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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HYBRID MINIPLenary

Members of the mini-plenary session met at Good Hope Chamber at 10:00.

House Chairperson, Ms Z Majozi took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate on Vote No 33 - Human Settlements:

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, hon Chairperson of our Portfolio Committee on Human Settlement, hon Albert Seabi; hon members, fellow Cabinet members who may be watching, our Deputy Minister, Mme Thandi Mahambehlala, members of our provincial executive joined by some of the members of the executive council, MEC, in particular from

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KwaZulu-Natal we appreciate the support, director-general, leading our technical team, Dr Moemi and our deputy director-generals, DDGs, chairpersons of our boards, councils and entities of Human Settlements and their chief executive officers, fellow South Africans, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

Sepedi:

Dumelang.

English:

Exactly this month, 30 years ago, this august House adopted a historic country's democratic Constitution. Our Constitution commits us to recognising the injustices of the past, honouring those who fought for justice and establishing a vision for a united, democratic society founded on human dignity, equality and fundamental rights. A year later, the then Minister of Housing, Sankie Mthembi-Mahanyele, championed the adoption of the National Housing Act 107 of 1997. And I will quote her as she emphasised and asserted that:

Housing development is about the availability of land, access to credit, about affordability, about economic

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growth, about social development and about a better environment.

We stand on those pillars even today. Over the years, we have continued to build on that solid foundation laid by our predecessors, including Joe Slovo and others.

Today, we remain steadfast and unwavering in restoring the dignity of our people through the delivery of sustainable human settlements. We continue to utilise a range of housing instruments, including social housing, affordable housing, fully subsidised housing, also known as our breaking new ground in the housing nation. As I table this budget policy statement, I'm reminded of mama Bhekile Mlambo, one of the KwaZulu-Natal 2022 flood victims.

Mama Mlambo is a pensioner from Illovo, eThekweni, receiving her key to a newly built house in August 2025, she said: I'm overcome with emotions. She reflected on the devastation caused by the floods and hardships endured by her community and reminded us of her story of how important the restoration it is, not merely as a shelter, but as changing her life, restoring her dignity back, hope and security.

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We did not stop there. We continued in ... [Inaudible.] ... and we released land from the City of eThekweni and we've started housing for all our victims of floods, starting from 2018, with the hope that we will conclude 500 temporary residential units, TRUs, also on the same site, just next door of uMhlanga.

IsiZulu:

Cha, akunaMkhonto ndawo.

English:

Her story reminds us of a housing that is only dignity. Mama Mlambo is one of the many women whose life has changed and dignity has been restored through our housing programmes. When we started that programme ...

IsiZulu:

UMkhonto wawungakazalwa nokuzalwa.

English:

We do not do this obvious of the fact that continues to face persistent and complex and multilayered human settlement challenges. Notably, our Statistics SA estimates that of the

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2,6 million of the latest census, it reveals that 84,1 of the households now resides in formal dwellings. That is from 73% of 2002. There is significant progress. Chairperson, 11,7 lives in informal dwelling.

Programmes which are meant to ensure that we restore the dignity through sustainable human settlement is what we ... [Inaudible.] ... ourselves and our motto and theme of this budget. This we strongly believe housing is more than a shelter, as mama Mlambo told us, but a tool for dignity, social justice and improved quality of life. We believe in the human existence to ensure that we produce the means for subsistence of survival, we argued, and we also believe that we can engage in, for example, religion or art.

They must firstly be satisfied by the material needs to have food, clothing and shelter. Notwithstanding the challenges we have, the availability of land, natural disasters and lack of resources due to the shrinking fiscus, we remain resolute in achieving our targets as contained in our 2024 to 2029 Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP. These targets for us are compulsory not optional. They are an obligation coming from a Constitution to heal the divisions of the past, to lay the

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foundation for a democratic open society, to improve quality of life for all citizens, to build a united and a sustainable prosperous South Africa.

In pursuit for these objectives, we have set ourselves below the following targets: Delivery of 2 878 social units with 2 000 units fully tenanted. A registration of over 20 000 title deeds. Delivery of 39 000 housing units. Completion of over 25 000 service stands across our programmes or provinces and blocking 195 projects with the budget and ensuring that 11 358 First Home Finance subsidy applications are approved and 9 231 subsidies must be disbursed to qualifying beneficiaries.

We must eradicate no less than 6 950 mud houses. We must deliver no less than 744 veteran housing units and 11 215 solar installations to ensure that energy resilience for our beneficiaries is achieved. Despite several challenges we encountered in the financial year, we are comforted by the significant strides we made in some of our programmes. These include achieving 48% of our MTDP target in the delivery of title deeds. When I started, some nay sayers were saying we are at zero and we'll remain at zero, but today we are at 48%.

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We brought back the dignity of the people who started owning houses merely by staying in them but also delivering their own. While progress is being made, we've also started in dealing with the unblocking of 85 stalled housing projects. We want to eradicate 8 176 uninhabitable mud houses, as I have said. While progress is also being made in changing the lives of the people through delivery of sustainable human settlement, we remain deeply concerned about the pace of housing delivery in relation to our target of 37 because we've only managed to deal with 23 027 units. I think we must be able to close the gap. We can't allow this situation to continue.

I'm pleased by the pressure that our portfolio committee always puts in ensuring that our efforts to expand the first home ownership, we've managed to deliver 10 856 units. Our target was 5 000. The team said, we will not be able to achieve and we committed to surpassing it. We made a collaboration, assisted by the President, for a stronger collaboration with traditional leaders. We went to KwaZulu-Natal, eNgcobo, traditional council and we wanted to pilot the roll out of first home houses in traditional areas. Some said that is just a dream it will not be realised.

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However, we've already relocated and are accumulating houses. We are assisted by the Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, we are assisted by the National Treasury and our project steering committees and councillor engagement. We are now saying, you can own a house of your own desire with a grant of government in rural communal land.

It is equally encouraging that the programme has primarily benefited women and young people, we could give you the list, the backbone and the future of our nation. It is comforting that First Home Finance benefited mainly this category. That is our MTDP priority in terms of inclusion of growth and job creation. It is 4 000 jobs that have been created through the construction of houses.

Our Housing Development Agency, HDA, have exceeded our land related target. It is important to listen to this one. Our target of land availability from HDA, we've accumulated 2 447 hectares in well-located land for human settlement, including Century City in Cape Town. We are targeting 1 000 hectares beyond for development. In addition, just over 1 000 hectares land will be zoned for human settlement for this purpose. This will surpass our annual target by around 850 hectares.

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We completed five priority development areas, PDAs, with provinces, which will ensure we deal with collaboration. For service sites, 24 251 against a combined target of 13 000, which surpasses our target as well for approximately 173% of target sites for young people who will receive sites that have electricity, roads, water and sewer for their own aggregate performance to ensure that they build for themselves. These achievements are critical in advancing spatial transformation and improving access to strategically located land.

Yesterday, I visited jointly with the City of Cape Town, a handover to a social housing unit in Somerset West, we call it Somer Life Housing. We have contributed over 400 million as a Social Housing Regulatory Authority, SHRA, to ensure that we house 1 200 units. We note that we received 15 000 applications, which shows that there is a need.

Just last month in Berlin, Germany, one of your projects, Goodwill Social Housing Project in the Western Cape under SHRA, our entity received the Project Management Association Award. All the way in Germany for being one of the best social housing projects in South Africa. So, we are hosting tomorrow an investment networking session to showcase the strategic

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parcels of land and opportunities within our city, particularly in the City of Cape Town.

We want to say we want to roll out more rental stock, we want to roll out more of breaking new grounds, BNGs, and we want to bring our people closer into the centres of town. So, the 3 031 social housing units is exceeded by the budget that we have already allocated. We are nearly at about 2 800 units which were successfully tenanted. We have now moved from 75% to 80%.

The implementation in this implementation of this project, we have created over 12 022 job opportunities aligned to our second priority of the Seventh administration. In line with the property practitioners, we continue to make significant progress in advancing transformation, skills development and participation of the predelivery inspections, PDIs, within the property sector. One learner one property practitioner programme, we have successfully placed 619 candidates, African property practitioners who were historically disadvantaged within the property industry to be the employers and host employers of choice, thus strengthening and ensuring that there is spatial balance in the areas.

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We have also exceeded our target of women empowerment through our principalisation programme, supporting 1 153 women against the target of 484. The Deputy Minister will also outline quite a number of the programmes that she is well doing. We hosted one of the successful innovative building technologies, IBTs, in February. Some of you were able to join. The key fundamental of this is that as a department and government, we have resolved a 2% of our sustainable development grant, SDG, which must be allocated from this financial year for our housing project.

We intend to roll out the IBTs for agility, particularly in response to families that would have been affected by the floods. We've finished and concluded on the building standards and the norms and standards for IBTs. This financial year, 212 black housing projects nationally, 85 were successfully unblocked, a target of which it was below that, resulting in 1 136 units in Gauteng, Free State, North West, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo being achieved.

Every recovery path must identify the responsible authority, the blockage, the required intervention and the budget implication. Rental housing tribunals are now active and

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functional in all the nine provinces. We made that commitment to our portfolio committee and we met that. No tenant or landlord should be forced inexpensively to live in those cities, as part of our prevention of illegal eviction, PIE, which we have already rolled.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Minister, can you please take a seat? There's a point of order. Hon member, what are you raising on?

Mr S W MKHIZE: Thank you, Chairperson. Is it parliamentary to have an ANC member wearing ANC regalia in Parliament? Just want to check this. No, you can't come here branded.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon member, your job is to raise a point of order, not to address a member. Which member is wearing an ANC regalia?

Mr S W MKHIZE: He knows.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, I don't see any emblem of the party there, so there's no ANC regalia. As much as this site, they can say that a member is wearing a tie that

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is green and black which does not represent that there's an emblem of the MK. So, we can't then take that point of order. It is not sustained. Hon Minister, can you please continue.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Thank you very much, House Chair. It is for this reason that we have drafted and published the Prevention of Illegal Eviction, PIE, Amendment Bill in the *Government Gazette* for public comments just for over 60 days, ending in the middle of June. And to date, we have covered KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape. By closing date of 16 June, we'll have covered all the provinces. We wish to emphasise that the Bill protects the rights of the vulnerable groups.

Our target for the Bill will be to reach the august House, the National Assembly, in August 2026. The reality is that we are operating under severe streams financially. However, we would want to say that the struggle for liberation, the fight for democracy and freedom cannot be hollowed if they are not practical to access the better food, better housing and improve quality for the daily lives. Viva the Constitution of South Africa, viva!

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Mr A M SEABI: House Chairperson, hon Minister Thembisile Simelane, Deputy Minister Thandi Mahambehlala, esteemed members of the House, including MECs present, the Director-General of the Department of Human Settlements and your delegation, chairpersons and chief executive officers, CEOs, of entities, a very good morning.

We, the ANC, wish to declare at the outset that we support Budget Vote No 33 for Human Settlements as tabled by hon Minister Simelane. We believe that this budget will provide momentum for implementing human settlement programmes, which are part of our ANC-led government ...

Hon Minister, we really appreciate your hard work ... acknowledge your ability to listen. Our support for this budget comes after the robust debate we had in our portfolio committee, and we commend you for listening and taking the inputs of hon members to heart.

Last week, we were in Baku, Azerbaijan, where the South African stand was one of the busiest. Delegates from more than 176 countries visited our stand in their numbers, attracted by our exhibitions of the houses we build for our people in our

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country. They were shocked. They were shocked to hear that those houses are given freely to our people. To them, that is an impossibility. However, we referred them to Mandela's words which said it seems impossible until it is done.

The following are our takeaways from the Baku Call to Action: human rights and protection against forced eviction, informal settlement upgrading and development, a climate resilient and integrated housing system, affordable and inclusive housing land governance, and diversified housing finance.

We support this budget because it directly responds to the above. However, Minister, we would appreciate it if the department can be a bit agile in order to achieve what is contained in this annual performance plan, APP.

In his state of the nation address, President Cyril Ramaphosa highlighted the central role of human settlements in South Africa's broader developmental agenda. He positioned it as a key component of the government's large-scale infrastructure programme which aims to stimulate economic growth and improve service delivery.

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Within this framework, housing is recognised as a driver of both economic activity and social development, given its direct links to infrastructure, land development and urban planning.

In line with the aspiration of the Freedom Charter and the resolutions of the ANC's 55th national conference, President Ramaphosa gave a clear directive on advancing the housing ideals set out in the Freedom Charter. He called on us to address inequality by reversing apartheid spatial planning, building housing in city centres closer to work and business opportunities, and providing serviced land so that qualifying beneficiaries can build their own homes.

To support these mandates, the department has prioritised key legislative and policy reforms aimed at strengthening governance and streamlining implementation.

Critical initiatives include the establishment of a comprehensive human settlement code to standardise operational processes, as well as the advancement of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Amendment Bill.

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Collectively, these interventions seek to cap illegal land occupation and clarify intergovernmental roles and responsibilities, and enhance the overall effectiveness of the national human settlements programme.

These reforms will also enable government to utilise the District Development Model more effectively to prioritise land for human settlement development, provide serviced residential stands for individuals who are able to build for themselves and address with greater urgency the root causes contributing to blocked and unfinished housing projects.

In addition, the reforms will ensure that building contractors are properly vetted before commencing construction work and that the oversight role of construction project managers in supervising housing projects is strengthened.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on building integrated communities, expanding access to adequate housing, improving security of tenure, upgrading informal settlements and providing temporary shelter for people affected by disasters such as fires and floods.

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Funding for these interventions is provided primarily through key conditional grants, namely the human settlements development grant, the urban settlements development grant, the informal settlements upgrading partnership grant for municipalities, and the informal settlements upgrading partnership grant for provinces.

As South Africa marks the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution, section 26 remains a central guide for human settlements policy. It places an obligation on the state to ensure access to adequate housing and to take reasonable legislative and other measures within available resources.

We just mourn the portfolio's projected decline in terms of their budget, which declined from approximately 33 billion to approximately 26 billion. With this decline, it will be impossible to deliver what is intended.

The First Home Finance policy aims to approve subsidies for households that do not qualify for fully subsidised housing but cannot access formal mortgage finance. The National Housing Finance Corporation ... carry out this task in the next three years to implement this programme.

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In responding to disasters such as floods and fires, the department will continue providing emergency housing support, including temporary accommodation and housing repairs.

As I conclude, the department's medium-term priorities reflect a decisive commitment to transform South Africa's human settlements landscape in line with the Constitution, the Freedom Charter and the developmental vision articulated by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The shift towards a subsidy-led housing model, coupled with targeted legislative reforms, infrastructure investment and strengthened partnerships with the private sector, presents an important evolution in the state's approach to housing delivery.

While significant progress has been achieved since the advent of democracy, the challenges of inequality, informal settlements, inadequate housing and apartheid spatial patterns remain present realities for millions of South Africans.

Through the implementation of integrated human settlement programmes, the provision of serviced sites, the upgrading of

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informal settlements, the expansion of affordable housing finance and support for vulnerable households affected by disasters, government continues to advance the progressive realisation of the right to adequate housing.

At the same time, greater emphasis ... on governance reforms, contractor accountability, intergovernmental co-ordination and empowerment of black-owned enterprises.

As we mark 30 years of constitutional democracy, the ANC reaffirms the collective responsibility to ensure that human settlements becomes the centre of opportunity, safety and economic inclusion. Thanks very much.

Mr T I GAMEDE: Let me greet you in the wonderful name of Mkhonto weSizwe Party, the government of this country in waiting. Hon Chairperson and Minister, I want you to hear this one before we even go that far. I'm glad that the MEC Mthombeni from KwaZulu-Natal is present.

IsiZulu:

Akusikhona eNgcobo laphaya. KwaZulu-Natal kuneNkosi Mqoqi Ngcobo ngenzela ukuthi ufunde Ngqongqoshe ngezinjongo

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zesikhathi esizayo. KuneNkosi uMqoqi Ngcobo endaweni ebizwa ngokuthi kuseMaQadini, kwaNyuswa. Umhabulise kusasa weMthombeni.

English:

Hon Speaker, I stand here today to address Budget Vote No 33. A document that purports to charge the cost for human settlement in our nation. Yet, for the Mkhonto Wesizwe Party, this budget is not a blueprint for progress, but a stark statement to a government that has lost its way. A budget that betrays the very people it claims to serve. We reject this budget, not out of political expediency, but out of a profound commitment to the dignity and wellbeing of every South African.

Let us be clear, hon Speaker. The numbers presented before us paint a grim picture. We are told of fiscal constraints, of necessary adjustments. What do these euphemisms truly mean for millions living in squalor, families cramped into informal settlements, and children who dream of a roof over their heads? They mean a reduced baseline allocation, a shrinking commitment from a government that should be expanding its efforts. The Department of Human Settlement is projected to

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decrease from R34,9 billion in 2025-26 to a mere R27,2 billion by 2028-29, with an overall R81,36 billion over a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, hon Speaker.

This is not a mere reduction. It is a retreat in the face of a deepening crisis. We are particularly alarmed by the so-called reallocation of R19,5 billion from the Urban Settlement Development Grant to a new Urban Development Financing Grant. This is not innovation. It is a shell game, a bureaucratic reshuffling that offers no tangible improvement for our people. It is a continuation of the same flawed approach, merely changing the name of a grant while the fundamental problems of infrastructure management and service delivery persist.

The report itself consists of this transition that simply maintains its previous role. This is not the transformative change our nation desperately needs. The committee's own report highlights the critical issues: increasing demand for housing, rising urbanisation pressures, and persistent backlog in informal settlement upgrading and housing delivery. Yet, in the face of these undeniable realities, the budget shrinks.

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This is a profound disconnect, a failure to grasp the urgency of the situation.

The report suggests that the department must prioritise high-impact intervention, improve expenditure efficiency, and strengthen co-ordination. While these are noble aspirations, they ring hollow when the various resources needed to achieve them are systematically eroded.

We observe that the department functions primarily as a funding intermediary, relying heavily on provinces and municipalities for implementation. This reliance on weak implementing partners is a reason for a disaster, leading to police sophistication outpacing actual delivery, Minister. Our people deserve more than sophisticated policies. They deserve homes, dignity, and a future.

The shift towards a subsidy-led housing model and leveraging private sector financing, while presented as progressive, raises a serious concern for the uMkhonto weSizwe Party. While public-private partnership can play a role, we must act against the commodification of basic human rights. Housing is

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not merely a commodity. It is a fundamental right enshrined in our Constitution.

We fear that this shift will further marginalise the poorest of the poor, those who cannot navigate complex financial instruments and attract private investment. The budget for rental and social housing at R981,2 million, and affordable housing at R596,7 million are described as modest and marginal.

These are not allocations of a government's serious about addressing the housing crisis for all its citizens. Perhaps most damning is the notable exclusion of Amakhosi and traditional leaders from the heart of human settlement planning.

IsiZulu:

Nginyazi ke ukuthi nihlale nikhuluma ngawo kodwa aniwafaki uma kusaqala kuxoxwa nivele nisuke nimbe emhlabeni wawo.

English:

Despite clear and urgent communication on the imperative of involving our traditional authorities, and this budget and

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department's strategy continue to sideline them. This is not just a procedural oversight. It is a strategic failure that ignores the very fabric of our communities. By failing to integrate Amakhosi, the government is cutting itself off from the wisdom, authority, and oversight that are essential for stable and secure development, Minister.

We must confront the brutal reality that housing is not an isolated issue. It is the cornerstone of our social and economic stability. Today, South Africa grapples with the ... [Inaudible.] unemployment rates that have surged to over 32%, with youth unemployment reaching a catastrophic 57%.

There is a direct and undeniable link between the lack of adequate housing and this economic paralysis. When our people are relegated to the margins without a stable base, they are effectively locked out of the economy. This desperation is the breeding ground for crime.

Statistics show that housing inequality explains up to 13% of the increase in criminal offences. By failing to provide homes, this government is effectively subsidising the crime wave that terrorises our communities. Without housing, there

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is no dignity. Without dignity, there is no work. Without work, there is no economic growth, which remains stagnant at a pathetic 0,8 to 1,2 per cent, hon Minister.

The Dube Hostel serves as a tragic and practical example of the consequences of this exclusion. The project was derailed and stalled because the voices of the people and their traditional leaders were not adequately centred. When the state attempts to impose top-down solutions without the guidance of traditional authority, we see areas hijacked by criminal activities, infrastructure falling into ruin, communities left in a state of perpetual insecurities. The ongoing engagement mentioned by the Minister with Izinduna is too late, and it is a reactive measure to a crisis that could have been avoided had traditional leaders been involved from the outset as true partners, hon Minister.

The MK Party stands for the complete liberation of our people, that includes poverty and homelessness. We believe in the state that actively champions the cause of the downtrodden, not the one that retreats from the responsibilities. The budget, which is cut and reallocated, demonstrates a clear

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departure from the liberation mandate that should guide our nation.

It prioritises fiscal control over human dignity, bureaucratic efficiency over the crisis of our suffering. We demand a budget that reflects the true needs of our people. We demand a budget that prioritises the upgrading of informal settlement, not just in rhetoric. But with substantial inflation adjusted increases, we demand a budget that ensures every South African has access to adequate housing, not just those who can navigate complex subsidy schemes and attract private capital. We demand a budget that empowers our communities rather than leaving them at the mercy of inefficient implementing partners. This is not merely a ... [Inaudible.] debate.

It is a moral one. It is about the soul of our nation. The MK Party will not stand idle while the dreams of our people are deferred, while their hopes are crushed under the weight of the budget that fails them.

We call upon all hon members to stand with us and reject this budget, to stand with the people and to demand a future where

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housing is a right, not a privilege. As Mkhonto weSizwe Party, we reject this report. Thank you very much.

Mr C J POOLE: Hon Chairperson, today, on behalf of the DA, we gather to participate in the debate on Budget Vote No 33 – Human Settlements.

Allow me to begin by reaffirming the DA's unwavering commitment to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, particularly section 26, which guarantees every citizen the right of access to adequate housing.

It is therefore deeply concerning that, despite decades of expenditure, policy reform and institutional expansion, millions of South Africans still remain without adequate housing opportunities.

Today, our country faces a housing backlog approaching three million households, a persistent title deeds backlog, the continued expansion of informal settlements, and we are facing a growing frustration in our communities that have waited for decades for dignity, security and ownership.

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The reality confronting South Africans is that crises in human settlements are no longer primarily a policy problem. It is an implementation and accountability problem. Nonperformance, corruption, stalled projects and weak oversight have become legacy problems within the sector.

These failures have not merely wasted public funds. They have stolen opportunities from millions of families who have waited patiently for years to become homeowners. This was evident during numerous oversight visits conducted by the portfolio committee across provinces and municipalities.

Communities repeatedly raised concerns about blocked projects, incomplete developments, illegal land occupation and weak enforcement mechanisms. The growing calls for amendments to the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act reflect the frustrations of municipalities and law-abiding citizens alike.

In this regard, we acknowledge the efforts of hon Emma Powell through her ... Member's Bill aimed at addressing weaknesses within the current legislative framework and improving the state's ability to respond effectively to illegal land

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occupation. We welcome the department's taking up of hon Powell's proposal.

The draft report on Budget Vote No 33 presents a comprehensive assessment of the department and its entities within a severely constrained fiscal environment. While the report acknowledges that the department's policies are broadly aligned with the Constitution, the National Development Plan, the Medium-Term Development Plan and the priorities outlined in Sona 2026, it makes one thing abundantly clear. The greatest threat to housing delivery is no longer policy direction. It is weak implementation, capacity and poor delivery execution.

Over our democracy, the department's budget has grown by almost tenfold, from around 4 billion in 1999 to more than 32 billion today.

Despite an exponential budget increase, delivery has declined. Our economy no longer has the privilege of throwing money around. We must make do with what we have and it is more than enough as 94% of the budget remains transfer based and dependent on provinces and municipalities for implementation.

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Delivery is vital and should there be failures, we will lay them at the feet of the Minister.

We cannot expect more delivery from institutions that already lack the capacity to spend effectively and implement consistently. If capacity is doubtful, we will throw money down the drain.

South Africans require scalable delivery, not isolated pilot projects and conferences that fail to translate into houses on the ground.

The entities supporting the department, including the Social Housing Regulatory Authority, SHRA, the National Housing Finance Corporation, NHFC, the National Home Builders Registration Council, NHBRC, the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority, PPRA, the Community Schemes Ombud Service, CSOS, and the Housing Development Agency, HDA, remain strategically important. However, each continues to face structural constraints, ranging from funding pressures, operational delays to information and communications technology, ICT, inefficiencies and inspection weaknesses.

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This is why the committee's recommendations are so important. The report makes important propositions, namely real-time housing delivery monitoring systems, performance-based funding linked to outcomes, a national intervention unit for stalled projects, strengthened consequence management and improved intergovernmental co-ordination mechanisms. These are necessary interventions because South Africans do not live in annual performance plans or policy documents. South Africans live in informal settlements, overcrowded backyards and incomplete developments, while waiting for opportunity and dignity.

The DA will continue to exercise robust oversight and hold the department accountable to the constitutional obligations imposed upon the state. We will continue to ask difficult questions because millions of South Africans are still waiting for the dignity of a home, the security of ownership, and the opportunity to build stable families and communities.

The time for incremental progress has passed. What South Africans now require is urgency, accountability and delivery at scale. I thank you.

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Afrikaans:

Baie dankie.

IsiZulu:

Nk M DLAMINI: Angibonge Sihlalo, ngithanda ukubingelela umkhuzi omkhulu, umongameli Julius Malema, ngibingelele kuma- ...

English:

... commissars, fighters and all ground forces. Before I begin ... the DA must decide whether it's government or opposition. You can't come here and grandstand, and speak as if you are in the opposition benches. It's either you come with solutions when you come here or you speak like ... opposition. Make up your minds.

The EFF rejects this budget. The housing crisis facing the poor, the landless, rural communities, flood victims and the youth of South Africa is such that it requires an urgent, co-ordinated effort by the government led by this department.

This will not be achieved through austerity budgets, Minister. If the government starts thinking that it has to play an ever-shrinking role in matters affecting our people, it can kiss

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its constituent legitimacy goodbye. What is immediately clear from this budget is that the department has completely failed to use housing as an instrument to reverse the historic injustice of land dispossession, apartheid spatial planning and economic exclusion.

Thirty-two years into democracy, black people are still pushed to the outskirts of cities far from economic opportunities, schools, health care facilities and public transport. Rural communities remain abandoned, underdeveloped and invisible. In the plans of this department, young people, despite suffering the worst housing conditions in this country, continue to be excluded from housing opportunities because this government has no radical plan for youth-owned housing development, youth contractors or youth access to land and property ownership.

The department has failed to protect vulnerable communities from environmental injustice and corporate recklessness. The community of eMaphepheni Ward 8, under the Mkhondo Local Municipality, is exposed daily to toxic chemical fumes released by PG Bison. The toxic fumes are destroying roofs, window frames and door frames through rust and corrosion. If these chemicals can destroy metal structures, they can

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undoubtedly destroy the lungs and health of our people, particularly children, infants and the elderly.

The existence of a chemical waste dam built by PG Bison next to the community, only metres away from the N2 highway, is a scandal and a direct attack on the lives of black working-class communities.

The silence of the Department of Human Settlements on ... matters exposes its cowardice and unwillingness to protect the communities from corporations that are sacrificing the lives of our communities. Human settlements cannot exist where communities are poisoned daily by industrial pollution and environmental racism.

The EFF further condemns the continued delays in assisting flood victims who remain trapped in temporary emergency housing accommodation years after disasters have destroyed their homes. Government cannot normalise permanent suffering for disaster victims while billions are wasted through corruption, outsourcing and failed housing projects.

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The EFF notes the progressive work under the leadership of the EFF in eThekweni's Human Settlements portfolio, which demonstrates what a people-centred government looks like.

Under the EFF's leadership, the KwaMakhutha Hostel refurbishment project is transforming apartheid-style hostels into dignified family housing units.

The Donnelly Road ... project in Bluff has delivered community residential units and expanded rental stock for working-class communities. Residential community units ... [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Dlamini? Hon members, let us not drown ... No, hon members, let us not drown out the speaker on the podium, please. No, but this is your member as well, so you can't be drowning ... Can you not drown out the speaker on the podium, please? Hon Dugmore?

Mr C M DUGMORE: House Chair, I would just like to ask whether the speaker is prepared to answer a question about the promised houses that were never built by the EFF.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Dugmore, you do not ask the question. You request if the speaker will be able to. Hon Dlamini, are you able to take a question?

Ms M DLAMINI: I'm busy with my speech here. Under the capable leadership of the MMC in eThekweni, the residential community units in Umlazi T-section have been completed to restore dignity to poor residents. The Cornubia Phase 2A South project in Ward 103 successfully delivered and allocated 113 Breaking New Ground houses to flood victims.

Civic infrastructure work is currently underway to ensure that more flood victims still trapped in temporary emergency accommodation can finally access proper housing. These interventions prove that when resources are placed in the hands of revolutionary leadership, delivery becomes possible. And there will be no erasure of the work of the EFF in eThekweni.

However, the current funding model for the refurbishment of hostels continues to delay the completion of critical projects and undermines the transformation of human apartheid hostel systems.

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The EFF therefore calls for increased allocations towards the Urban Settlements Development Grant and the Informal Settlements Upgrading Partnership Grant because eThekweni has consistently spent 100% of these grants over the past five consecutive years.

The EFF further condemns the department for delaying the release of the forensic reports into the Communicare and broader social housing sector.

Companies that benefitted from apartheid-era social housing support are now hiding behind private ownership, while evicting poor black tenants through unaffordable rental increases. Social housing has been turned into a profit-making scheme against the poor, instead of being a tool for affordable urban accommodation. The department's failure to intervene against exploitative rental practices exposes its complete abandonment of working-class people.

The EFF will state again that housing is not charity. Housing is a constitutional right and a revolutionary tool for restoring dignity, land justice and economic freedom.

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The EFF rejects this budget because it protects corporations, delays justice for flood victims, neglects rural communities, excludes young people and fails to fundamentally transform apartheid spatial injustice.

The EFF demands radical investment in quality public housing, rural development, environmental justice, youth participation. The EFF rejects this Budget Vote. Thank you.

Ms C M PHIRI: It's not a new thing, Mbali. We knew you were going to reject ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Phiri, you are not recognised. Can you not unmute please? If you do that again, I will ask IT to remove you from the platform.

Mr A K NGOBESE: Hon House Chair or progressive House Chair ...
[Laughter.]. Housing plays an essential role in shaping citizens' quality of life. The environment we live in determines what schools we go to, our access to clinics, the job opportunities available to us and everything in between.

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The IFP welcomes this debate on Budget Vote 33 as an opportunity to enhance the quality of housing across the country. We welcome this department's commitment to creating an equitable national housing landscape. We are pleased that this has been translated into the budget allocation by granting the largest portion of funds to Programme 2, which revolves around housing subsidies and land development.

This indicates the significant commitment to enhancing the quality of human settlements across the country. However, hon House Chair, we strongly emphasise that this funding is only impactful insofar as it's translated into practical action. Consequently, we note with concern the lack of detail surrounding the informal settlement upgrades. Although this constitutes the second largest portion of the budget, with R7 billion granted to informal settlement upgrades under Programme Phase 3, there is a lack of a measurable outcome regarding the progress.

We propose the implementation of practical quantification results through initiatives like turnkey housing development. Informal settlement dwellers are one of our country's most vulnerable demographics and it is essential that we take every

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possible step to grant them safe housing. Similarly, we appreciate the department's policy focus on alternative housing delivery models. However, we advocate for a shift away from abstract planning towards tangible solutions. For example, the IFP has long advocated for alternative solutions like self-help home building by building service sites that will allow low-income communities to build their own housing. The department will accelerate its goal of providing equitable housing for all as set out in the medium-term development plan.

While it is vital to openly protect the vulnerable demographics like rural and informal dwellers, we must ensure that the "gap market" does not go neglected. Consequently, we particularly welcome the allocation of R596 million towards housing finance for demographics but urge the department to strengthen the practical protection established.

We strongly advocate that the maximum qualifying income for subsidy housing is increased from R3 500 to R5 500. This increase will allow the department to identify and support more citizens who desperately require additional assistance to maintain a sustainable quality of housing. We note the lack of

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allocation related to the housing partnership with the private sector and emphasise the value that it can offer South African citizens. For instance, public-private collaboration can facilitate initiatives like rent-to-own schemes, which will allow more poor citizens to better their socioeconomic position by becoming homeowners. We strongly encourage the department to funnel more attention to resources towards the immense potential that private-sector partnerships hold.

The IFP supports Vote 33. I thank you.

Mr S H M VAN WYK: Greetings, Chairperson. Progressive, our Chairperson! Greetings, Minister Simelane, our Deputy Minister, hon members and allow me to also greet the incoming president of the Republic, hon Gayton McKenzie, in 2029.

President Gayton McKenzie, you must get used to it.

[Interjections.]

Today, I rise on behalf of the PA to support Vote 33, not because we are happy, Minister, but because we don't want our people to wait another 30 years on the housing list.

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Hon Minister, you have done very good in a short space of time. You are performing well and you are addressing serious problems, hon Minister. But I must raise a very sensitive issue, Minister. You know, since 1994 up until now, nobody ever spoke for the marginalised, and I am specific when I say the so-called coloured people in this country, here in Parliament.

We have places like Eldorado Park, Heidedal, Kimberley, Platfontein and so forth. You spoke earlier about Mama Mlambo; I am very happy for her and the work that you have done. But do you know how many other mothers there are in Platfontein, outside Kimberley? Nothing has ever been done for them in terms of housing, hon Minister.

In Heidedal, for example, you have the first rollout of the Breaking New Ground, BNG project, hon Minister, was done in Heidedal, but our people still don't have the title deeds. Grandmothers and grandfathers were celebrating for their houses. They were very happy but, unfortunately, they have passed on without the title deeds.

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I am here to come and ask for one simple thing, hon Minister. Could you also just zoom in, in so-called coloured communities, when it comes to title deeds and more housing. Furthermore, when you look at the contractors that are appointed to build houses, the so-called coloured contractors don't get an opportunity. Minister, please look into that one as well.

It doesn't help that I'm going to come and read this long speech here, Minister. I think today is just to come here, acknowledge the work that your department is doing, say thank you to you, and request humbly for you to assist us. I would have thought that the DA would have come here and spoken on behalf of the so-called coloured people, because it's the so-called coloured votes that have put them here since 2004. But they are doing nothing, absolutely nothing for so-called coloured people. What they are really doing is confining them ... [Interjections.] ... thank you very much, Minister.

It's my partner there in the Government of National Unity, GNU. In here, I will hold them accountable. The fact of the matter is, they are supposed to take care of their voters; they don't. Minister, I am standing here on behalf, without

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fear or any favour, I'm speaking on behalf of the so-called coloured people today when it comes to housing.

Afrikaans:

Julle, dan gwaza hulle. Julle moet kyk. Salut.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you very much ...
[Interjections.]

Mr N MADUNA: Who appointed you to be the spokesperson of coloured people?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Maduna, I'm cautioning you for the last time. You do that again; I'm going to ask IT to remove you.

I will now recognise hon Van Staden.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Hon House Chairperson, I think we need to ask the question: What is the purpose of providing housing to the poor. It is first of all, to give poor people dignity and

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secondly, provide them a roof over their heads. Thirdly, we are required by the Constitution to provide them housing.

However, illegal land occupation as well as the misuse of subsidised housing including the unlawful sale and rental of Reconstruction and Development Programme, RDP, houses remain a long-standing problem dating back to the early years of democracy in 1994. Over many years, I have personally witnessed how people work very hard in communities to build these houses for the poor only for beneficiaries to sell them for a few thousand rand after handover. I have said many years ago in my days as a counsellor in Tshwane Metro, when I was serving on that portfolio there, that beneficiaries must either be contract-bound with the specific clause or we must work on other interventions to stop this. A house cannot be sold for a few thousand rand for a case of beer after it was handed over to these people.

Earlier this month, the MEC for Human Settlements in KwaZulu-Natal revealed the existence of an alleged criminal syndicates linked to the illegal sale of RDP houses. Government subsidised homes intended for South African beneficiaries were reportedly occupied by undocumented foreign nationals, with

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properties being transferred through unauthorised third parties, bypassing official Housing Subsidy System procedures. Furthermore, extensive fraud linked to the Flood Disaster Relief Fund has also been uncovered.

Now complaints from communities across various municipalities about being unlawfully removed from housing waiting lists are not new, but they remain a serious and widespread issue. It is time for decisive action. Officials implicated in these practices must be held accountable, arrested, charged, and brought to justice.

Measures should be enforced on provinces and municipalities to completely stop these sorts of practices. This is an ongoing practice. I have seen it in many, many years. The beneficiaries are on the waiting list for 10 to 20 years. They are on top of the list they are next to be handed a house and someone in front and take that house because a certain official in a municipality or a province helped that person to bypass the waiting list. This needs serious attention once and for all.

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Hon House Chairperson, the overall reduction in budget allocation compared to the previous financial year, together with the reallocation of funds, has resulted in a decrease in the department's baseline funding despite the significant and growing demand in the housing sector.

The continued expansion of informal settlements across the country remains a serious problem. In addition, housing projects that are stalled or left incomplete further exacerbate the crisis. The committee's observation regarding the persistent challenges in coordination between national, provincial, and municipal spheres of government is 100% accurate. Weak planning and limited institutional capacity continue to undermine the effectiveness of the human settlements Programme. I thank you, hon House Chairperson.

Ms M P KOBE: Good morning progressive House Chairperson. I would like to greet you and greet South Africans who are joining us on the online platform.

Yes, progressive House Chairperson. She was called like that earlier.

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Hon House Chairperson, across our country, families continue to live in overcrowded informal settlements, backyard structures and unsafe conditions while waiting years and sometimes decades for decent housing. Every election cycle they hear promises, every budget cycle they hear commitments, yet many are still waiting.

The committee report rightly acknowledges the growing pressure facing the housing settlement sector. Housing demands continue to rise, informal settlements continue to expand and urbanisation is increasing. At the same time the department is expected to do more with fewer resources.

However, South Africans are not interested in excuses. They want delivery. What concerns ActionSA is that many of the challenges that are identified in this very report are not new. They are still talking about blocked projects, delayed developments, weak co-ordination between spheres of government, illegal land occupation and governance failures within entities.

These issues have appeared report after report, yet communities continue to bare the consequences. The people of

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South Africa are not experiencing housing through strategic plans and annual performance targets. They experience it through leaking roofs, unsafe structures, broken sanitation systems and years of spending time on waiting list with no communication from this government.

As ActionSA we believe that housing delivery must place people right at the centre. We must release well located state-owned land for development. We must accelerate title deed transfers so that beneficiaries become true property owners. We must support affordable rental housing and create opportunities for families who earn too much to qualify for government housing but too little to access traditional housing finance.

Most importantly, government must stop measuring success by budget spent and start measuring it by the outcomes that are delivered. For example: How many families have received title deeds? How many blocked projects have been completed? How many informal settlements were upgraded? And how many young people particularly woman-owned businesses have participated meaningfully in housing projects? These are the questions that communities are asking.

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Hon House Chairperson, housing is about far more than bricks and water, it is about dignity, it is about safety and it is about creating communities where people can land live closer to economic opportunities and build a better future for their children.

As ActionSA we support stronger oversight of the department and its entities, improved accountability for underperformance and practical interventions that prioritise delivery over bureaucracy. South Africans have waited long enough. They deserve a government that build houses and not excuses. It for these reasons that we will not be supporting this Budget Vote. I thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Hon House Chairperson, hon Minister of Human Settlements, Ms Thembi Simelane, the Director-General, DG, of the Human Settlement Department, Dr Alec Moemi, Members of the Executive Councils from different provinces, the House Chairperson hon Seabi, members of the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements, and hon Members of Parliament, fellow South Africans...

IsiXhosa:

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... mandinibulise ngale njikalanga.

English:

Today, as we gather beneath the democratic mantle of this August House, South Africa marks thirty years since the adoption of our democratic Constitution, 50 years since the historic Soweto Youth Uprising of 1976, and 70 years since the historic Women's March of 1956. These defining milestones remind us that the struggle for freedom has always been inseparable from the struggle for dignity, land, shelter, and inclusion.

Human Settlements therefore remains one of the most powerful instruments of social and economic transformation, through which government continues to dismantle apartheid spatial patterns, expand access to opportunity, and empower women, youth, and emerging enterprises to participate meaningfully in rebuilding our nation.

At its core, the work of Human Settlements is about reversing the legacy of exclusion and inequality imposed by apartheid. It is about ensuring that poor and working-class communities are no longer pushed to the margins of development, but are

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integrated into centres of opportunity, economic participation, and democratic life.

Hon members, As we debate Budget Vote 33, our hearts remain with the families affected by devastating floods and severe weather conditions across parts of the country, particularly in the Western Cape. It would be remiss of me not to place on record our appreciation to the officials of the National Department of Human Settlements, who acted with urgency and compassion, cutting through bureaucratic delays to bring relief to affected communities.

We equally extend our gratitude to the Gift of the Givers for their continued humanitarian support through the provision of hot meals, blankets, and clothing to vulnerable households. These disasters are a stark reminder that climate change is no longer a distant threat. It is a lived reality confronting poor and vulnerable communities every day.

Through the Emergency Housing Programme, we continue to provide temporary accommodation, relocation support, and the restoration of damaged structures. Beyond emergency response, however, our responsibility is to build climate resilient

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human settlements capable of withstanding future disasters and protecting the dignity of our people.

Through Innovative Building Technologies, the Department of Human Settlements is embracing faster, safer, and more sustainable methods of construction. The recent Innovative Building Technologies Summit confirmed that these technologies are no longer experimental alternatives, but a necessary component of modern housing delivery.

Government is now institutionalising these technologies within the mainstream human settlements programme to accelerate delivery, strengthen disaster response capability, support localisation, and create economic opportunities for women, youth, and emerging enterprises.

The value of these technologies has already been demonstrated in practice. In Limpopo, two Innovative Building Technology houses withstood severe disaster conditions that destroyed surrounding structures, providing safety and protection to the families who occupied them. These experiences continue to affirm the resilience, durability, and future potential of

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Innovative Building Technologies in building climate resilient human settlements for vulnerable communities.

We are encouraged by recent progress in KwaZulu Natal under the stewardship of Member of the Executive Council, MEC Sboniso Duma, Mthombeni. Following the commitment made by all three spheres of government to provide permanent solutions for victims of the 2002 floods, tangible progress is now being realised.

Last week, we witnessed the relocation of 113 households from Transitional Emergency Accommodation into permanent homes in Cornubia. These are families who endured immense hardship following the floods of 2002.

Plans are further underway to complete an additional 450 houses in Cornubia by March 2027. To reduce over reliance on the private sector in disaster response interventions, the department, through the Housing Development Agency, acquired the Transnet owned Montclair Lodge facility. Its refurbishment and operationalisation will provide dignified emergency accommodation while strengthening the province's preparedness

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and response capability in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather patterns affecting our country.

Despite a constrained fiscal environment and reductions across parts of the Human Settlements budget, we remain firmly focused on delivery, implementation, and accountability.

Our people do not live in policy documents or reports. They live in communities. They wait for houses, serviced sites, title deeds, water, sanitation, electricity, and safe living conditions. For the 2026-27 financial year, we will accelerate delivery across the entire human settlements value chain, including the completion of more than 38 000 housing opportunities and over 25 000 serviced sites across provinces and municipalities.

The Department of Human Settlements is also intensifying efforts to unblock blocked housing projects. A blocked project represents more than delayed construction. It represents delayed dignity, trapped public resources, and broken promises to communities. We must therefore move projects from planning to occupation with urgency, discipline, and consequence

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management where necessary. Thus, our ... [Inaudible.] ... took a decisive decision in this regard.

Hon members, we remain committed to the upgrading of informal settlements through the Informal Settlements Upgrading Partnership Grant. This programme is not merely about infrastructure provision. It is about restoring dignity, strengthening social cohesion, and ensuring that poor communities are not excluded from opportunity and development. Title deed restoration remains central to the programme of spatial justice and economic empowerment.

Through the Title Deeds Friday Campaign, the department has handed over more than 81 000 title deeds to beneficiaries across the country. A title deed is not simply a document. It is security, ownership, dignity, and generational wealth.

Hon members, The Social Housing Regulatory Authority SHRA, continues to demonstrate that affordable rental housing is central to spatial justice and inclusive economic growth.

During the year under review, SHRA delivered more than 3 000 social housing units and facilitated over 12 000 job

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opportunities, while expanding access to dignified rental accommodation for working class South Africans.

A few weeks ago, in Mitchells Plain we launched housing units. This was the official launch of the third phase of the Regent villas Extension 2 Social Housing Project standing as a reminder that our democratic mandate must always find expression in the lived realities of our communities.

We continue to build communities where working-class families can live with dignity, closer to opportunities, services, and a better future. This was especially evident in the story of a young family, both parents just less than 30 years old, who had recently moved into their new home with their one-year-old daughter a moment that truly embodied the impact of this project.

This the reason why the hon members must support Budget Vote 33. This budget is therefore not merely an allocation of resources. It is an investment in dignity, transformation, and the future of our people.

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As the late Joe Slovo reminded us, it is not enough to remove the shuttles. We must build the new structures. And therefore, the struggle for housing justice has always been deeply political. It is about restoring humanity to those who apartheid, sought to dispossess and marginalise. It is about affirming that the children of the poor deserve safe, dignified, and ownership and hope. Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson.

Ms B M KEGAKILWE: Hon Chairperson ...

Setswana:

... багаetsho ke a lo dumedisa lotlhe.

English:

Hon Chairperson, human settlement in South Africa continues to reflect the deep structural inequalities inherited from apartheid.

Although approximately 83% of households in metropolitan areas live in formal housing, more than 5 million people still reside in informal settlements, where communities face overcrowding, service delivery backlog, unemployment and

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growing vulnerability to climate-related disasters such as the recent floods experienced across several provinces.

The national housing backlog remains estimated at nearly 3 million units, driven by rapid urbanisation, population growth and fiscal constraints. In pursuit of their constitutional right to adequate housing and sustainable human settlement, government has developed a range of policies and programmes over the years.

The Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlement, approved in 2004, together with the revised Housing Code of 2009, shifted the focus from simply providing shelter to building sustainable communities and supporting a functional residential property market.

The Housing Code expanded access to housing opportunities and basic services for low-income households, while promoting improved quality location and ownership options.

In addition, Chapter 8 of the National Development Plan, NDP, provides for a long-term framework for achieving sustainable human settlement by 2030.

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Chairperson, the ANC-led government continues to address the legacy of apartheid's spatial planning, which deliberately excluded black South Africans ...

Setswana:

... lona ba MKP ...

English:

... from economic centres and confined many communities to underdeveloped peripheral areas.

Despite progress since 1994, many citizens still live far from employment opportunities, schools, healthcare facilities and transport network.

The Department of Human Settlement, therefore, continues to prioritise spatial transformation, integrated development and the dismantling of poverty traps through inclusive planning.

Since 1994, Chairperson, this ANC-led government has delivered approximately 5 million houses ...

Setswana:

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... ko boGamede ...

English:

... benefiting more than 20 million South Africans.

Importantly, the focus has evolved from simply building houses to creating integrated and economically viable communities where people can live ... [Interjections.] ... Mbali?
[Laughter.] ...

Housing demands patterns continue to differ across provinces while ownership remains a high ...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms L S Makhubela): Hon Kegakilwe, the is honourable, you do not refer to a member by their first name in the House, and you should withdraw that!

Ms B M KEGAKILWE: Hon Mbali.

Housing demands patterns continue to differ across provinces while homeownership remains high in provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga; rental demand, particularly in Gauteng and Western Cape, due to urban migration.

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In this regard, the National Housing Finance Corporation plays an important role in expanding access to affordable housing finances. Its long-term objective is to become a fully-fledged human settlement development bank capable of stimulating investment, transforming the sector and improving financial sustainability. I think it answers you, hon Kobe.

Chairperson, the informal settlement upgrading partnership remains one of the most important interventions in addressing the growth of informal settlement and the pressures created by urban migration.

Over the medium-term the department aims to upgrade 4 075 informal settlements through the implementation of the National Housing Code, including the provision of secure tenure, engineering structures, basic services, and community-based livelihood opportunities.

The ANC notes with concern that the 2026-27 allocation for informal settlement declines in both nominal and real terms.

Compared to the adjusted allocation of 2025-26 ...

[Interjections.] ...

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Setswana:

... wa ntshwenya ...

English:

... this reduction in transfer and subsidies to municipalities and provinces comes at a time when the demand for informal settlement upgrading continues to increase.

Hon members, the National Home Builders Registration Council continues to play a critical role in protecting housing consumers through the regulation of the home building industry and the administration of the warranty fund ... [Time expired.] ... thank you. ANC supports the vote.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, the ACDP notes the portfolio committee's comments about departmental challenges due to fiscal constraints, slow title deed registration and uneven provincial performance. The department also seemed incapable of effectively implementing its Special Housing Needs Policy, which is a great shame.

The ACDP recently received a concerning email from a constituent stating that while the Special Housing Needs

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Policy was approved in 2022, there is little to show for it; leaving those most vulnerable, including orphans, the elderly, and victims of domestic abuse and violence without hope for better living conditions.

She advised that since 2024, 12 special housing needs funding applications have been submitted by them, but to date, none have been processed or approved.

The Department of Human Settlement appears to be stalling the implementation of the programme, she says, and there has been no public announcement that the Special Housing Needs Policy has been approved. In addition, just two of our nine provinces have been briefed on the Special Housing Needs Policy by the department since 2024, despite provincial departments' requests.

The department has also failed to adjust the special housing needs grant calculator with a percentage increase required to cover escalation costs. Without that, we are told that provinces are unable to process applications, and it is the second year that provinces have failed to add these projects to their budgets.

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Lastly, our constituent is deeply concerned that the department's lack of response may cause their donor funding timelines to lapse. This would be very detrimental to the vulnerable they hope to assist.

House Chairperson, I want to personally urge the Minister to investigate the points raised here and ensure that the Special Housing Needs Policy is fully implemented and be able to make a difference for as many people as possible. I thank you, House Chairperson.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu, ...

English:

I think people are expecting me not to congratulate Orlando Pirates for being the three-time treble champions of South Africa. Let's congratulate them once again. As long as we have a platform, we'll continue to congratulate Orlando Pirates.

Minister, South Africa does not have a housing crisis because we lack land as a country. What we have as a challenge is urban land for residential purposes, primarily due to urban

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migration. Available, well-located urban land, unfortunately, has been captured by profit, speculation, and exclusion.

Today, land in our urban centres has become so expensive that ordinary South Africans are locked out of the cities they built with their labour every day. And while families are squeezed into overcrowded informal settlements, rental prices continue to spiral out of control. This is our current reality, and this department and this budget must ensure that its grants are not only for homes being built, but also the reversal of our apartheid geography.

The biggest injustice facing poor and working-class people today is not only homelessness, but also displacement. Human Settlements cannot simply mean houses on the outskirts of cities with no clinics, no transport, no safety, no economic opportunity, because that is not dignity. That is spatial apartheid wearing a democratic mask.

As RISE Mzansi, we believe that public land in our cities must be released for affordable housing. We need mixed-income communities close to economic opportunities. We need dignified

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urban settlements with water, sanitation, electricity, clinics, schools, parks, and reliable transport.

This department has got a mandate to undo spatial apartheid and to give effect to the constitutional duty to ensure that everyone has got access to a safe home. A keyway that this department needs to do is to actually relook at how the Human Settlements Development Grant, HSDG and the Urban Settlements Development Grant, USDG, grants are being used to address the rapid migration into urban centres.

The unsustainable state of our cities also makes the role of Social Housing Regulatory Authority, SHRA, more important than ever. Social Housing Regulatory Authority has unfortunately become a toothless dog that promotes the interests of private social housing institutions over that of vulnerable people meant to benefit from social housing. Grant recipients are being left without electricity, and our elderly are subjected to inhumane roles in government-supported social housing. So, that's what we want this department to address.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

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English:

Once and always. We will support on the 23rd, not today.

Mr L MPHITHI: Chairperson, hon Minister, hon chairperson of the portfolio committee and hon members. I'd like to maybe start by saying that today we debate Vote 33 of the Human Settlements Budget, which for many South Africans is a pivotal budget that stands between themselves and dignity.

Across the length and breadth of South Africa, many people remain destitute and without the dignity promised in our Constitution under section 26. This right quite frankly remains unfulfilled.

Hon members, it is incumbent upon all of us to see the realisation of this right for the people of this country. The hon Dlamini mentions in her address that we must decide as the DA whether we are in opposition or part of the Government of National Unity, GNU.

We will remain a critical party that will speak against what we see being done wrong until there's actually an opposition in this Parliament that can fill the DA's shoes.

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Chimamanda Ngozi speaks about a single story and its dangers. Today, we have heard various stories from a number of members of this House who have spoken on this platform, stories of great progress, targets being made to progress that is still seemingly on the way.

Simultaneously while hearing these stories are the millions of stories of South Africans who remain out of this conversation, who remain unrepresented, uncaptured and who remain unseen by the very stories that we speak of today.

The jargon thrown around in these debates leaves us in this room feeling better, laughing, applauding but forgetting the many of millions of South Africans who remain outside of these very stories that we hear. This democracy is not alive for them.

We nod, we clap, we joke but the truth of the matter is there's millions of South Africans whose stories still have not found expression in this House. The national Department of Human Settlements is the main vehicle of the resource for the delivery of integrated sustainable human settlements nationwide and it is incumbent upon this department to

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prioritise the dignity of South Africans who continue to suffer the indignity and the brutality of lack of shelter.

We cannot legislate the problems we have away as a country and as this department and so I'd like to say thank you to the hon Minister for taking a brave step of amending the Promotion of Access to Information Act which is a deeply needed action by the Department of Human Settlements.

We are seeing a very dangerous behaviour in our country of people taking land and occupying hijacked buildings illegally and this is speaking to what we are clearly seeing of the slow delivery of housing throughout the many years of our country.

We are also concerned about the selling of Breaking New Ground, BNG, houses. Minister, we note that many South Africans who are beneficiaries of these houses are selling them and moving back to informal settlements. This is not solving the problem but creating a further problem in our country.

We continue to worry that informal settlements are growing at a rapid rate in our country. This is something that should all

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concern us. Though government is delivering free housing, we are seeing that the problem of informal settlements continues to grow. This is a huge concern.

While we sit in this House, we need to be mindful that many South Africans continue to wait for the housing list to be digitised. That is an issue that was tabled in the sixth administration. It continues to be a problem in the seventh administration. We call on your department to please prioritise the fast pace of the digitisation of the housing list.

We also ask that the title deeds be expedited as much as possible because the title deed does speak to the dignity of South Africans and of the people of this country. We continue to be worried about lifestyle audits which the DA has asked for to be given for housing inspectors who continue to receive back-ended payments for approving low-quality housing and housing that does not meet the standard of our country.

These lifestyle audits remain fundamentally important to ensure that the housing that South Africans are offered

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through social housing, through Breaking New Ground housing, is of quality and of the dignity that South Africans deserve.

Minister, we speak further to the issues about abandoned projects, which is something we mentioned in the portfolio committee, to say that the increase of abandoned projects in our country is something that should all concern us. We have contractors who continue to benefit for building literally nothing and have received money and payments on this basis. We ask that the department focuses primarily on the abandonment of housing projects and ensure that these abandoned projects and the contractors who are responsible for these contracts and these abandoned projects are facing the law and that they never do business with the Department of Human Settlements going forward.

We remain concerned about the legal fees that are used up by the entities. There are far too many legal fees being spent by the entities and we remain concerned about that. We also would like to ask the Minister to be careful about predecessors who continue to have hands in these entities in which they continue to benefit and in time we will expose these

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particular individuals who continue to benefit through the entities. We know who they are and we want them to be exposed.

Minister, I would also ask that you please give us an update on the National Housing Finance Corporation, the NHFC. This is an important entity for our country as it pertains to social housing. This is something that South Africans deserve to know what the department is going to do about the suspended chief executive officer, CEO.

We also ask that we expedite the knowledge and the information related to the National Housing Finance Corporation because this is a fundamentally important intervention in being able to link social housing to those who are unable to afford bonds as it pertains to banks. That particular intervention is fundamentally important to young and up-and-coming homeowners in this country.

I thank you

Mr S L DITHEBE: House Chairperson, hon Minister, Deputy Minister, fellow Members of Parliament, MEC Duma and other MECs online, Director-General, Deputy Director-Generals and

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other executives, heads of our entities and chief executive officers, comrades, friends, fellow South Africans, I rise on behalf of the ANC to declare our firm support for Budget Vote 33 for the Department of Human Settlements and its entities for the 2026-27 financial year.

To the parties in this House that irrationally oppose this budget, I wish to remind you that a bee is designed to create sweetness, structure and sustenance. A fly is naturally drawn to decay and waste. Yes, the black economic empowerment, BEE, that the ANC has built over 5 million houses in the last 31 years, and the metaphorical flies in this House still think these houses and the dignity they confer on the erstwhile homeless people are garbage.

The beneficiaries appreciate and understand the difference between the twisted paradigm of the flies and the forward-looking paradigm of the BEE that is the ANC that continues to create security, comfort and sustenance for millions more.

The BEE that is the ANC will continue to seek dignity, security and a better life for all, especially the workers, the poor and vulnerable. The ANC's 2024 Election Manifesto

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further commits us to building a capable developmental state, accelerating inclusive growth, reducing poverty and expanding the social wage through universal access to quality services, including housing.

Budget 43 gives practical effect to the National Development Plan and the medium-term development plan 2024, 2029. Over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, the government will spend R81,36 billion, including R26,972 billion in the 2026-27 financial year, to drive spatial transformation and improve living conditions for our people.

Hon members, we are acutely cognisant of the severe challenges facing the sector. The tight fiscal envelope, with reductions in baseline allocations driven by the reconfiguration of infrastructure funding and sector grants. At the same time, urbanisation pressures continue to rise, demand for housing is increasing and historical backlogs remain significant.

Hon Poole, we must not wring our hands helplessly. We must develop policy that responds to these inevitable developments of human society. In this difficult environment, the ANC believes we must build a resilient, disciplined and capable

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state. We cannot continue operating with weak entities and persistent operational failures.

The Housing Development Agency, which is intended to become the government developer of choice, cannot fulfil its role while facing structural and operational backlogs. The Housing Development Agency, HAD, must urgently strengthen its internal capacity, fill critical engineering and project management vacancies and eliminate administrative bottlenecks. If it is to lead land release and infrastructure development effectively and indeed build on to what the Minister has indicated are the exploits and achievements of the HDA.

Similarly, all Department of Human Settlements entities, including the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority, PPRA, National Home Builders Registration Council, NHBRC, National Housing Finance Corporation, NHFC, Special Rating Area, SRA and Community Schemes Ombud Service, CSOS must improve governance and operational performance.

The portfolio committee has emphasised that critical vacancies must be filled within 60 days to stabilise these institutions and improve delivery. We must also reduce dependence on

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outsourcing core public functions and instead strengthen in-house technical expertise to combat fronting corruption and poor-quality construction.

One of the most urgent priorities of this budget is the upgrading of informal settlements. Millions of South Africans still live without adequate water, sanitation, electricity and safety. True freedom cannot exist while our people continue to live in such conditions.

Informal settlements therefore received R7 billion in the 2026-27 financial year, making it the second largest component of this budget. The government is shifting from rigid top-down housing approaches towards a more incremental upgrading strategy focused on immediate interventions. These include providing tenure security, rolling out interim basic services and eliminating the title deeds backlog so that families can own and benefit economically from their homes.

A second priority is improving the performance of the Human Settlements Development Grant, HSDG, which remains the department's priority funding instrument at R17,8 billion. Have you heard, hon Kobe? Under Programme 2, historically the

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grant has been undermined by stalled projects with contractor performance and underutilisation. Hear this, hon Dlamini, to address this, the government leverages public-private partnerships and blended finance and rigorously audits funds and restarts housing projects that underperformed or stalled owing to a number of reasons.

Provincial and municipal transfers must be linked to measurable performance outcomes so that funds are not left unused while communities continue waiting. We must therefore strengthen accountability through real-time monitoring.

The ANC firmly, vehemently supports this Budget Vote, and we call on all the metaphorical flies to see structure, swiftness, sustenance.

The BEE, that is the ANC will continue to work for structure, swiftness, sustenance, security and comfort. The ANC supports this Budget Vote. Do not rejoice at what the EFF supposedly does while it appropriates that from the National Revenue Fund. Where else does it get the money. [Time expired.]

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The CHAIRPERSON (Ms L S Makhubela): Order! Order, hon members.
Order!

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, populism without facts can humiliate and embarrass members sometimes. Hon Gamede, Inkhosi Ngcobo Mlambo Traditional Council, Ozwathini Endwedwe, iLembe District is in partnership with the Department of Human Settlements through National Housing Finance Corporation, NFHC, to build houses for ...

IsiZulu:

... khona lapho...

Exactly ...

IsiZulu:

Qhuba nje uyephambili.

English:

Yes. So, you cannot say because Ngcobo is called the way I am calling him, the project does not exist. I am talking about NFHC partnership where houses in a grant between 3 500 to

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22 000 is given to poor people in South Africa in the gap market to build houses that they desire in rural areas.

IsiZulu:

Qhuba nje uyephambili.

English:

It is very easy to not understand government when you have never governed. Grants are conditional. When you are given a grant, it has got its own conditions. You can call it trading services, you can call it International Organisation for Standardisation, ISO.

IsiZulu:

MK ake nime kancane nje ...

English:

... when you have learned to lead, you will know how grants are managed. Hon Dlamini, claim no easy victory ...

IsiZulu:

... ngane kaMa ...

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English:

... disaster grant is allocated to national, it is a condition. The EFF can never respond on disaster issues in any metro. It can only be national government. Claim no easy victories. Claim no easy victories. The same as the EFF MMC who was removed at Ekurhuleni who was unable.

The CHAIRPERSON (Ms L S Makhubela): Hon members, although heckling is allowed, but howling is definitely not allowed. So do not howl at the speaker and also do not drown at the speaker. Can I also warn the hon members of your gestures, those gestures are not allowed, they are unparliamentary. Continue, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: I am saying much as the hon MMC of Ekurhuleni of homeland settlement under the EFF was removed because of no performance, we also have placed hon MMC who has just delivered no less than 900 units in a Benoni close to the station to make sure that social housing is continuing.

The NHBRC, you do not even know your units, I am so amassed. The NHBRC has got a youth development programme running in a

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coloured area in Toekomsrus, my brother, I will take you there. We are training young people through our development and we have chosen the Western Cape, the coloured area, which has been neglected.

About four projects of social housing and the Breaking New Ground, BNG, have already been handed over. We will talk about that. But also, just last week, the Deputy Minister here in Mitchells Plain in a project of Regent villas handed over no less than 400 units to coloureds in the Western Cape.

So, yes, we have got challenges and shortages, but there is no automatic neglect because you are coloured. I appreciate the points that we have made, but we will also make sure we deal with service sites Baba Ngobese and we have also reported, for example, in this area that we have delivered 13 995 to ensure that we enhance that self-help project. Mma Kobe, you would not have heard me name

Sepedi:

... ngwana wa ko gae, ka lebaka la mašata.

English:

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... 212 projects were identified as blocked, 85 have been dealt with, 13 900. I was giving figures. I was not talking annual performance plan, APP. I was giving figures of delivery that has been made by ...

First home, instead of 5 000, we delivered 10 ,856. That is a figure. Those are families. You know, I do not know. Hon Mphithi, I agree with you. Quite a number of the issues that you have raised. We will keep on discussing. But the digitisation, we have already signed the contract with the State Information Technology Agency, Sita, with Minister Malatsi, to roll out and ensure that one, there are pages which tell you who received their houses and who are they. But also, to break down the 3 million that we say is in the waiting list so that me and you and anybody else could be able to monitor.

The ruling from the grave, I cannot comment about it. I am not sure about it. You give me more facts. But the chief executive officer, there will also be progress. A report from the National Treasury is one of the issues you have raised have officially been received. That allows us to start and roll out the disciplinary hearing, which has already happened.

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What is of importance here in supporting this budget beyond and firm is to ensure that the resources that have been allocated are utilised appropriately for the building of houses at the BNG level for ensuring that all our entities are able to roll out.

Hon Dlamini, in the trip and in the budget, money that you took to Brazil to educate you about housing and its development, it is the very same budget today that you do not want to support. In future, when the budget you do not support, it must not give you the capacity and training. You would have not supported. Thank you. [Time expired.]

The CHAIRPERSON (Ms L S Makhubela): Order, hon members. Hon members? Hon members, order. Hon members, the mini-plenary is still in session. You will take those conversations outside the session. Hon members, you are reminded that there is a physical sitting in the House that is scheduled for three o'clock at the dome.

Debate concluded.

The mini-plenary session rose at 11:51.