded mandates and will not be able to execute their functions efficiently and effectively. We believe when we promote investments in municipalities, grow the local economy and grow the township economy, households will be able to generate sufficient revenue not just to improve their quality of life but also to support municipalities ... the business community. So, we believe that cutting red tape to improve the climate for investment in municipalities is a basic that we need to get right and get it right immediately.

As a province, we are deeply concerned about the question of the instability in the local sphere of government, particularly in the management of coalition governments in our municipalities. We therefore make a call to the leadership in these municipalities to prioritise the people and make sure that we do not seem to be focusing on ourselves but that we focus on the people. They suffered under apartheid and ours is to improve their quality of life. Thank you very much.

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Mr K CEZA: Hon Deputy Chairperson, first of all let us put it on record that the EFF is the first organisation to introduce the Andries Tatane clean-up campaign. So therefore, it is disingenuous for the Gauteng province, GP, to come here on this podium and use this platform to take credit of a programme that was introduced by a vanguard, leftist party in society. So, that is the first thing.

The EFF reject the proposed budget for the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs as proposed in the Budget Vote for water and sanitation.

Let me start by...

IsiXhosa:

... ukukhahlela kwiinkosi zethu, iikumkani neekumkanikazi zeli lizwe. Rhoqo xa sithetha ngeli sebe, sithetha ngesebe labantu abalele emqokozweni. Okokuqala, iinkosi neenkosazana mazibandakanywe xa kuthathwa izigqibo, ingakumbi xa kuqulunqwa imithetho kooRhulumente basemaKhaya. Musani ukubenza...

English:

... ceremonious, Minister. Do not envelope leaders, because they are not. You are not dealing with the nonthinkers or

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people who must tell us tales about family trees and preserved culture.

Second to that there is a danger in viewing fatalities of our children in numbers because they are human beings behind statistics. We must know the causes of injuries as the most are assaulted, in some instances. One death is one death too many. Therefore, there must be consequences and accountability for lives lost and there is stigmatisation that comes with amputations as these children can no longer lead normal lives as men.

The nature of death must be reported. An expert must be involved in making sure that there is an investigation and apprehension of criminals who are only concerned with making money that properly taking our children through the right of passage.

IsiXhosa:

Okwesithathu ...

English:

... we are very proud of our kings and queens as all of us pass through them as men and women in rural areas and as

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mentors of the community. Therefore, they must ensure that they are at the centre of ensuring that children are actually finishing school. Therefore, the EFF advocates for the equal remuneration, respect and benefits such as tools of trade and other instruments for their functionality as seen by the president of the EFF's treatment on King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo.

The budget speaks about the Khoisan and the amaMpondo, but excludes amaBhaca kaMadzikane, amaHlubi of Kumkani Langalibalele, who constitute 22 clans.

IsiXhosa:

Okokugqibela, mandibhekise kweli cala lemicimbi yemveli.
Inkolo yabantu mayikhuselwe njengoko kusenziwa kweyasentshona.
Amaxhwele namagqirha mawanikwe intlonipho, bakhelwe iindawo zokusebenzela ukuze amayeza abo afumaneka kwiindawo zonke apho awasentshona afumaneka khona. Camagu.

English:

We reject this budget because of failed state of municipalities. The failed state of the department to conduct the oversight role on the functionality and good governance that is expected from all spheres of government.

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We also reject a budget of a department that has no monitoring tools in place for local government who repeatedly received disclaimer opinions. The reality is that local government continues to be characterised by dysfunctionality, financial mismanagement in council and administrators, instability and crumbling municipal infrastructure.

According to this department's own admission the state of local government report only 38 out of 257 municipalities received clean audit. Over a quarter of our municipalities are dysfunctional and at an increased risk of placed under administration. Local government is continually placed under administration an intervention which is supposed to be temporary. Yet, local government such as uMzinyathi, Mpofana, Inkosi Langalibalele in KwaZulu-Natal are still under administration for over seven years. While Makana, Emfuleni in the West Rand, Emalahleni, Govan Mbeki, umsuka Lekwa, Thaba Chweu, UThukela have been administration for over six years with no progress.

Municipalities remain dysfunctional due to poor oversight mechanisms, weak administration, lack of repairs and maintenance of infrastructure, inability to perform on

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conditional grants and poor collection and management of revenue.

To date, there has been no priority given to the causes of the dysfunctionality as municipalities remain deeply engulfed in corrupt practices as a result, they are no longer financially viable.

Every year, the Auditor-General, paints a bleak picture about the future of these basket municipalities. Year-after-year, the narrative remains the same as large numbers of local municipalities are given less than desirable audit outcomes. A case in point is the worsening situation engulfing Matlosana Local Municipality where the municipality's service delivery problems stem from the dysfunctional fleet.

There is also no hope that the sewer spillage, dilapidated roads and aging infrastructure in Gert Sibande and Dr J S Moroka Local Municipalities will ever be repaired. There have been no unbelievable plans put in place to improve the administration of municipalities. There has been no zooming into challenges faced in local municipalities especially those which have not been able to raise money on their own.

The main source of revenue of most municipalities remains rates and taxes paid by property owners and customers of municipal services. This includes government institutions that are not up to date with payments. However, this method is out of touch with South African's realities such as unemployment, poverty and inequality. That limits the meaningful economic participation.

The collapse of municipalities signifies the collapse of service delivery, water infrastructure, roads and sanitation infrastructure.

In terms of Community Work Programme, CWP, the EFF is concerned about the destination of the workers that are within the CWP because the department does not have necessary central data to say that where they are going to go from here. How many have achieved permanent employment? There is no such within the department. We see the dysfunctionality of these municipalities through the numerous service delivery protests which are held timeously across the country, some which have reported fatalities.

In terms of section 17 of the Constitution, which allows for protests, what the Minister should be concerned about is not

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to stop the protests, it is to stop nondelivery of services and then you ultimately stop protests. So long as the status quo still remains, protest will continue and not even the Minister have the capacity to stop them.

Chairperson, this department also fails at co-ordinating and co-ordinated disaster management system in this country. It has not given us enough reason to approve this budget. In terms of water and sanitation, the EFF rejects the report on water and sanitation. Rural towns and rural municipalities like Dundonald, Glenmore, Tjakastad, Manzana, Caroline and Nhlazatshe all those zones there are still without access to water. Such that it is Africans that must store water in drums and facilities like that, no other race does that!

We reject the budget because year-in-year-out, our people living in rural areas affected by chronic lack of water are not accessing water. They device their own ways in the presence of the department.

Chairperson, we are also concerned about how entities of the department who did not even report to the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation, a demonstration that challenges that facing our people are not taken seriously by this department.

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That even though our people still store water suppliers in containers such as drums, buckets and vertical water tanks corrugated iron water tanks and pale enamel. You find that the people of the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga are the only ones...

IsiXhosa:

... xa beza kubanomcimbi, kufuneka balindele iilori eziza kubaphathela amanzi.

English:

That is the circumstances they are facing. That is the reality. Every time you go home you find that status quo in place. I do not know whether these water tankers are deliberate in the manner in which they are put there because they are all supposed to be temporary measures and they are perpetually there. Some municipalities have been having ... for instance in Mcushwa it has been having those circumstances since 2013. The taps are dry there. There is nothing that we are getting from the budget in terms of the targets that are aimed at ensuring that the status quo changes. Lekwa Local Municipality, Dr J S Moroka, Emakhazeni Local Municipality still are not able to provide adequate drinkable water. Especially for the people that are staying within white farming areas. The so-called farm dwellers. White people just

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close the water there. They come to the EFF and complain, and it becomes the duty of the EFF now to go and stop those white people. It is in terms of what is happening at that level.

The residents of Amathole Ndlambe, until today do not have safe drinking water and almost the whole of Sara Baartman in the Eastern Cape have no stable supply. There has been no indication as to how and when this department will approve the water services for 16 local municipalities in Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the Northern Cape.

Chairperson this department needs to be decisive in consequence management. Play a more proactive role to the state of governance. We will not approve a budget that makes no commitment to build capacity of the state to deliver services to the people. A budget that is rubberstamping the independence of all three spheres of government on private companies to perform their own functions through tenders and outsourcing. Without these proposals we are rejecting this budget. Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

IsiXhosa:

Mnu. M M PETER: Mandibulise Sihlalo, kubaPhathiswa abakhoyo, abahle, abahleli phambi kwam, noSekela baPhathiswa babo,

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abakhangeleka bempuluswa. Ndiphuma kwela phondo laseMpuma Koloni ndimele umbutho wezopolitiko i-UDM kwaye ndiqinisekile ukuba wonke umntu olapha uyayazi ukuba i-UDM ijongene neentsizana zabantu kuquka neentsizana zoomasipala babantu abalambayo, Mphathiswa. Ndifuna ukugxila apha kutata uHlabisa. Tat'uHlabisa, i-UDM soze ingaluxhasi olu hlahlo-lwabiwo mali kuba abantu bakuthi noomasipala abalawulwa sithi baphelile yindlala. Abantwana bethu abangoceba abalazi uhlahlo-lwabiwo mali ukuba luphunyezwa njani. Sele luphunyeziwe uhlahlo-lwabiwo mali, abazazi iinkonzo zophuhliso ukuba zisiwa njani ebantwini.

Mandikuqalele eGqeberha, usizi lwento. IGqeberha yayeka kudala ukuba ngumasipala ombaxa. Yindawo egcwele ukungcola bamaphepha neepplastikhi. Ungandibona namhlanje ndiphilile kodwa ngomso kungasa kuthethwa enye into. Ndiyithetha nje le nto kukuba oomasipala abayisebenzisi imithetho yoomasipala (bylaws). Xa bexoxa, basiwa eGqani ukuba baxoxele iiprojekhthi. Kuyafuneka ukuba sizijonge iimeko zeli sebe koomasipala kuba zibuhlungu kakhulu kwaye kufuneka sifunde imizuzu esifake ngayo ooceba apha koomasipala.

Masigqithe singene kumama ophethe iSebe lezaManzi noGutyulo, uPemmy Majodina. Siza kulumana ke mama, ndiza kuntlantlatha

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kwaye uza kumana undileqa phaya eMpuma Koloni kuba amanzi yingxaki yoomasipala bonke. Laa madama akhiwa ngowe-1750 ne-1850 ingaba babebangaphi abantu belizwe ngoko? Laa madama awakaphuculwa nanamhlanje. Ukuba naniwaphucule laa madama ngesinawo amanzi kuwo. Nangoku apha sisela amanzi athengiweyo. Asikwazi ukusela amanzi kuba amdaka, awaseleki. Ngoku sekusithiwa amadama ayandiswa, amanzi wona ayaphela, loo mbinana ikhoyo yamanzi imdaka. Iimpompo zamanzi zomile.

Umngeni ojengene nawo ngoku kukuqinisekisa ukuba uziyela ngeenyawo zakho, uzibonele, ungazifundi ephepheni ezi ngxelo. La masebe abhala isiNgesi esikhulu abe ezivalele ezi-ofisini. La masebe awayi apho kufele khona ithole. Ayikho into abayenzayo abantwana bethu, Mphathiswa. Bangena kula masebe beneenjongo zopolitiko ezingadibananga nokuzisa iinkonzo ebantwini. Useza kuphoxwa ngabantwana bakho, balo mbutho wakho, bangakuxhasi ukuze kuwe nalo rhulumente uphetheyo. Sebenzisa umntu osuka kwelinye iqela lezopolitiko ukuze amasebe asebenze kakuhle. Lo osuka kwelinye iqela lezopolitiko uza kuthi umleqe ungenaxhala, umlandelela ngomsebenzi.

Sendisenza nje isishwankathelo ngoku, ngokuthi ndiveze ingxaki yeenkosi ezenziwa oonomgogwana kudlalwa ngazo kwiindawo zonke. Iinkosi azinaso isidima, zibekwa kwicandelo lokunuka ukuba

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mazihambe ziye kuxoxa ngasebuhlanti kwaye azifakwa kulawulo ngulo rhulumente. Bakhona ootat'umwelo Nonkonyana, bayalawula kwiilali zabo. Ngexesha likaNgqika kwakuhluthwa kodwa ngoku siyalamba kuba iinkosi zibanjwe ngeendevu azikwazi nokushukuma. Phakamani zinkosi, musani ukucenga isonka noxa ihamile ibekwe entloko. Niphi zinkosi? Urhulumente akaniniki izithunywa. Nima ebuhlanti nithetha ngolwaluko kuphela. Kutheni ningathethi ngokuziswa kweenkonzo ebantwini? [Inaudible.] 00:05:03 niphi Niphi Mwelo, Barns Ncamashe niphathe ilizwe? Enkosi.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Chairperson, hon members, the performance of our municipalities and the provision of water and sanitation has deteriorated over time, as illustrated by the by the findings of the department's Blue Green and No Drop Reports which were released last year. The Green Drop report found the percentage of municipal wastewater treatment systems in a critical state of performance had increased to 40%, compared to 30% in 2013. The Green Drop Report illustrated that 90 of the 144 wastewater service authorities had at least one water wastewater system in critical condition, discharging partially treated or untreated sewage in our rivers.

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At the core of this decline, hon members, is that municipalities are, in many instances not hiring the necessary staff with the necessary qualifications in relation to jobs such as plant managers, technicians, process controllers and scientists. Municipalities also often have weak billing and revenue collection processes and do not prioritize budgets for the maintenance and operation of sanitation infrastructure.

Hon members, the presence of sewage in our rivers, groundwater, dams, beaches, sea and an environment result in increased risks of life-threatening water borne diseases including diarrhoea, cholera and meningitis, with most risk to the poor and the most vulnerable. It also results in intolerable living conditions for communities who live where raw sewage flows near to or in their properties daily.

Hon members in this House, can make a plethora of examples in as far as this is concerned. Hon Ceza spoke of Matlotsana Local Municipality. We can refer to Khuma, Jouberton, Orkney and Kanana. We can refer to J B Marks Local Municipality, where in Mohadin, Promosa and Extension 7 in Kanana there is an overflow of sewage into the Porky Dam. This is a reality that we are dealing with. It also results in those particular living conditions.

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This also, in turn, devastates tourism and the services industry and the eThekweni Tourism Sector presents a good example. Such deteriorations result in risks to fresh produce through irrigating polluted water, contamination of groundwater and an increased treatment costs for portable water obstructed from polluted rivers. Further, it causes severe environmental damage, including the annihilation of plants, fish and other animal life.

Hon Chairperson, in the past, the department generally has not taken strong regulatory action against municipalities for sewage pollution. Instead, the department's policy position was that taking regulatory, civil, or criminal action against municipalities would be contrary to sound intergovernmental relations. In recent years, however, the department has been strengthening its regulatory functions and making regulatory actions more consistent as required by the National Water Act. This has resulted in an increased number of civil actions and criminal charges against municipalities who are responsible for sewage pollution.

Since 2017, the department has opened 88 criminal cases for sewage pollution involving 52 municipalities across all nine provinces. This follows non responsiveness from municipalities

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to notices and directives which are part of the regulatory mechanisms provided in the Act. In 78 of these cases, investigations are currently underway. In five cases, investigations are completed with the National Prosecuting Authority having decided to prosecute, while five cases have been concluded in court and the department is monitoring the implementation of these court decisions. These include Govan Mbeki Local Municipality which was fined R200 million and the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality and the Rand West District Municipality, which were each fined R10 million.

The courts ordered that the municipalities allocate these funds to the improvement of their sanitation infrastructure. Over the past two years, the department has also initiated 18 civil cases against municipalities, two of which have been finalised, resulting in court orders against municipalities to address their sewage pollution. Indeed, the department is hard at work.

Hon Chairperson, while the department is obligated to lay criminal charges against municipalities polluting sewage in terms of the National Water Act and while the department will continue to do so with further consistency, criminal charges and civil action are not sustainable solutions to poor

municipal management of wastewater treatment systems. On average, it takes two to three years for criminal cases to be finalised. This is from the laying of the charges to the date of the court ruling, while in the meantime, pollution continues.

Structural reforms of municipal water and sanitation services are required in addition to the ongoing support by national government to municipalities. In this regard, in the last financial year, the department engaged in public consultations on proposed amendments to the Water Services Act. The proposed amendments aimed to strengthen the role of municipalities as water services authorities meant to function as local regulators to ensure that local water service providers through internal municipal controls, provide services that meet required national norms and standards.

The amendment proposes this to be done through introducing an operating license requirement for water service providers to ensure that water service providers have a minimum level of competency. Water service authorities would be required to only approve and contract with water service providers with an operational license. We will shortly submit the water Services

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Amendment Bill to cabinet to seek approval for it to be considered and adopted by Parliament.

As I conclude, the hon Chair, while we are aware that the processes we have put in place will not resolve these challenges overnight, we remain confident that they will make the necessary impact in turning the state of our water and sanitation around and ultimately provide improving the provision of water and sanitation services to all the people of our country, I thank you.

Mr R B MAKAMU (Limpopo): Hon Chair of the NCOP, Minister and Deputy Minister of Co-Operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Minister and Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, chairpersons and members of the committees. chairperson and members of the National House of Traditional and Khoi and San leaders, the president and the national executive committee, members of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, hon members of the NCOP, directors-general and other officials, fellow South Africans, good afternoon

Let me begin by extending my congratulations to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Water and

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Sanitation and I want to wish them well in their new deployment on behalf of Limpopo province. Today we convene to deliberate on critical issues of co-operative governance and water and sanitation as encapsulated in Budget Vote No 3 and Budget Vote 41. As we embark on this in public discourse, it is pertinent to reflect on the 30 years of freedom and democracy and its impact on the evolutionary maturity of local government in South Africa. Our journey of three decades has been steered by the principles enshrined in our Constitution that declares:

We, the people of South Africa, Recognise the injustices of our past; Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land.

This country has witnessed the fruition of our democratic ideals through the establishment and strengthening of local government which has become the cornerstone of our democracy, translating the aspirations of our people into tangible outcomes. The evolution of local government has not been without challenges, yet it exemplifies the enduring spirit and commitment to democratic governance. Nelson Mandela once said, "It always seems impossible until it is done." It is indeed

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the establishment of functional and responsive municipalities has been a testament to our resilience and ingenuity.

The maturation of local government is evident in the erratic improvements and reforms implemented to bridge the gap between the state and its citizens. Ensuring that governance is not only about the state but also about the people. President Cyril Ramaphosa recently remarked, "Our freedom is an ongoing project, a daily effort to expand, defend, deepen and deliver to every South African." This is a call to action for us to continuously refine our local government structures to better service our communities.

In the pursuit of a more efficient local government, we have encountered municipalities in distress, such as in Mogalakwena and Thabazimbi ... [Inaudible.] ... Musina. The challenges have tested our resolve and commitment to rebuilding and restoring functionality. The re-establishment of order and functionality in Mogalakwena serves as an example of what determined intervention in local governance can achieve under the guidance of the Limpopo Executive Council, strategic interventions have been executed to stabilise and restore governance structures, ensuring that Mogalakwena operates effectively for the benefit of its residents.

Conversely, the Thabazimbi and Musina Local Municipalities present ongoing challenges, yet they are not insurmountable. Through targeted interventions, constant monitoring and support, we will work tirelessly to restore functionality, ensuring that these municipalities serve their constituencies ... [Inaudible.] A crucial component of the strategy for enhancing local government is the ... [Inaudible.] ... of the District Development Model, DDM. This model aims to strengthen co-operative governance by promoting a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to service delivery by allowing for national, provincial and local government efforts within specific districts.

The DDM ensures that the resources are utilised more effectively and that development initiatives are tailored to the unique needs of each community. This model has already shown promise in fostering collaboration among various government sectors and stakeholders, leading to more coherent planning and implementation of the development projects. The state of municipal infrastructure services, particularly water and sanitation, remains a significant concern. Recognising the Constitution's assertion that everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water. We are unwavering in our commitment to address these issues.

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The severe drought conditions and ageing infrastructure have exacerbated the challenges, but through innovative projects and collaborations, we have seen significant strides in some areas and the principles that water is life and sanitation is dignity guide our interventions. These initiatives are based on drilling new boreholes, repairing existing infrastructure, implementing co-operative water management services and sanitation projects and providing sustainable solutions to our communities.

Reflecting on the virtues of the Government of National Unity, GNU, and the late Archbishop Tutu's vision of South Africa as the Rainbow Nation, it is crucial to recognize the unity in our diversity as the asset that has fostered our collective progress. Bishop Tutu envisaged a nation where all South Africans, irrespective of race, creed or colour, come together in the spirit of unity and compassion, my humanity is bound up in yours, so we can only be human together he said.

These efforts are conceived to inspire our governance policies as we start to build a society that celebrates diversity while working towards common goals. Strengthening our disaster management systems is another critical priority. The recent natural disasters have underscored the need for a robust and

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proactive disaster management framework. The review of the disaster management system aims to enhance our risk reduction strategies, ensuring that we are better prepared to respond to emergencies and mitigate their impacts. This includes improving the early warning system, enhancing community awareness and preparedness, and investing in resilient infrastructure. By adopting a comprehensive approach to disaster management, we can protect lives, property and livelihoods and ensure a quicker recovery from adverse events.

The journey towards realising the archbishop's dream of the Rainbow Nation is ongoing. We celebrate the milestones we have achieved. Let us remember that our diversity is indeed our strength. President Ramaphosa reiterated that and said, "We are a nation of many cultures, many histories and many colours but one nation related in diversity." This belief underscores our commitment to inclusive governance, where every voice is heard, and every life is valued, our collective effort and unity are what will drive us forward, overcoming challenges and seizing opportunities to build South Africa as a nation.

Additionally, I would like to commend all communities and stakeholders on the conclusion of yet another successful initiation season. This cultural practice is deeply rooted in

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our heritage and has been conducted with care and dedication, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all initiates. It signifies our commitment to preserving our traditions while adopting the contemporary standards of health and safety. Notwithstanding the budgetary constraints, we continue to fulfil the Chapter 12 constitutional obligation to support the institution of traditional leaders with tools of trade, offices and staffing to ensure they perform their duties effectively.

In conclusion, I express my unequivocal support for Vote No 3 - Co-operative Governance and Vote No 41 - Water and Sanitation. These budgets are not merely financial instruments but are commitments to enhancing the quality of life for all South Africans. By addressing the pertinent issues within our local government and focusing on critical areas like water and sanitation, we laid down our pillars for sustainable development and growth.

Let us continue to work together to build South Africa that upholds the dreams of our founding fathers and embodies the principles of our beloved Constitution. I thank you, hon Chair.

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The DEPUTY MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (Mr N D Masemola): Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces and your Deputy, Ministers present here, Minister Hlabisa and Minister Majodina, Deputy Ministers present here in this sitting today, hon Chief Whip of the NCOP and Chairperson of the select committee, leadership of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, and members of the executive council, MECs, in attendance, and members of this honourable House, I am honoured to stand before you to highlight the significant work accomplished by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Cogta, and to outline our plans moving forward under the Government of National Unity in this seventh administration. Working together with Minister Hlabisa, we present Vote 3 confidently as a step towards enhancing co-operative governance for the benefit of all South Africans.

Standing here today you recognise the unique opportunity the NCOP provides as it is closely aligned with our work and our shared commitment to co-operative governance for the benefit of our provinces and, ultimately, the people we are humbly serving. The local government transformation process has been complex, driven by the ever-increasing demand for essential services that impact our citizens daily. As we commemorate 30

years of our freedom, we reflect on our nation's achievements and the transformative work of the sixth administration. In the words of Amilcar Cabral, he taught us as I quote:

Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories...

In context it is this lesson that guide our conscience every time we come to present to this House the achievements we have made, the challenges we have experienced and the way forward in our efforts to sharpen instruments of governance, to better serve the people of this great nation.

Despite our successes, challenges persist within local government structures in areas like lack of capacity, improper governance, lax financial management, maleficence and malversation, and political instability affecting 66 identified dysfunctional municipalities. In this seventh administration, we cannot therefore be in different amidst these challenges, hence our wondrous commitment to provide leadership in resolving the inherent issues. In doing so, we are committed to strengthen local government to fulfil its

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constitutional mandate effectively without failure, working together with everyone going forward.

Today, we present this budget under the theme "Every municipality must work", as our Minister has said in his presentation. This is a clarion call to action for all South Africans to unite and contribute to building an effective, efficient, and community-cantered local government that responds positively to the needs and aspirations of our people.

Let me remind this august House that 2026 local government elections are around the corner, marking the end of the current local government's term. We owe it to our communities to improve their lives through effective and impactful service delivery, because failure to do so will have serious electoral consequence. The time for lamenting is over. The seventh administration has opened a new chapter for all of us, which must be a turning point for the Cogta family and Cogta sector, post-30 years of freedom and democracy. We are committed to building on the work of the sixth administration, which positively impacted various communities. Notwithstanding challenges related there that require our undivided attention. Each financial year gives us a fresh start and a continuation

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to deal with previous and new challenges. Therefore, this financial year is no exception. As the grate John W Gardner observed opportunities to resolve these challenges are abounding. He remarked and I quote:

We are all faced with a series of great opportunities, brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.

Our democratic values will be meaningless without participation of the citizens in activities of their municipalities serving as a vital link between ward councillors, communities as well as municipalities, integrated development plan, IDP, budget forums, mayoral outreach programmes serve as a pillar for deepening local democracy.

By 30 June 2023, an impressive 4 358 ward committees out 4 468 have been established nationwide, highlighting our commitment to inclusive and as well as participatory governance. These account for 97% of the establishment of this important organs of people's power. We are aware that as we embark on this journey of ensuring that every municipality works, we would require very seriously so participation of the citizens of this country in the affairs of their municipalities. Therefore, ward committees play an important role in this

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regard as they facilitate citizens participation in local government in South Africa.

However, we recognise challenges, such as functionality of ward committees. Some ward councillors not convening meetings, inadequate community feedback, and unresponsiveness to community complaints leading to protests over basic services. All these matters alluded above here require and need our urgent attention, and we remain committed to work hard to address these matters going forward.

We are committed to strengthening these structures of people's power for effective participation of citizens so that their voices continue to be heard and acted upon by those mandated with the responsibility to manage affairs of our people at the local government level. Our goal in this space therefore is to build a responsive and accountable government that truly serves the people of our country.

Working with our provincial counterparts, we continue to support municipalities during the pre-implementation and implementation phases of municipal infrastructure grant, MIG, projects, by guiding them to meet the MIG programme requirements. This work is reinforced on a technical level by

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the municipal infrastructure support agent which participates in verification processes during cost reimbursements.

We will remain vigilant in preventing unspent MIG allocations from being returned to the National Treasury, therefore, depriving communities of essential services that they are supposed to be getting because of the dysfunctionality or nonperformance or poor performance of some municipalities in our country. During the sixth administration, Cogta began intervening in municipalities with underexpenditure by utilising provisions of the Division of Revenue Act. This allows the department to retain a portion of the municipal infrastructure grant and implement projects on behalf of these municipalities.

We would like to take this opportunity to assure this honourable House that we will continue this practice in the current administration to ensure that residents in the affected municipalities receive the services they need and so deserve. We have identified in this regard 25 municipalities that have an increase in the allocation of municipal infrastructure grant for funding purposes of repairs as well as refurbishment of the infrastructure. Therefore, these

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municipalities will be supported to utilise 10% of their MIG budget towards enhancing their infrastructure capacity.

These municipalities are as follows: There are four in the Eastern Cape: Makana Local Municipality, Amathole District Municipality, O R Tambo District Municipality, and Joe Gqabi District Municipality. In Free State they are five: Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality, Kopanong Local Municipality, Metsimaholo Local Municipality, Mantsopa Local Municipality and Masilonyana Local Municipality. Gauteng there are two: Emfuleni Local Municipality and Merafong City Local Municipality. KwaZulu-Natal they are four: Msunduzi Municipality, Ugu District Municipality, uMzinyathi District Municipality, Amajuba District Municipality. Limpopo there two: Lepelle-Nkumpi Local Municipality and Greater Giyani Local Municipality. Mpumalanga there three: Dipaleseng Local Municipality, Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality and Pixley Ka Seme Local Municipality. Northern Cape are Phokwane Local Municipality, Siyancuma Local Municipality. North West is Dawid Kruiper Municipality and Bojanala Platinum District Municipality. Western Cape is Kannaland Local Municipality.

We have also identified 55 MIG receiving municipalities to support them in ensuring increased access to basic services

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such as water, roads, solid waste, and sanitation. These municipalities are there in their numbers and are attached on the annual performance plan, APPs, for easy access and reference by honourable members.

As part of implementing the Integrated Urban Development Framework, we have launched a support programme specifically for intermediate cities, focusing on three key areas: fiscal framework, implementation support, and enabling environmental support. The fiscal framework support introduced a consolidated infrastructure making all identified intermediate city municipalities eligible to apply for these ... thank you, House Chairperson. [Time expired.]

IsiZulu:

Mnu E NZIMANDE: Ngiyabonga Sihlalo, ngihloniphe nje umthetho. Uma kwenziwa ushintsho bekufanele ngaziswe kodwa ke siyahlonipha la sivala khona. Ngibingelele uMphathi wohlelo, ngibingelele nonke bahlonishwa abakule Ndlu. Ngibe ngithunywe yindoda enamakhanda amabili, elokucabanga nelokuhlasela amankengana ehamba nombimbi lwawo, amambuka. Nakudala kwakunjalo, nasezimpini zakudala. Ngizawuqala la Mphathi wohlelo. Ngikhulume nge...

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English:

... pillar one of people's mandate...

IsiZulu:

...lena esilethe lapha. Ukuhlonishwa nokungahlonishwa kwamalungelo amakhosi endabuko, siyasho sithi umbimbi lusahamba kuzo izinyathelo zokuthi amakhosi aqhubeke abengathi zimfabanga ezweni lawo, aphaathe ikepisi acele ukukhongozela kubona. Babonakala ngokuthi kufanele amakhosi azishutheke ezinhlakeni ezenziwe yibona ukuze bathathe izinqumo ezweni lamakhosi. Siyakuphika ke lokho. Asikuvumi, yingakho nje okokuqala okuzokhomba ukuthi sithi asihambisani ke nalesabiwomali sithi siyasikhahlela ngezinyawo zombili.

English:

The current system doesn't provide sound provision for traditional leaders to make final determination of policies that preserve our culture, elevate our belief's traditional values, including our African ethical behaviour. Instead, like I said, our traditional leaders are reduced to be subordinate to government arms.

IsiZulu:

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Sasithi: Mayibuye! Sihamba sibaningi nabanye namhlanje abahamba namankengana akhifulwa wulwandle. Namhlanje siyabona bathathe izwe lamakhosi benza abathi ukazimele geqe wabantu ababandlululayo. Bathi yi...

English:

...self-determination...

IsiZulu:

... baqale ngapha e-Northern Cape. Siyababona bayeza, sizobavimba.

English:

Any plans that are incorrectly curved are bound to result in wrong results, not desired results. We have raised it in another forum, for example, dealing with this aspect of amakhosi. As long as you cannot diagnose properly the challenge, then you are likely to just illusionary come with the view that it is all about functionality of the traditional council house. It is not, because again, if that is your desired outcome, that on its own can never be the end result of the challenges that you are having. So, attaching money to plans that do not properly deal with the actual problem, is a problem and that is why you cannot support.

Infrastructure deficiencies, government is struggling with inadequate infrastructure for water supply and sanitation, leading to unreliable access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities, especially in the rural and underserved urban areas.

IsiZulu:

Sizwile bathi imali iya ngokuncipha iminyaka neminyaka kodwa ingqalasizinda zisenkingeni.

English:

In fact, the current plans acknowledge the failure in previous terms to invest adequately in infrastructure. Therefore, the 10% percentage funding on refurbishment and repairs is not informed by scale of our challenges.

IsiZulu:

Yingakho uzozwa abantu behlekisa uma beyokhankasa bethi ngilibonile ikaka, behlekisa ngezimpilo zabantu bethu.

English:

It is admitted by the department that the infrastructure is aging and is not part of our country where there is no such challenge, which often leads to burst pipes, whether it

involves water that is ready for consumption or for treatment. Furthermore, there is an article by Andrew Baker from WRC on the state of wastewater treatment facilities and river system with figures on failing treatment systems in Gauteng. There is no consideration for some of these things. The very same situation presents itself through the length and breadth of our country. Failure of the department to provide adequate and or sufficient resources impacts negatively on the maintenance of pump stations and no water ingress ... management implementation causes serious spillages and waste of water. No 50-year Master Plan is in place but as it is evident on the budget allocation. It is clear this shall not enable the country to address the challenges and to meet the targets. Any intention to provide basic services on commodity is rejected by MK Party whether on incremental basis through PPP or not, that shall never be accepted because it will be elevating market above affordability.

On the issue of health, like we have spoken also, yes, in another forum the issue ...

IsiZulu:

...yojojo, badla ngabo ojojo labantu. Yingakho bangeke bayilungise into yokuhanjiswa kwamanzi. Ababalandeli

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nalabojojo. Uthola ukuthi abasenazo nezivalo. Abanamagciwane, awahlanzwa lamanzi, abantu bakithi bahlale basenkingeni yokugula. Into abayaziyo nje inkohlakalo. Ngiyabonga, bengingakaqedi ... [Uhleko.].

Mr F J BADENHORST: Deputy Chairperson, hon Ministers, Deputy Ministers, members, fellow members and fellow South Africans, good day. A famous Poet, W H Auden once said: "Thousands have lived without love, no one without water". Whereas it is quite possible for a human, taking circumstances into account, to survive without food for around 30 to 60 days, no human can survive without water for more than five days. The slogan of the Department of Water and Sanitation "Water is Life - Sanitation is Dignity" is therefore very applicable.

Reading through the department's annual performance plan and medium-term budget, it is clear that one of the most critical challenges South Africa faces today is its crumbling water infrastructure. One of the most important cogs in the wheels of water distribution is our local municipalities and considering that 173 out of 257 municipalities are regarded as dysfunctional, the problems at ground level, as experienced by many of our citizens, are very real. The estimated water loss due to leaks, ageing pipelines, and inadequate maintenance

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stands at a staggering 40,8% and non-revenue water losses at 47,4%. This not only translates to a direct loss of a vital resource but also impacts the revenue and financial viability of municipalities across South Africa.

Allow me to dwell on a few examples of issues that are affecting the life and dignity of many of our citizens daily. According to the Census of 2022, 8,9% of South African households have to share a communal tap. That's 1,6 million South Africans. Eight-point seven percent of South African households do not have any access to piped water. That's 1,5 million South Africans.

In a parliamentary question last year, the then Minister of Water and Sanitation revealed that the country requires R90 billion of year-on-year infrastructure spending for a decade to close the water infrastructure deficit. Put simply, the country's water and sanitation infrastructure require R900 billion over the next decade to stay up to standard.

Further, according to the Auditor-General in 2022-23, 71% of Regional Bulk Infrastructure projects are delayed, which has resulted in runaway expenditure of nearly R10 billion. One of the delayed builds is the Lesotho Highlands Project, which is

meant to fill Rand Water's supply gap. In another parliamentary question last year, it became clear that the Lesotho Highlands Project - meant to fill Gauteng's water shortfall - is nine years behind schedule and costs have ballooned by almost R17 billion.

Water bodies, established in terms of section 38 of the Water Services Act, responsible to provide bulk and reticulation water services to municipalities, are also marred with issues. Take Rand Water for example, this entity is supposed to service all of Gauteng, parts of Mpumalanga, the Free State and the North West province. Rand Water is owed R3 billion by municipalities, affecting its own balance sheet and its own infrastructure upkeep.

Another issue related to Rand Water is the poor infrastructure maintenance within Gauteng metros. A revealing statistic is that Johannesburg loses 46,1% of the water it receives from Rand Water due to leaks and incurs R1,7 billion in lost revenue as a result. Further, Johannesburg alone requires R27 billion to bring its water infrastructure to standard. In short, until metros sort their business, Rand Water will continue to struggle.

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In 2023, two of KwaZulu-Natal's largest bulk water bodies, Mhlathuze Water and Umgeni Water were merged. However, this has proven to be bad policy decision. Due to the lack of infrastructure maintenance, eThekweni - the largest customer of this water body - loses 58% of its water or R2 billion in annual revenue. This ultimately affects its payments to the water body and the overall water balance of the province.

The Blue Drop, Green Drop, and No Drop reports provide a sobering reflection of our water and sanitation services' performance. The Blue Drop report, assessing the quality of drinking water, has revealed alarming trends, with only 56% of municipalities achieving Blue Drop certification. Similarly, the Green Drop report, evaluating wastewater treatment, shows that only 45% of municipalities meet the required standards. This meant over half of the municipalities in South Africa need attention to protect the health of their citizens and the environment. The No Drop report highlights inefficiencies in water conservation and demand management.

Hon members, like every dark cloud on the horizon, one always needs to acknowledge the silver lining, that beacon of hope that brings with it a promise of a better tomorrow. Across all metrics - Blue, Green and No Drop Reports - the Western Cape

is the best performing province in the country. Proving that, in a province plagued by extreme flooding and droughts, good governance shields residents from the worst of what the weather has to offer. In terms of water quality - Blue Drop Report - the Western Cape has the most municipalities - eight - with excellent drinking water, achieving scores of 95 out of a 100 and above.

For perspective, while Gauteng has more than double the Western Cape's population, it has a quarter of the number of municipalities with excellent drinking water - two, actually there is three, if you include the DA-run Midvaal municipality. The Western Cape's excellence is also reflected in its low rates of water losses and non-revenue water - the No Drop report. Of the 12 municipalities with the lowest rates of water losses, nine are in the Western Cape, and 10 are DA-governed.

In terms of wastewater management - the Green Drop report - the Western Cape has the lowest risk profile of its wastewater systems at 64,9%, which is below the national average of 76,5%. For further comparison, the highest risk profiles in the country include the North West at 85,4%, the Free State at 88,5% and the Northern Cape at 92,4%.

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The Western Cape government has utilized drought intervention funding since 2021 to drill new boreholes, refurbish vandalised boreholes and provide power supply back up infrastructure at new and existing ground water resource sites. Together with this, the Western Cape government has developed a 15-year provincial water resilience plan which aims to provide for timeous planning and implementation of interventions to ensure water security and water resilience for the benefit of residents in the Western Cape. In fact, over the Sixth Parliament term, the Western Cape government allocated R76 million towards water security and water resilience. This demonstrates that where there is political will underpinned by competent officials, quality and sustainable water supply is indeed possible.

As I conclude, taking onboard best practices that exist around us and in the spirit of our Government of National Unity, we need to learn from our lessons past and work together to rescue our beloved South Africa's water and sanitation sector. By addressing failing infrastructure, securing bulk water availability, and upholding the highest standards of service delivery, we can ensure a brighter, healthier future for all South Africans. It is up to us to make the changes we want to see in order to create a safer and better future for our

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children, filled with love, and yes, clean, drinkable water. Let's work together to rescue South Africa. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo): Deputy Chair of the NCOP, Minister of Water and Sanitation comrade Pammy Majodina, the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation Sethlolo Isaac, the chair of our Select Committee Mr Mbimbi, hon Moiemang, the leadership of Salga, and all other members, it is nearly two days when Isithwalande-Seaparankoe Nelson Mandela will have turned 106 years. There are those here today who are contributing to the debate. They want to be doomsayers and promote adversity. They should be able to take from Nelson Mandela's important words when he said, and I quote:

There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely assessed, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lays defeat and death.

It is important that we should understand that as humanity we are interconnected, we are interdependent, and we have shared aspiration. When it comes to issues of water and sanitation, water knows no boundaries and it knows no ideology. There should be nobody who comes here to tell lies and claim easy

victories. In our case, we will never mask our difficulties. But progress has been made, and what is the progress that we have made?

In the last 30 years of this country, led by the ANC government, were to answer the question whether this country is water secured. And our Minister has been clear to say until 2030, our country will not run out of water. But there are risks that are there. That is why we have a major drive on infrastructure, and we are dealing with the question of water security. More than R153 billion over the Medium-term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, will be spent around dealing with issues of water security. That is why Mzimvubu Dam, Clan William Dam, Polihali Dam, and all others that are there. That is our response as this government. Hence our Minister, speaks about water mix and other interventions that needs to be done, especially in terms of dealing with issues of being climate resistant.

Equally, we want to say that we will not be able to solve all our problems, and 60% of this money will never be coming from the state. That is why the question of private public partnership is important. Going to the market, look at the

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concession and others. That is the story and what this Government of National Unit will proceed to do.

Local government has been at the centre of delivery of services. We must never diminish the point. More than 90% of South Africans have access to water infrastructure. However, we are the first to admit that there are worrying signs, which is why when it comes to issues of reliability, it has dropped to about 67%. There are those who have access to water every day, but there are those who do not have access to water and the biggest burden is actually being experienced by women and vulnerable girl children, especially our communities in rural areas.

There is no magic, it is only the government that has produced the report around the status of water, whether it is the blue drop, is it safe to drink, whether there is an effluent in terms of pollution getting there, whether the water is being lost or not being lost? It is our report, and we intend to continue to do that so that we can give confidence on the system.

There are a number of intervention that the Minister said we are doing. One of the interventions we are going to do is to

work with local government to look at an implementation model. One of the issues that are extremely critical is the question of leadership. Leaders in local government cannot continue to do nothing about the challenges that the drop reports have done. One of the biggest decisions we are to implement is that there cannot be a water service authority and a provider that actually that do not separate the two and you do not do the function.

The Minister said "we are not taking away your powers" you would keep your powers. But you cannot continue to have power when you can 't deliver the services and you put us under the bus.

Ring-fencing must be made to the finances. The money that comes from the Minister in this Budget Vote, more than R47 billion over the MTEF around Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant, RBIG, and Water Services Infrastructure Grant, WSIG, is coming to support. We are excluding the money that comes from Urban Settlements Development Grant, USDG, and Municipal Infrastructure Grant, MIG, and if we include it just this year alone, we are actually providing R61 billion. Each municipality in the country has a project to do.

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Hon Ceza do not tell lies and clam easy victories.

Siswati:

Ekhaya eMpumalanga ...

English:

... this year, there are sixty projects, worth more than R1,5 billion. What is more important is that this money must be ringfenced. It cannot be used for anything else. That money must be ringfenced, including the money that comes from the water sales. That is how we are going to turn the situation around.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Please give the Deputy Minister a chance to deliver his speech.

Siswati:

LISEKELA SIHLALO LELITIKO LEMANTI NENDLE (Mnu. D Mahlobo):
Sikhatsi siyaphela Bhungane, liwashi alikwamiswa.

English:

... Chairperson, the money will be ringfenced. Another point we say is that we want to professionalise the water sector. We cannot continue to employ people who work in the water sector

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when it is technical in nature, it is science and engineering related. Over the next three years, everybody working in the water sector needs to go back to school with recognition of prior learning, and our Ministry will support working with Sector Education and Training Authority Services, SETAs, and Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency, MISA, to make sure that there is appropriate qualification. That is an intervention we are making.

We are proceeding with the bucket eradication system and making inroads. The kind of sanitation facilities that are there are inhumane. Water is an impediment. We are going to be in a position to apply other technologies from our Water Research Commission, so that the non-sewered systems are responsive. But the local government has a responsibility to discontinue the bucket system. You cannot continue putting more informal settlements in place. Those are the informal decisive actions that we need to be able to look at.

The other matter is the question of the attack on infrastructure, by vandals, by criminals, where there is theft, including those mafias who are selling water illegally, and illegal markets that are there. We shall work with the law enforcement agencies, look at alternative technologies. But as

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government alone, we will never be able to do it. We need societies to play their part.

One of the issues we are looking at in terms of this Budget Vote is a contribution to the economy, we shall industrialise it. We are a built environment in terms of infrastructure. Whether you look at issues of cement, you look at the chemicals that we use for treating water, those are some of the issues that this Ministry will proceed with, including the issues of the reform. We are confident that local government will be able to turn the situation around, but in instances where they do not perform their function as required by the Constitution, the Ministry of Water and Sanitation will never hesitate. We shall intervene. That is why the reforms on legislation, our intervention on liquor, progress is being made. You go to Emfuleni, Hammanskraal including Johannesburg, these are some of the strides we are taking. And it is going to be important that members here, both our MECs and permanent delegates here, we shall have to work together in the quest of turning local government around.

As I said, "water knows no boundaries. Water knows no ideology." It in the interest of our country to get local government to work, not for us, but for the future of our

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children. Water is a key component around the economy, around the environment, around social security. And those are some of the issues that I thought in responding to your input, we should be able to do that.

As I conclude, while we are celebrating Nelson Mandela. I want us to say, let us work together, it is the right thing to do towards the prosperity of our nation. And the benefit of the future generations by using water efficiently. The Minister has made the call. But also, to protect our environment so that those under the sun cannot be treated like skunk and a pariah in their land of birth because their right to water in terms of access and benefit have been denied. And the right to have an environment that is not harmful through decent sanitation where polluters must be dealt with decisively. God bless South Africa and her children. Thank you.

Cllr K PHUKUNTSI (Salga): House Chair, Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, hon Hlabisa, Minister of Waer and Sanitation, hon Majodina, Deputy Ministers of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Water and sanitation Respectively, MECs present, hon members, good afternoon. Hon Chair, allow me on behalf of the collective leadership of the SA Local Government Association,

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Salga, to congratulate the hon Ministers on their respective maiden budget speeches to the National Council of Provinces as appointment as Ministers of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Water and Sanitation earlier this month. We are collectively enjoying the energy, vibrancy and urgency which they bring to the local government sector. Based on our historic interactive relationship with their respective Ministries, we anticipate a sustain cordial and mutual regarding working relationship. Allow me to further express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for this opportunity to contributes towards the debate on the Department of Co-operative Governance and the Department of Water and Sanitation budget as delivered by the hon Ministers supported by Deputy Ministers and MECs for local government.

Hon House Chair, allow me to start off by not only paying homage to our global icon of peace, human rights and international struggle for social justice, democracy and economic emancipation, but more so to inspire individuals to take action to help change the world for the better and in doing so build a global movement for the good this we do as we march towards Nelson Mandela International Day in honour of our former President Nelson Mandela. It is within this context that we would like to remind this august House that the

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Constitution of the Republic of South as championed by Madiba entrenches local government as a fully-fledged sphere of government in a system of co-operative governance in which the three spheres are distinctive yet interrelated and interdependent.

It is against this background that despite the remarkable achievement and gains made, the most pervasive challenge facing our country as developmental state is the need to redress poverty, inequality, underdevelopment and marginalisation of the majority of our people and communities amongst us.

The Constitution architectures recognises that these challenges can only be addressed through concentrated offered by government in all spheres to work together and integrate our actions in the provisions of services and development of our spaces. Ultimately, the three spheres must provide effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government for the Republic as a whole.

As the SA Local Government Association, Salga, we stand ready within the spirit of the 1998 White Paper on Local Government to work collaboratively with both Ministers and their

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respective departments to respond to the complex challenges in
Local government and to find sustainable ways to meet
community needs and improve the quality of their lives. We
must start by acknowledging the massive progress sector has
made over the last 24 years of democratic life in basic
services. To so many more of our people the rapid development
and quality of infrastructure, the increased mobility,
investment and social amenities and massive progress in
financial management and institutional resilience.

As the SA Local Government Association, Salga, we are likewise
concerned that 175 of the country's 257 municipalities are
financially distressed. We are particularly concerned about
the debt owed by municipalities to Eskom, water boards and the
water trading entities as well as the underlying debt owed to
municipalities. We have staggering debt of R346 billion as at
the end of March 2024. If the municipalities are not
financially sustainable, the sustainability of all
institutions in the value chain including water boards is
negatively impacted. We are advocating for a holistic approach
to address the debt through cost of supplies, that is,
infrastructure, operational and institutional assessment to
identify solutions. It is our submission that the fundamental
in making municipalities developmental is an urgent need to

sort out some of the lingering challenges arising from the current fiscal framework. This must include consideration of the unstable and increasing debts owed to by municipalities. Bold measures are needed to cap this debt, ensure municipalities to collect and better manage their customers and national inventions are initiated to ensure that this growing debts situation does not undermine the solvency of local government.

Working closely with both Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Department of Water and Sanitation and other key stakeholders, we believe can bring about positive change.

We are in agreement with the concern expressed by the Minister of the Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs on the high number of municipalities currently under section 139 administration and many more that are struggling. We again wish to reiterate that the 1998 White Paper obligates the national and provincial spheres of government to provide support and capacitate local sphere to perform their functions and discharge their obligations. We are very pleased with the Department of Water and Sanitation's progress in the establishment of the National Water Resource Infrastructure

Agency which will free up the department to focus on policy, planning, regulation, price setting and provide support to our water services authorities and providers. We look forward to the business case to ensure financial sustainability of both the agency and municipalities. Efforts to improve the governance and operational performance of water boards are particularly welcomed given the strategic role water board fulfil in providing bulk water to municipalities. We undertook a thorough assessment and consultation on the proposed bulk tariffs across all municipalities and had a joint session with the department and the National Treasury to find a balance between bulk water tariffs that ensure water boards financial sustainability and affordability to municipalities and end-users. We look forward to working together on the water board funding models since the self-funding model is not viable.

Whilst many sectors have Minimecs or intergovernmental structures where national and provincial local government can take resolutions, monitor performance and hold various stakeholders to account, the water sector lack such a structure. We have prepared terms of reference for our proposed interministerial committee for water where local government can come together with the relevant ministries to speedily solve problems and take decisions. We would like to

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engage further on this proposed structure. Within the local government and water sectors the need to professionalise water services is recognised. However, we lack a strategy to put this into practice. Further, there have been discussions concerning powers and functions for water services between districts and local municipalities since many municipalities are failing to provide sustainable water services to our communities.

With the postlicencing of water service providers we need to urgently address powers and functions, find workable sustainable service delivery mechanism and speed up the establishment of an independent economic regulator of water.

We support and affirm the department's mandate to monitor and enforce compliance. However, the issue of supporting and providing capacity building for municipalities to be strengthened. We propose a sector wide collaborative approach similar to the Masibambane programme launched in the early 2000s whereby the department together with the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the National Treasury and Salga work together to ensure targeted support to municipalities that are water service authorities. The first task of this approach would be a thorough assessment was

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developing water service improvement plans and where necessary to determine service delivery options that strengthen institutional resilience.

Hon Chair, as I draw toward conclusion, I stand before you on behalf of the leadership of Salga, of organised local movement and the local government leaders from all our municipalities and pledge our support to the two ministries and their departments respectively to fulfil the promise of our Constitution to build a better life for all in realisation of our finding father Nelson Mandela, and I quote:

It is in our hands to make our country a better place for all our people in that notion leaving no one behind.

I thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr D R RYDER: House Chair, it is nice to see you in the seat. It is an incredibly good omen that the very first debate in the Seventh iteration of this House is focussed, at least in part, on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Mr Minister, the National Council of Provinces is where co-operative governance has its voice. Chapter 3 of the Constitution lives in this House, and this House lives because

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of Chapter 3. It is only in this House that the SA Local Government Association, Salga, has its voice as we have just heard at a national platform, and where provinces are empowered to air their issues and debate the impacts and overlaps of national government.

It is no secret that the local sphere of government is in deep trouble. The overpoliticisation of grassroots structures has meant that service delivery has ground to a halt in many places around our country. Mr Minister, I have sat in the NCOP for the past five years and I can affirm what you raised in your speech is one of the biggest issues that we have come to grapple with is the problem of interventions that prove to be ineffectual. Section 139 of the Constitution details the need for subordinate legislation to determine how section 139 is implemented. The legislation has been in draft since as far back as 2009, with no appetite for taking it further due to the political discomfort that this will bring. The time has come to grasp the nettle and generate a law that will save ordinary South Africans and South African businesses from the ineptitude of their local governments, regardless of political discomfort. I was therefore most pleased Minister to hear it mentioned and I urge you to have deeper consultation with this

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House to better inform this piece of legislation and the draft of this legislation that you mentioned.

Mr Minister, I was also pleased to hear the news that the White Paper on Local Government is to be reviewed. This is a welcome government of national unity initiative. On that point, let me pause and say, how good it is to see the government of national unity in effect today looking at the diversity of the allegiances of the Ministers and Deputy Ministers represented in this House. Congratulations!

The Department of Water and Sanitation has indicated that they are underfunded, and the new Minister has approached the private sector calling for some additional funding. I can't help but feel that this is somewhat cheeky considering that the department is a state capture crime scene and many of the state capture projects that relied on the departmental budget remain in place. If ever there was a case for zero-based budgeting it is this one. It is time to do a full reassessment of your departmental budget. Every cent must be reconsidered.

Minister Senzo Mchunu began some good work, ably supported by the Director-General, DG, Sean Phillips. Yet they have been treating symptoms instead of [Interjections.] It is time to go

back to the very start. This will not be fixed overnight. But an admission of the problem, and a commitment to a sustained effort with a coherent plan will go a long way to winning the trust of the private sector. You cannot expect them to come running until you have shown your willingness to play by the rules.

Deputy Minister Mahlobo, the removal of the basic income grant, BIG, from municipalities changing from a direct to an in direct grant has slowed down delivery of key infrastructure in some instances. In others it is very necessary, and I accept that.

To the Deputy Minister Seitholo, the Water Services Amendment Bill sounds very encouraging, and we are looking forward to tracking it to the public and to the provinces for constructive engagement and inputs. I thank you.

Sepedi:

Moh K R MOLOKOMME: Modulasetulo, e re ke tamiše Ditona tša rena le Batlatšatona ...

English:

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... the Committee Chairperson who is present in this meeting, the MECs, hon members, the Chief Whip of the NCOP, the SA Local government Association, Salga, good afternoon. I also congratulate imbokodo, who is leading the Department of Water and Sanitation because we all know that ...

Sepedi:

...tša etwa ke ye tshadi pele di nwa maswi.

English:

I am Saying this because we all know that water is an issue which is affecting all provinces. So, we believe that with your leadership you will consider that whatever challenges faced by all these provinces, you will lead us on that.

Sepedi:

Ge re se na meetse ...

English:

... whatever economic development that we want to achieve, we are not going to achieve it. Hon Chairperson, we have just six years remaining to reach 2030, the year we committed to realize our National Development Planned mission while we have made significant progress in achieving universal access to

clean drinking water and descent sanitation. We still need to do more to achieve the objectives of the National Development Plan.

The Minister has already alluded to this fact that they have already made strides to those projects that affect water in all those provinces, especially Deputy Minister, you know in Limpopo that we are struggling with water, especially in Sekhukhune, Giyani and other areas in Limpopo. But we want to also acknowledge the ...

Sepedi:

... re rata go leboga ...

English:

... the initiatives that you brought to Limpopo province, especially on those projects that were a stagnant for such a long period of time. So, we believe in the monitoring and evaluation of those projects so that they finish early ...

Sepedi:

... gore batho ba rena ba kgone go humana meetse kua Limpopo ...

English:

... and other provinces. According to the recent Census Report of 2022, our democratic government has managed to expand access to water to more than 98% of the population and 84% have access to descent sanitation services.

Recently, the Deputy Minister Mahlobo has emphasize that as much as we have made this significant achievement, we also need to recognize that some communities have 100% access to services while others have zero access to some services.

In short, as this august House, we have a responsibility to extend water and sanitation services to communities that have not yet received the benefits of our freedom by receiving clean drinking water and descent sanitation.

Hon Members, billions of rends are allocated through various grants mechanism to expand access to water and sanitation and infrastructure to promote social and economic development of our communities. However, some of our communities, especially those in rural areas and informal settlements are still without access of their basic right to clean drinking water and descent sanitation. Poor planning, budgeting and institutions have cost delays in the implementation of some

major water and sanitation projects delaying our people their right to access clean drinking water and descent sanitation. This has resulted in increasing costs for our democratic government. Is either government officials fail to properly budget to those projects or simply neglected their duties.

As this august House, we need to encourage proper budgeting and planning as well as prompt implementation and completion of water infrastructure project. We must instruct government officials to always adhere to their principle of getting the best value for money. Investigating the root cause of the project delays and rising cost is crucial. We should not hesitate to enforce consequence management when officials fail to fulfil their duties. We know that we have these challenges, especially in the three spheres of government where you will find that projects are no longer operational or they have stopped and we don't know the reasons why and there are no consequence management taken against officials or whoever is involved in such. Hon members, we need to ensure that we move away from the silo mentality where sector department implement their programs alone or where the national department does not talk to the provincial or local government even though they are targeting the same constituency.

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President Ramaphosa has called upon the government to use the District Development Model, which guarantees the integrated planning, budgeting and execution of major projects can result in improving service delivery, especially the reticulation of water to communities.

Hon members, we have over the years seen the public sectors losing critical skills personnels due to the competitive labour market, which the private sector is taking up the majority of the court of the people while some migrate to overseas. The private sector salaries and benefits contribute to the public sectors loss of discord thereby impacting our democratic government's capacity to deliver high quality basic services. It therefore becomes important for our government to improve public private partnership to facilitate skills transfer and address skill gaps in the public sector. In other sectors such as health, the democratic government has already established public private partnership. It has constructed health facilities that both the public and private sectors use jointly. The private doctors provide consultations sessions for the public. This can be replicated in the water and sanitation sector but with a focus on transferring skills to public sector workers who are already in the field to build

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the capacity and capabilities to lead the service delivery component.

We need to broaden the scope of this public private partnership to finance the development of the water infrastructure in the country rather than restricting it solemnly to the transfer of skills to bridge the skills gap. However, we must first take decisive actions against poor governance and financial mismanagement in order to move towards clean governance and financial sustainable government.

Hon members, nationally we have seen the strides of the Ministry and the department not only in eradicating under expenditure on its allocation budget. But also, in reducing preventing improper expenditure. That is unauthorized irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure. These actions by the Ministry and department will attract funding for the various planned water infrastructure project that our government need to implement if we are to achieve the 2030 National Development Plan objectives.

As the ANC, we firmly believe that our democratic government need to establish strategic public private partnership with

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financial institution to close the investment gap in water and sanitation infrastructure.

Hon Chairperson, we expect President Ramaphosa to sign into law the National Water Resources Infrastructure Agency after both Houses, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces approve it just before the end of the 6th parliamentary term.

The ANC applauds Minister Majodina's pledge to complete the National Water Resources Infrastructure Agency establishment by May 2025 by fast-tracking agencies establishment

Our democratic government will be better able to mobilize funding for the major water and sanitation infrastructure needed to achieve the 2030 National Development Plan objectives. Minister Majodina summarized part of the reasons we are urging the department to expedite the establishment. The agency will own all the national water resource infrastructure assets and obtain the revenue streams associated with those assets. This will enable the agency to borrow additional funds based on the strength of its balance sheet.

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In short, the agency will have the ability to attract and mobilize funding for major water and sanitation infrastructure project, which our democratic government is not in a position to fund through the national budget.

Our democratic government has designed the public procurement system in such a way that it benefits the historically disadvantaged communities' black economic in general and Africans in particular. In the form of a broad-based black economic empowerment scheme, the Department of Water and Sanitation prioritize public procurement aiming to empower women, youth and individuals with disabilities. I think Deputy Minister must emphasize on that aspect when he was on the podium.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): You have less than a minute, honmember.

Ms K R MOLOKOMME: Okay. As the ANC, we welcome the announcement by the department that this financial year it has put plans in place to improve its procurement by implementing infrastructure procurement strategy that set out clear guidelines on the empowerment of women and youth and persons with disabilities. Let's me just go to the end, as the ANC, we

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fully support the department Budget Vote as presented by hon Ministers because if we don't pass this vote how are we going to take services to the people because if we don't have budget, we are not going to be able to take ... Thank you.

[Time expired.]

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE & TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS: Hon Chairperson, and greetings once again to hon members. Let me firstly welcome and thank all the contributions made by members in this debate. I welcome every contribution, even the contributions that might have sound as negative, but there is goodness if you listen to what the other members were saying not necessarily supporting the presentation we made.

The matters raised by hon Kaunda are noted. The Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent, Misa intervention in our municipalities, the current challenges around initiation schools are matters that we will be confronting very closely as the department. It is true that the local government is in trouble due to some municipalities that are failing to deliver services.

We are of the view that the time is now to turn things around and make every municipality work for its people. This we can

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all do as hon members in this House because if we can work together, having expressed our views in favor or against, but if we can work together, the beneficiaries will be our supporters across political parties.

I think all hon members who are here carry a responsibility to advance their constituencies. The issues regarding the legislations, matters affecting our traditional leaders will receive our attention. We will surely be proactive when it comes to the dysfunctioning municipalities in giving concrete support to address issues raised by the Auditor-General in order to improve the performance of the dysfunctional municipalities.

The issue of instability in the local government sphere, especially the coalition governments will be receiving our attention. The coalition government at a local government sphere will have to take the shape to the Government of National Unity, GNU.

The GNU will finish its course of five years because it is the will of the people. Anyone who is doubting should really stop doubting. We will need to inject majority the local government sphere because in those local government municipalities where

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there is coalition, it is because the people in those local government municipalities said no one is going to have the majority. You need to find a partner to work with.

Now that the GNU has been formed, we will take a pattern from the GNU to filter it down to the local government level in order to advance the lives of our people. We will ensure that in every municipality, there is a budget which will be closely monitored, that it is spent on maintenance to ensure that the infrastructure that exists is kept in a good state.

We welcome the remarks by SA Local Government Association, Salga. We will create a meeting within a month with the executive of Salga so that we engage deeply in how we can take our municipalities forward for the best interest of our people. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

The MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Chair, I left a minute and a half. [Laughter.] House Chair, let me thank all hon members for your comments, your suggestions, your grilling. However, when we come here, we come because we are sent by the electorate, by the residents, by the voters. When voters sent us here and we come here and reject the budget, go back to the voters and tell them that you are rejecting therefore budget,

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therefore they must not get water. They must not get any service.

You want to come and oversight us, oversight us on what because you've rejected the budget? We cannot play with everything. At a particular point, we must take responsibility and be public representatives and represent the people. We assist municipalities through the Regional Bulk Water Infrastructure Grant. The Kopanong Local Municipality project was completed and was funded through this Regional Bulk Water Infrastructure Grant, RBIG.

The only challenge was that the local municipality wanted a similar treatment in the same area and that was not budgeted for. But the phase one of it was budgeted for and it was completed. Two contractors as are on site at the Ngwathe Local Municipality as I speak. The refurbishment of Parys is on, and we are monitoring those projects to ensure that we deliver and intervene as expected.

Amathole District Municipality is currently benefiting out of the R750 million of Ngqamakhwe Bulk Water Supply as well as with Xhora Bulk Water Supply and that is part of the Water Service Improvement Plan. It is through the improvement plan

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that we give municipalities that grant, but also their ministerial intervention programmes that we get into municipalities and assist.

I'm happy that Salga is noting that we have challenges. It is our joint responsibility to make municipalities work. We are going to work with Salga, we're going to work with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to ensure that our people access water as well as the issue of sanitation.

The municipalities are in the cold phase of service delivery. The fact is that some municipalities are unable to collect revenue because the very people that they are serving are unemployed. How are they going to pay for the services? That is where their municipalities are supposed to analyse the situation and then seek for intervention, because we cannot expect people to pay for services when they don't have money.

Ours is to be a resource of water but ...

IsiXhosa:

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... asiwankinkishi amanzi. Ikhona into engaqondakali kakuhle apha. Lungu elihloniphekileyo uPeter mandiyiphinde le nto, amanzi akhona emadameni. Ingxaki yile, ukusuka edamini ...

English:

... or the reservoir ...

IsiXhosa:

... ukhona umntu ekumele ukuba uyawasusa amanzi.

Sesotho:

O teng motho ya tlosang metsi, empa ase rona. Ke moo re sebedisanang mmoho le masepala a kenye dipeipi mme batho ba fumane metsi. Empa, ha o re ha hona metsi hohang ...

IsiXhosa:

... leliphi eli lizwe uthetha ngalo kuba ngokuqinisekileyo asililo eli lalapha eMzantsi Afrika, kuba amanzi akhona apha. Siyavuma kodwa ukuba awafiki ngokukhawuleza ebantwini. Njengoko singabaqulunqi bomthetho apha, masingade sithi amanzi awakho. Masithi, iindlela eziwakhawulezisayo amanzi ukuya ebantwini azikho kakuhle.

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Uyabona ke mna, ndisuka kwilali iMacacuma kwaWadi-7 eJoe Gqabi. Into yamanzi angekhoyo ndiyayazi kuba idama laphaya iJozana lincinci kakhulu. Abahlali baphaya ngama-389 000. Asikwazi ukonela sonke ke kuba inani labahlali liyakhula. Mna amanzi ndiwakha ndiwabeke entloko. Lo nto ayilunganga kweli xesha sikulo. Oomama, abantwana, abantu abadala nabo baphila nenkubazeko bayasokola ngakumbi kwiilali zethu.

Le nto ithethwayo ithi abantu basela amanzi kunye neehagu ndiyayazi mna. Ndiwaselile amanzi neehagu. Andiphandi ngaloo nto, ndisuka kuyo loo meko. Ngoko ke andinako ukonwaba ndibona abantu bakuthi nelizwe lonke lingenawo amanzi acocekileyo. Yiyo loo nto singenelelayo sisithi mawacocwe amanzi afikelele ebantwini. Sibizelwe loo nto apha. Sinikwe amagunya okwenza oko.

Xa ndigqibezela, siza kuqinisekisa ukuba le projekthi iqhubayo eMatjhabeng njengoko iMatjhabeng iyenye yeendawo eziphambili ukuba zihoywe. Namhlanje usodolophu, uSomlomo, iSebe lezaManzi noGutyulo lweLindle bahambela eOdendaalsrus, e Kutlwanong naseThabong ukuqinisekisa ukuba amanzi ayacocwa afike ebantwini. Siyabulela kakhulu nakuBaphathiswa abaqhamgamshelene nathi ngobuxhakaxhaka. Siyathembisa ukuba siza kusebenza nabo. Enkosi kakhulu.

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Debate concluded.

The Council adjourned at 17:34.

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