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HYBRID PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:00.

The Deputy Chairperson (Mr P Govender) took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation.

The Deputy Chairperson announced that the hybrid sitting constituted a sitting of the National Council of Provinces.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr K M MMOIEMANG: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I hereby give notice that on the next sitting day of the Council, I shall move:

That the Council-

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- (1) debates the economic impact of the widespread 2026 foot-and-mouth disease, FMD, outbreak affecting cattle, pigs and goats across seven provinces;
- (2) notes that the 2026 FMD outbreak continues to halt exports of meat and dairy products, leading to billions of rands in losses, impacting farmer revenue, reducing milk yields and increasing livestock management costs; and
- (3) acknowledges the ramped-up vaccination campaigns to curb the spread of the 2026 FMD and the move to declare the 2026 FMD outbreak a national state of disaster to unlock faster co-ordination and resources, highlighting the slow responses and systemic failures that have seen the situation deteriorate from sporadic outbreaks since 2019 to sustain transmission.

I so move, Deputy Chairperson.

Ms T I LEGWASE: Deputy Chairperson, I hereby give notice on behalf of the African National Congress that on the next sitting day of the Council, I shall move:

That the Council-

- (1) debates the R10 000 fine that is imposed by the Department of Employment and Labour on South African employers for each undocumented foreign national in their employ.

The R10 000 fine for every unlawfully employed worker is very low and fails to send a clear message to employers who intentionally violate labour and immigration laws. The penalty, especially in the context of South Africa's severe unemployment crisis, is completely inadequate and will not stop employers from benefitting from cheap labour. I so move.

Ms M KENNEDY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I hereby give notice on behalf of the EFF that on the next sitting day of the Council, I shall move:

That the Council-

- (1) debates a motion declaring student residence as homes;
and

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- (2) further deliberates on the application of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998, PIE, must also apply to protect students from illegal eviction, affirming that tertiary institutions are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of students in accredited or off-campus accommodations.

Thank you.

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Deputy Chairperson, I hereby give notice on behalf of the Freedom Front Plus that on the next sitting day of the Council, I shall move:

That the Council-

- (1) debate the growing surge in the persecution of all religious groups for their faith.

In December 2025, members of the Stilbaai Assembly of God church signed over 85 petitions addressed to the President of the Government of National Unity, with a request to the President and Parliament to strongly condemn the persecution and slaughter of Christians for their faith around the world and specifically,

in Africa. However, not all Christians are persecuted and the need and value of faith and religion in healthy communities have come under threat in a growing secular world.

I will also supply electronic files containing these petitions to the House along with the notice of a motion. I so move. Thank you, Chair.

Mr P NOE: Deputy Chairperson, I hereby give notice on behalf of the African National Congress that on the next sitting day of the Council, I shall move:

That the Council-

- (1) debates broad-based black economic empowerment, BBBEE, and the role it plays in increasing the level of participation of black people in the economy and the affirmative action policies of our country.

BBBEE has played a pivotal role in ensuring that about 500 companies have been involved in around R600 billion in transaction values. BBBEE will continue to have a role to play when more than 80% of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, JSE,

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listed companies are still in the hands of those who have always been advantaged. I so move.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA-ISRAEL 2026 WAR ON IRAN

(Draft Resolution)

Mr K M MMOIEMANG: Deputy Chairperson, I move without notice on behalf of the African National Congress:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with utmost concern the escalating tensions in the Middle East as a joint United States of America-Israeli campaign, characterised as the 2026 Iran War, has triggered what the International Energy Agency calls the largest oil supply disruption in history which resulted in the closure of the Strait of Hormuz blockade, effectively closing one of the vital waterways, which typically handles 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas and continues to threaten regional and global peace and security;

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- (2) notes further that the intensification of hostilities and bombardment, which has resulted in countless losses of human life and destruction of residential buildings, carries serious humanitarian, diplomatic and economic consequences for the people of the Gulf region; and
- (3) calls on the international community, particularly the parties involved, including multilateral institutions and regional partners, to intensify diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalation and peaceful resolutions.

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

TRAGIC DEATH OF NINE-YEAR-OLD CHRIS FOORD

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

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- (1) notes with deep sadness and outrage the tragic death of nine-year-old Chris Foord from Bothaville on 7 February 2026, who was electrocuted due to an exposed electrical cable connected to a municipal streetlight;
- (2) also notes that this tragic incident points to serious failures in municipal maintenance, oversight and compliance with basic safety standards as required in terms of the Constitution, the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- (3) recognises that this preventable tragedy raises urgent concerns regarding the quality of contractors appointed by the Nala Local Municipality, as well as the monitoring of infrastructure maintenance;
- (4) calls on the Nala Local Municipality to submit a detailed report to the NCOP outlining:
 - (a) the contractor responsible for the installation or maintenance of streetlights;

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- (b) the procurement and oversight processes followed;
 - (c) the steps taken to investigate this incident and
 - (d) the consequence management actions to be implemented against officials or service providers found to be negligent;
- (5) also calls on the municipality to outline the measures it will take to ensure that all public infrastructure is safe and compliant to prevent similar tragedies in future;
- (6) expresses our deepest condolences to the family of Chris Foord; and
- (7) further calls on the municipality to provide appropriate support and assistance to the family during this time of profound loss.

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

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PASSING OF REV JESSE JACKSON

(Draft Resolution)

Ms O D MEDUPE: Hon Chair, I move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council—

- (1) notes with sadness that Rev Jesse Jackson, a civil rights leader, a Baptist Church minister and a two-time presidential candidate, passed away at the age of 84, leaving a profound legacy in American social and political life;
- (2) also notes that Rev Jackson walked with Dr Martin Luther King Jr in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and this activism extended internationally, negotiating the release of hostages and advocating for human rights abroad;
- (3) further notes that Rev Jackson ran for the Democratic Party presidential nomination twice, in 1984 and 1988,

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achieving historic successes for a black candidate at the time, winning multiple primaries and caucuses;

(4) Rev Jackson was also one of the very few who were active friends of the oppressed and downtrodden masses in our country until we won our liberation; and

(5) sends our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends at their time of bereavement.

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

ONGOING FAILURES AT DR RUTH SEGOMOTSI MOMPATI DISTRICT

MUNICIPALITY

(Draft Resolution)

Mr M K MONTWEDI: I rise to move without notice on behalf of the

EFF:

That the Council—

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- (1) notes with deep concern the ongoing failure of the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality to fulfil its mandate as a water-service authority;
- (2) despite its responsibility for being ... Greater Taung, Kagisano-Molopo, Naledi, Mamusa and Lekwa-Teemane, the municipality continues to fall short in delivering essential water and sanitation services;
- (3) further notes the serious allegations of procurement irregularities involving the repeated appointment of *HT Pelatona Projects*, including the acceptance of an expired Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, Coida, certificate, the manipulation of tender prices under the guise of an arithmetic error and the company's prior involvement in an irregular upfront payment of more than 17 million in 2021;
- (4) recognises that such irregularities constitute maladministration, favouritism and possible corruption, undermining lawful supply chain management processes and compromising the rights of affected communities;

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- (5) further recognises that the most devastating impact of procurement irregularities is felt by the community that the municipality is meant to serve, and by allowing maladministration and favouritism to take root the municipality betrayed their legal obligations and their residents;
- (6) the EFF calls on the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs to intervene urgently in terms of section 139 of the Constitution to restore proper governance and ensure the delivery of water services in the district;
- (7) the EFF further calls on the President to consider authorising ... [Inaudible.] [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon delegate, your time has expired. The motion will become a notice of motion and be printed in full in the next Order Paper. Thank you.

ONGOING CRISIS IN EASTERN CAPE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

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(Draft Resolution)

Ms A MATSHOBENI: Chair, I move without notice on behalf of the EFF:

That the Council—

- (1) notes the ongoing crisis in the Eastern Cape, where many health care facilities in both rural and urban areas are facing serious challenges which include unsafe and dilapidated infrastructure, limited access to essential medication and treatment, prolonged water shortages at the health care centre in Idutywa, and clinic closures without proper interim arrangements;
- (2) also notes that these challenges place vulnerable patients at serious risk and undermine the constitutional rights of communities to access quality health care services;
- (3) acknowledges that communities in rural areas are the most affected by these failures, often being forced to travel

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long distances or wait long hours to receive medical assistance;

- (4) resolves that the relevant authorities must urgently intervene to address the deteriorating conditions in health care facilities across the Eastern Cape; and
- (5) immediate steps be taken by the ANC government in the Eastern Cape to repair infrastructure and ensure the availability of water, medication and medical equipment.

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

COMMUNITY OF DUNOON LIVES IN FEAR

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

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- (1) notes that the community of Dunoon lives in fear every day;
- (2) also notes that the community of Dunoon remains underpoliced, with a mobile SAPS unit stationed kilometres away from its residents;
- (3) acknowledges that the DA has been petitioning for the placement of a mobile unit closer to the community;
- (4) further acknowledges that despite claims of insufficient resources by Lt-Gen Patekile and the Minister of Police, a fully staffed mobile unit was deployed at the Dunoon recreational centre on Monday, only to be removed again on Tuesday;
- (5) further notes with concern that this deployment coincided with a campaign visit by the Minister of Employment and Labour ahead of next week's Dunoon by-election;
- (6) condemns any abuse of policing resources for political purposes;

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(7) calls on the SAPS to account for this deployment, and to permanently place a mobile unit within Dunoon to ensure consistent visible policing; and

(8) affirms that community safety must never depend on political convenience.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you very much, hon Gotsell. Are there any objections to that motion?

The objection is noted. Hon delegate, an objection has been noted and the motion will not proceed. It will become a notice of motion.

**SA REVENUE SERVICE SECURES EVIDENCE AND ASSETS AGAINST SIX
PEOPLE FOR UNDERDECLARED TAXABLE INCOME**

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

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- (1) notes with a sense of pride that our revenue collection agency, the SA Revenue Service, Sars, executed search, seizure and preservation orders to secure evidence and assets against six people alleged to have underdeclared taxable income exceeding R45 million, resulting in tax prejudice of about R18 million;
- (2) also notes that Sars has been investigating allegations that customs-inspection teams colluded with clearing agents and importers to manipulate physical inspections in exchange for cash bribes;
- (3) further notes that this law enforcement operation demonstrates that Sars is fully behind the National Illicit Economy Disruption Programme announced by the President during Sona; and
- (4) acknowledges all those employees at Sars who are dedicated to that bigger purpose announced by the President and who are resisting large sums of cash to be loyal and to serve the country with pride.

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

GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR ASPIRING PROSECUTORS

(Draft Resolution)

Ms J S MANANISO: Deputy Chair, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with excitement that the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, hosted a graduation ceremony for the latest group of aspiring prosecutors at its head offices in Pretoria on Friday, 27 February 2026;
- (2) also notes that the event celebrated the achievements of more than 70 law graduates who completed a rigorous year-long training program designed to enhance the prosecutorial capacity and improve the effectiveness of the justice system within South Africa;

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- (3) further notes that the NPA continue to evolve and adapt its training methods, ensuring that the new prosecutors are well prepared to meet their ever-changing landscape of South Africa's legal environment; and
- (4) congratulates the aspirant prosecutors on the beginning of their journey towards making a meaningful impact in the South African justice system.

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

**MAKANA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY HAS RECEIVED A DISCLAIMER FROM THE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

(Draft Resolution)

Mr J H P BRITZ: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the DA:

That the Council -

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- (1) notes that the Makana local municipality has received a disclaimer from the Auditor General for the past five consecutive years;
- (2) also notes irregular, unauthorized, and fruitless and wasteful expenditure of R5,25 billion were accumulated over the past five years;
- (3) further notes the James Kanan's Water Treatment Works upgrade has ballooned from R160 million to over R600 million;
- (4) acknowledges that two attempts to dissolve the municipality have stalled on appeal and Makana meets the threshold for mandatory intervention under Section 1395 of the Constitution and Section 136 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, having demonstrated persistent failure to an inability to provide basic services as required under Section 152 of the Constitution;
- (5) resolves that the Provincial Executive of the Eastern Cape Province be called upon to invoke the provisions of Section 1395A and to impose a recovery plan aimed at

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securing the Makana's ability to meet its obligations to provide basic services and financial commitments; and

- (6) failure by the municipality should result in Section 1395B being invoked to dissolve the municipal council if the municipality cannot or does not approve legislative measures to give effect to the recovery plan.

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

**HIGH LEVEL OF CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES ACROSS FIELDS OF GOVERNMENT
UNDER THE GNU**

(Draft Resolution)

Mr E NZIMANDE: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the MKP:

That the Council—

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- (1) notes the high level of corruption activities across spheres of government under the GNU owing to failed control systems and/or to prevent corruption;
- (2) highlights collusion between supply chain managers or management officials, bid adjudication committee, politicians representing the GNU people;
- (3) recognizes the need for clean governance as corruption has negative impact to the citizenry;
- (4) call on this House and the country to condemn the unethical and greedy GNU to stop their corrupt activities;
- (5) acknowledges that unless the corruption when the corrupt GNU is removed from power, the citizens shall never experience value for money in service delivery; and
- (6) affirms our resolve that the GNU is a breeding platform for corruption and concerned about power and nothing else at the expense of citizenry.

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IsiZulu:

Yekelani ukuntshontsha. Siyabonga.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): There being an objection the motion will not proceed and will become a notice of a motion

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT DELIVERED ADDRESS AT THE EASTERN CAPE
TRADITIONAL LEADERS SUMMIT**

(Draft Resolution)

Ms B S MABEBO: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes that on the 10 March 2026, the Deputy President Paul Mashatile delivered the keynote address virtually at the Eastern Cape Traditional Leaders Summit that took place from the 10 to the 11 March 2026 at the East London ICC, Eastern Cape province;

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- (2) also notes that a couple of weeks ago, President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the official opening of the National House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders in Parliament, Cape Town;
- (3) further notes that all the occasions the president stressed the importance of the institution of the traditional leaders in the history, present, and future of South Africa as a united, democratic, and prosperous country in the service of its citizens; and
- (4) takes this opportunity to demonstrate the importance of that institution. The President has delegated the Deputy President to work closely with traditional and Khoisan leaders in addressing issues that they have raised.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): There being an objection, the motion will not proceed and will become a notice of a motion

**ARREST OF THE SUSPECT IN THE MURDER OF WITNESS D, MR MARIUS VAN
DER MERWE**

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(Draft Resolution)

Adv Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council—

- (1) notes with great sense of appreciation the arrest of the suspect in the crucial murder of witness D, Mr Marius van der Merwe;
- (2) also notes that Mr Marius van der Merwe has revealed harrowing accounts of criminality in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Police Department during his testimony at the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry, confirming the allegation made by Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi on July 6 2025;
- (3) further notes that the car that the suspect was driving when he allegedly committed the matter, has been positively identified and linked to him and has since been seen in the position of another person; and

- (4) whilst reaffirming the constitutional right of everyone to be presumed innocent until proven guilty by the courts of law, we call upon this august House to salute our law enforcement agencies in their meticulous and excellent work of tracking and apprehending this suspect.

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

**FINDINGS BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION INTO
SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NORTH WEST**

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

- (1) notes the findings of the South African Human Rights Commission's 2025 Investigations Report into Service Delivery in the North West province, as presented to the Select Committee on Corporate Governance, which

highlights systemic failures in provision of basic services;

- (2) also notes that the report points to a collapse in service delivery, including persistent border shortages, inadequate sanitation and deteriorating infrastructure, which continue to violate the constitutional rights of residents;
- (3) recognises that in terms of Section 154 of the Constitution, provincial government is obliged to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs and to perform their functions;
- (4) expresses serious concern that the North West Department of Co-operative Governance has failed to provide adequate and effective Section 154 support, thereby allowing municipalities to regress despite previous national interventions in terms of Section 100; and
- (5) calls on the MEC for Co-operative Governance and the North West Department of Co-operative Governance to urgently appear before the select committee to account

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for the specific measures taken to fulfil their Section 154 obligations, the reasons for the continued collapse of service delivery in municipalities within the province, the failure to implement sustainable recovery plans following...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you, hon member. Your time has expired. The motion will become a notice of a motion and be printed in the next Order Paper.

BUSTS OF DRUG MULES AT OR TAMBO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

- (1) notes with appreciation the persistent successful busts of drug mules at the OR Tambo International Airport who attempt to smuggle illicit drugs into South Africa;

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- (2) also notes that despite successive busts by law enforcement agencies, these drug syndicates continue unabated with their attempts to smuggle drugs through OR Tambo International Airport;
- (3) further notes that as it is commonly argued by some international experts on illicit drugs, that this is driven by the belief of some organised international drug syndicates that, South Africa is not only a lucrative international market for illicit drugs, but also a strategic international transit to other parts of the world;
- (4) calls upon this august House to salute the men and women in blue and other components of the security sector for their relentless and successful efforts to bust these drug mules; and
- (5) further calls on the Ministers in the security cluster to strengthen the coordination of the security cluster in the fight against illicit drugs, hon Deputy Minister Nel.

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

COMPLETION OF THE MENZI HIGH SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

(Draft Resolution)

Mr M BILLY: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the DA:

That the Council—

- (1) notes the completion of the Menzi High School infrastructure project in Umlazi, KwaZulu-Natal, a critical public works initiative aimed at delivering much-needed educational facilities to learners in the community;
- (2) also notes that the KwaZulu-Natal NCOP delegation has been formally invited to attend the completion celebration, which will take place on Friday, 20 March 2026;

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- (3) recognises that the project had been significantly delayed for nearly two years due to criminal interference by so-called construction mafias, depriving learners of access to proper facilities;
- (4) recalls that the KwaZulu-Natal NCOP delegation identified this project for oversight during Provincial Week in 2024 and undertook an intervention to assess challenges and assist in unblocking its progress;
- (5) acknowledges that through effective parliamentary oversight, collaboration and decisive action, this important project has now been successfully completed and delivered;
- (6) commends the MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure in KwaZulu-Natal, hon Marthinus Meyer, for prioritising this project, working with stakeholders and ensuring its completion despite significant obstacles; and
- (7) affirms that this achievement demonstrates the tangible impact of Parliament in enhancing service delivery,

restoring accountability, and protecting development from criminal disruption.

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

INCREASE IN EXTORTION RELATED GANG VIOLENCE IN CAPE TOWN

(Draft Resolution)

Ms S MASUMPA: Chairperson, I hereby move without notice on behalf of the ANC:

That the Council-

- (1) notes with a sense of disgust the increase in extortion related gang violence in Cape Town and the resultant gruesome videos circulating on social media;
- (2) also notes that Western Cape continues to carry a disproportionate share of gang related violence in South Africa and the rise in attempted murder remains a serious concern;

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- (3) further notes that organized crime, including extortion and firearm driven violence, continues to place immense pressure on vulnerable neighbourhoods; and
- (4) calls on the police to work in collaboration with communities and businesses to identify and isolate perpetrators of this crime.

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

**APPOINTMENT OF ADVOCATE ANDY MOTHIBI AS THE NEW NATIONAL
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTION**

(Draft Resolution)

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

That the Council—

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- (1) notes with pride and appreciation the decision by President Cyril Ramaphosa to appoint Advocate Andy Mothibi as a new National Director of Public Prosecution;
- (2) also notes the illustrious experience and record of success of Advocate Mothibi as a former public prosecutor and the head of private investigation;
- (3) believes that he is bringing a world of experience in the fight against organised crime; and
- (4) call upon this august House to extend his congratulations to Advocate Mothibi as a new Director of Public Prosecution.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): The motion will not be proceeded with and will become a notice of a motion.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND JUSTICE ON THE PROGRESS REPORTS DATED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025 ON THE PROVISIONAL SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OF Mr D NAIR, CHIEF MAGISTRATE AT PRETORIA; Mr E S NZIMANDE, REGIONAL COURT

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PRESIDENT, KWAZULU-NATAL; Ms K BODLANI, REGIONAL MAGISTRATE, UMLAZI; Mr L T MKANSI, REGIONAL MAGISTRATE, BLOEMFONTEIN; Mr A A K SINGH, SENIOR MAGISTRATE, PIETERMARITZBURG; AND Ms R GOVENDER, ADDITIONAL MAGISTRATE, LENYENYE, LIMPOPO SUBMITTED IN TERMS OF SECTION 13(3)(F) OF THE MAGISTRATES ACT, 1993, AND REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON 10 NOVEMBER 2025 FOR CONSIDERATION AND REPORT, DATED 25 FEBRUARY 2026

Ms J S MANANISO: Hon Mathapelo, please, not today. The Magistrate Commission must, in terms of section 13(3)(f) of the Magistrate Act number 90 of 1993, report on the progress made in respect of inquiries against magistrates who have been professionally suspended from office to be submitted to Parliament every three months. The Select Committee on Security and Justice on 3 December 2025, was briefed on the Magistrate Commission's report dated 30 September 2025, in respect of the following magistrates as alluded by the Deputy Chairperson.

Number one; Mr D Nair, chief magistrate at Pretoria, the commission reported that the matter was postponed for further trial in January 2026. Number two; Mr E S Nzimande, regional court president KwaZulu-Natal, the matter was postponed due to recusal of the presiding judge. The Magistrate Commission

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explained to the committee that they sometimes experience difficulties in finding retired judges to fulfil these roles. Number three; Ms K Bodlani, regional magistrate, Umlazi. This matter is still pending and will be dealt with in December 2025 as it was reported. The commission found that this magistrate caused the delays in the matter and where the commission finds malice on the part of the magistrate it will recommend withholding the remuneration of the magistrate. Mr L T Mkansi, regional magistrate in Bloemfontein, in November 2025, the commission took a resolution to remove this magistrate. Then, the fifth one; Mr A A K Singh, senior magistrate, Pietermaritzburg, a judge has been appointed to preside over this matter and the matter will proceed in February 2026. Number six; Miss R Govender, additional magistrate at Lenyenye, Limpopo, the select committee and the NCOP passed a resolution to suspend this magistrate. The commission is still awaiting the Portfolio Committee of Justice Constitutional Development finalise this matter.

In terms of our observation as the select committee, the committee is concerned and disappointed by the delays that affects the administration of justice. The committee will request the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development

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together with the commission to brief it on the budget, delays, timelines and strategies to address this matter. The committee expressed its concern about the delays and the cost to the taxpayers in respect of magistrates receiving remuneration while they were suspended for years.

The committee encouraged the Magistrates Commission to recommend the withholding of remuneration of the magistrate who remain on suspension from 2019 and 2020. The committee expressed concern about the misconduct of magistrate and wish to reiterate that they must hold the integrity in the judiciary to ensure the smooth administration of justice and to uphold the rule of law in our courts. The committee will explore the underlying issues that are contributing to the misconduct of the magistrate. The committee will await formal referrals in respect of magistrates Bodlani and Mkansi for further processing by the committee.

The committee further undertook to conduct follow up with the Portfolio Committee on Justice and Constitutional Development on magistrate Govender's suspension. In terms of what we have engaged on as the committee, we really emphasise and look on the merits to say that each and every case must be dealt with case by case, hon Govender. It must not be a one-size-fits-all and it

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must not be one blanket approach. So, these are the issues that we have deliberated on as the committee.

We strongly discourage all acts of misconduct within the judiciary and particularly amongst magistrates. Magistrates are appointed as those holding an office that should represent integrity and uphold the rule of law and they should lead by example in our courts of law. We expect all who hold senior positions such as magistrate and judges to behave ethically having respect for the code of conduct. They are required to conduct themselves in line with high ethical standard as this conduct will restore trust in the administration of justice in our courts of law and amongst our citizens.

So, as the committee we will continue scrutinising the code of ethics within our system because we believe justice delay is justice denied as well for these magistrates. So, everything that we would want the commission and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development to do it should be done speedily because these suspensions they actually bare too much burden on the fiscals of the country. So, we are very committed as this select committee to ensure that there's value for money and all is being taken care accordingly by law. I thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you, hon Mananiso. Also, thank you to the Select Committee on Security and Justice for the work well done.

Debate concluded.

Question put: That the Report be adopted.

In Favour: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, Western Cape.

Report adopted in accordance with section 65 of the Constitution.

DEBATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: "DEEPENING A CULTURE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS."

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Mr A C NEL): Hon Deputy Chairperson and hon members, I respectfully request that all of us rise, whether in body or in spirit, and join me in reciting the preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

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We, the people of South Africa, recognise the injustices of our past, honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land, respect those who have worked to build and develop our country, and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it.

United in our diversity, we therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution, the Law of the Republic, so as to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights. Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society, in which government is based on the will of the people, and every citizen is equally protected by law. Improve the quality of life of all citizens, and free the potential of each person, and build a united and democratic South Africa, able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.

IsiZulu:

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika

Sepedi:

Morena boloka setšhaba sa gešo.

Afrikaans:

God seën Suid-Afrika.

English:

God bless South Africa.

Tshivenda:

Mudzimu fhaṭutshedza Afrika.

Xitsonga:

Hosi katekisa Afrika.

English:

I thank you. Deputy Chairperson, we appeal to you, the Chairperson and the members here present, to consider making the reciting of the Preamble to the Constitution a standard practice when we meet as the freely elected representatives of the people of South Africa, to discharge our duties and responsibilities in terms of the Constitution, which we have all sworn an oath to uphold. It is a powerful reminder of where we come from, who we

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are, and the values that inform what we seek to become as a nation. This important debate takes place in the year that we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution in 1996. We do so under the theme, One Constitution, One Nation, Reflect, Renew, Recommit. We must approach this Human Rights Day in that same spirit.

We must reflect; we must renew, and we must recommit. The theme of today's debate is deepening a culture of social justice and human rights. It's not only fitting, but also urgent, because it calls upon us to reflect on the journey that we have travelled, to renew our commitment to constitutional values, and to recommit ourselves to building a society where justice, dignity, and equality are not abstract ideals, but lived realities.

We must answer the question posed by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the adoption of the Constitution on 8 May 1996, when as Chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly, he said, and I quote:

People will ask, what can be said about this Constitution?

This Constitution, with its Bill of Rights, is the mirror of South African society. It reflects both the history from

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which we have emerged and the values we now cherish, human dignity, equality, and freedom. It proclaims to the world that we are a society committed to democracy, to the rule of law, and the protection of human rights.

It proclaims to all South Africans, the landless, the homeless, the women, the workers, the children of this country, that their basic needs and aspirations matter enough to be included in the country's Constitution. It celebrates the richness of the diversity of cultures, religions, and beliefs of South Africans, and affirms that all belong as equals in our one nation. It commits the state to respecting, protecting, promoting, and to fulfilling the rights in the Bill of Rights, and acknowledges that it is not enough for government simply to refrain from violating people's rights.

It is also necessary for the government to take positive measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by all South Africans. Through this Constitution, we hope to transform our society from one that is based on injustice and strife, to one based on justice and peace.

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This anniversary coincides with the commemoration of two other very important milestones in our struggle to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous South African nation. The 70th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings, and the 50th anniversary of the 1976 student uprising.

As we celebrate the rights that we have enshrined in our Constitution, we also recall the events at Sharpeville on that day in 1960, when apartheid police opened fire on unarmed protesters, killing 69 people and injuring many more. Human Rights Day reminds us of the sacrifices of our past, the struggles of our present, and the hopes of our future. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land, the basis for the transformation of our society into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic state, founded on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality, and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.

Our Constitution is both revolutionary and transformative. It advances the objectives of building a South African nation united in its diversity, of building a democratic and developmental state that meets the needs of the people, of

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building a transformed, inclusive, and thriving economy that works for all South Africans, and of building a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous society based on the best of human values. The Constitution has, over the past three decades, profoundly transformed South Africa's political and legal landscape into a constitutional - and I stress - a constitutional democracy.

The Constitution is progressive because it not only recognise the injustices and the inequalities of the past, but it places an obligation on government and citizens, women and men, young and old, to work to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights. Our Constitution requires government to pursue transformation policies that meet people's socioeconomic needs and redress the injustices and inequalities created by colonialism, apartheid, and patriarchy, to improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person. It affirms that the people shall govern, that all shall be equal before the law, and that dignity, work, shelter, education, health, social security, and basic safety are not privileges, but fundamental rights to be enjoyed by every citizen.

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For three decades, our Constitution has anchored democratic governance, created independent institutions, expanded access to justice, and enabled major social advances in housing, education, health care, water, electricity, social protection, and infrastructure. These gains have raised the standard of living of millions who lived on the margins of the apartheid state. It has mandated decisive action to dismantle the legacies of racial, gender, and class super-exploitation.

We must celebrate these achievements, but celebration must be matched with renewal and recommitment and implementation. We must confront the persistent inequalities that remain. Democracy has no doubt improved lives, yet corruption, unemployment, and poverty continue to erode hope. Whilst gender equality has advanced, gender-based violence remains at levels which are unacceptably high and have been classified as a crisis.

Social justice demands that we confront these realities honestly and decisively. The Constitution promised transformation. We must ensure that that promise is never betrayed. This 30th anniversary takes place amid increasingly strident attacks on constitutional values, the rule of law, and a rules-based international order. Across the world, the values of democracy,

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equality, equity, inclusion, human solidarity, gender equality, and social justice are under attack.

The fundamental assertion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world is under threat. These universal values are enshrined in the Freedom Charter and the Constitution of the Republic. This attack seeks to delegitimise any government that aims to address inequalities, whether between nations, communities, genders, races, and individuals.

It seeks to undermine the existing rules-based order in the world and return human civilization to an era of might, privilege, and subjugation. The vast majority of South Africans, and indeed of global humanity, embrace these values of freedom, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, and human solidarity.

However, there is an increasingly vocal minority in our own country that make common cause with this global attack and actively propagate falsehoods.

Their aim is to undermine South Africa's constitutional democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism, and the Transformation

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Project. They employ multifaceted tactics, including the propagation of blatant falsehoods, such as claims of white genocide, to attract sympathy and solidarity from global racist movements and individuals. Reversing the gains of democracy by any means has become an increasingly open objective of domestic anti-transformation forces and their global allies.

Therefore, given these challenges, the current situation demands that we build the broadest united front to defend, consolidate, and advance our constitutional democracy and status as a sovereign country in the family of nations. We must defend and advance the constitution and the institutions of our constitutional democracy and ensure that they work for all South Africans. We must defend and advance the rights of workers, the unemployed, the informal sector, small businesses, professionals, and the middle classes. We must defend and advance quality basic services and the expansion of housing, education, health care, electricity, water sanitation, the social security net, roads, broadband services, and infrastructure to millions of South Africans.

The preamble to our Constitution enjoins us to build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a

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sovereign state in the family of nations. Sovereignty is based on the fundamental principle that every state has the right to govern its own territory and decide on its internal affairs without any foreign interference.

This coming Saturday, 21 March, thousands of people will march to Constitution Hill on Human Rights Day. They will be joining the People's March in defence of South Africa's sovereignty and democratic gains. This sends a powerful message that we are a nation united in our diversity around our constitution and in defence of our statehood and sovereignty. Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi, who sends a very warm regards, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development will be there to receive their memorandum on behalf of government. Defence of our sovereignty must be rooted in dignity, common values, and national pride amongst all South African citizens.

The 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution presents a profound opportunity for South Africa to take stock and chart a renewed course for the next three decades of democratic consolidation. The Constitution has served as both a legal foundation and a moral compass, guiding the nation through turbulence and triumph, transformation, and trial. Yet its

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continued vitality depends not only on institutions, but the daily confidence and participation of the people of South Africa. The commemoration must therefore be a national civic renewal campaign, a co-ordinated, multi-sectoral programme that reaffirms constitutionalism as the cornerstone of national identity and as a living instrument for justice, equality, and development.

Cabinet has adopted a programme providing for a year-long whole-of-government and whole-of-society celebration. The objectives are to celebrate and reaffirm constitutional values, to educate and engage citizens, especially the youth, reflect and evaluate the performance of our constitutional democracy, promote the rule of law in everyday life, foster national unity and social cohesion, and recommit to transformation of our society. Just like the Constitution-making process, the national commemoration will be an inclusive initiative involving multiple stakeholders, including government departments, Chapter 9 institutions, civil society, organised labour, business and religious leaders, traditional and religious leaders, youth formations, and educational institutions.

The programme will include public dialogues, civic education, cultural events, youth engagements, symbolic events at historic

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sites such as Sharpville and Constitutional Hill, and other community-driven initiatives to deepen constitutional awareness and social cohesion. We must use this opportunity to educate and empower citizens, especially young people, on the Constitution, on their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and how they can enforce these rights. That is why this year we will promote the reading, the reciting of the preamble at schools and at public events, host dialogues, moot courts, and youth debates, and translate the constitutional materials into all languages, including Braille. and audio formats and mobilize the creative sector to tell the stories of ordinary people whose lives have been transformed by constitutional justice. Constitutional literacy must become the property not only of lawyers, but of learners, workers, students, traditional leaders, and faith-based communities. Only when every person understands their rights and respects the rights of others can social justice truly take root.

We urge all public representatives, through their parliamentary constituency offices to play an active role in this campaign. Let us show ourselves to be equal to the challenge posed by President Nelson Mandela when he said at the signing of the

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Constitution into law at Sharpeville on 10 December 1996 that, and I quote:

Today, we cross a critical threshold. Let us now, drawing strength from the unity which we have forged, together grasp the opportunities and realise the vision enshrined in this Constitution. Let us give practical recognition to the injustices of the past by building a future based on equality and social justice. Let us nurture our national unity by recognising with respect and joy the languages, cultures, and religions of South Africa in all their diversity. Let tolerance for one another's views create the peaceful conditions which give space for the best in all of us to find expression and to flourish.

Above all, let us work together in striving to banish homelessness, illiteracy, hunger, and disease in all sectors of our society. workers and employers, government and civil society, people of all religions, teachers and students in our cities, towns, rural areas, from north to south, east to west, let us join hands for peace and prosperity. In doing so, we will redeem the faith which fired those whose blood drenched the soil of Sharpeville

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and elsewhere in our country and beyond. Today, we humbly pay tribute to them in a special way. This is a monument to their heroism.

Hon members, one constitution, one nation - reflect, renew, recommit. I thank you.

Ms N S DU PLESSIS: House Chair, hon Deputy Minister, members of the executive council, MECs, members and fellow South Africans. The irrevocable relationship between social justice, human rights and the economy is visible throughout history. From the negative relationship of empires built on the backs of others, to the much-needed positive solutions that the United Nations created the Sustainable Development Goals, SDG, which bases economic ... [Interjections.] ... the protection of human rights and the realisation ... [Interjections.] ... of colonisation ... [Interjections.] ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Hon Du Plessis, hold on a second, please. Hon members, that was my fault. Can the hon members online mute themselves and remain muted throughout and not disturb the proceedings in the Chamber. Hon Du Plessis, you were interrupted. Please continue with your speech.

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Ms N S DU PLESSIS: The SDGs – apologies. The SDGs are needed especially in countries with a history of colonisation. With approximately 100 countries being colonised in the past 100 years, the data is immense to support the necessity of the United Nations SDGs particularly in developing a country.

The SDGs further layout that society cannot flourish when people are forced to fight for the most basic of human needs and human rights such as water, electricity, safety, shelter and gainful employment.

Individuals cannot progress unless we address the injustices in their lives. This is why government must adhere to the rights enshrined in our Constitution of South Africa, and these protections are mirrored in the SDGs. It is nearly impossible to effect societal change without securing these basic human needs, these basic human rights.

I represent a city and a province that is bearing the brunt of being used as a slush fund by an uncaring and callous gang of individuals who would rather eat the money than spend it on basic service delivery and then go shower in hotels.

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The symptoms of the crisis are clear in Johannesburg, with the residents of Westbury, Coronationville and Ivory Park protesting in September last year. And the residents of Lenasia frequently protesting the illegal land invasions caused by a corrupt housing allocation system. To name a few protests.

This year has seen the biggest collapse of water reticulation in Johannesburg and the rest of Gauteng, a crisis that could have been avoided. The first warning bells were rung in a report in 2017, commissioned by the then DA MEC of Environment and Infrastructure Services Department, EISD. The report outlined the backlog in both Johannesburg Water and City Power and provided a 10-year turnaround strategy that has subsequently been forgotten so that the budget can move from service delivery to misappropriation.

The symptoms of the systemic fraud and corruption are clear, however the contours of the depth and definition of it remain unclear. It hides behind clever language and rhetoric, proving the words of Orwell that:

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"Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

The contours disappear between backroom deals over whiskey filled evenings in the skyline of Johannesburg. While whistleblowers who dare to define the depth of corruption are quickly taken care of quickly, like Babita Deokaran, who was assassinated for her bravery.

We cannot speak credibly about human rights and social justice without confronting this reality. Until corruption and fraud are rooted out, South Africans will not enjoy freedom, as enshrined in our Constitution, in the SDGs.

Until corruption and fraud are rooted out, basic human rights will never be a reality for all our citizens, and people will not receive the dignity that so many have fought for, that so many have died for. There will be no social justice.

Human rights and service delivery is not a zero-sum game; they must coexist. The DA run municipality of Midvaal has recorded the lowest unemployment rate in Gauteng, a benefit of a caring

government that has demonstrated accountable governance.

Government must be the chief architect of our Constitution, of the United Nations SDGs. However, it requires a non-negotiable foundation of integrity and accountability.

A democracy without these will transform into a forever unjust society that cannot support a culture that cherishes human rights or social justice.

An international example of this is Ecuador. This developing country has undergone a rapid transformation from a relatively peaceful nation into a key logistical hub for international drug trafficking, often described by analysts as a gangster state or narco-state due to the high level of infiltration of organised crime into state institutions.

Since 2021, the country has experienced a severe security crisis, with 2025 becoming the most violent year in history, recording over 9 000 deaths driven by clashes between more than 30 criminal groups. Is this our future?

I hope not.

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I hope the stories that come out of the Madlanga Commission indicate how far we still need to go. I hope they don't die like the stories from the Zondo Commission. I hope that we all stand together and see fraud and corruption as the enemy to human rights, to social justice and economic growth. Human rights, social justice and economic growth have an irrevocable relationship. Let us protect it.

I thank you.

Mr M K CHILOANE (Gauteng): Chairperson of the NCOP, hon members and special delegates, MECs, distinguished guests, fellow South Africans, I rise in this august House on behalf of Premier Panyaza Lesufi and the people of Gauteng - the economic heartbeat of our Republic, to add the voice of our province to this debate on Human Rights Day. In three days' time, on 21 March 2026, we will mark the 66th anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. Sixty-six years ago, 69 peaceful men and women were gunned down by the guns of a regime that feared their humanity. They were not armed. They carried no weapons. They carried only their dignity and their demand that it be respected.

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That day, Black Monday, as the survivors called it, did not break the spirit of our people; it forged it. The blood that spilled at Sharpeville flowed all the way to the United Nations, which declared 21 March the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It further flowed into the consciousness of the world, exposing apartheid for what it was: A crime against humanity.

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The theme for our debate, "Deepening a Culture of Social Justice and Human Rights," is not merely a commemoration; it is a call to action. It asks us: What have you built on the foundation that was laid in blood? In Gauteng, we answer that question first and foremost through education. We believe, without equivocation, that education is the most powerful expression of human rights. It is the instrument through which a child born in Sharpeville, in Sebokeng, in Tembisa, in Mamelodi and Kagiso can access the same future as any child born anywhere in the world.

Last year, Gauteng achieved an 89,06% in the National Senior Certificate pass rate, the highest in our province since 1990. However, what moves us even more than the number is what lies behind it: A historic narrowing of the performance gap between township schools and former Model C schools. This is not just an

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educational achievement but human rights in practice. This is social justice made real.

We are deepening this further. The recent launch of the Thuto Lore Engineering School of Specialisation in Sharpeville, a stone's throw from where those 69 souls fell, is among the most powerful statements our province has made. We are building on the grounds of sacrifice, a school that will produce engineers, scientists and innovators. We are telling the children of Sharpeville: This soil does not only hold memory; it also holds your future.

Human rights are not only protected in courtrooms and classrooms; they are lived on sports fields, in theatres, in music halls and on dance floors. Sport, arts and culture are the languages through which communities heal, reconcile and rediscover their shared humanity.

In Gauteng, we use sport as a deliberate instrument of social cohesion. We use arts and culture to preserve the memory of those who fought, so that we may stand here today. When we invest in youth sport development in our townships, we are not just building athletes; we are building citizens. We are giving

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young people a sense of belonging, of identity and of dignity. That is the deepening our theme demands of us.

Hon members, the survivors of Sharpeville are aging. Their numbers grow fewer with each passing year. The greatest tribute we can pay them is not a speech; it is a province and a country in which every child knows their rights, exercises them freely and is protected when they do. Gauteng stands committed to this promise.

We will continue to build schools that open minds, stadiums that build character, heritage sites that preserve truth and communities where social justice is not an aspiration but a lived reality. The 69 did not die in vain. Their sacrifice is written in our Constitution. Our task is to write it into the daily lives of South Africans.

As we leave this House today, let us carry with us the weight of that responsibility; not as a burden, but as a calling: A calling to govern with conscience, to legislate with compassion and to build a South Africa worthy of those who bled, so that we may deliberate freely in chambers like this one. Sharpeville did

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not happen so that we could remember it; it happened so that we would never allow anything like it to happen again.

The next chapter of our human rights story will not be written in protest marches or courtrooms alone; it will be written in the classrooms of Sharpeville, on the sports fields of Soweto, in the studios and theatres of our townships and in the quiet dignity of a child who knows her rights and lives them without fear. That is the South Africa we are building, and that is the South Africa the 69 died believing was possible. I thank you.

Adv Inkosi M NONKONYANA: House Chairperson, hon members, Chief Whip of the Council, hon members inclusive of Members of Executive Council, MECs and special delegates, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers, fellow South Africans.

The people of our country were once told that human rights were privileges for the few. The liberation movement led by the ANC fought so hard that freedom should mean and must mean clean water from a tap, a roof overhead and a light for a child's future.

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Our Constitution enshrines these, declaring access to water, housing, healthcare and social security as justifiable human rights, not merely policy goals. Thus, when we speak of leaking pipe, a pothole or a broken streetlight, we are not discussing administrative lapses. We are addressing a violation of the 1994 social contract. We are speaking of a failure to uphold human dignity.

To ensure fidelity to this contract, the architects of our Constitution, including the ANC's legal minds, embedded Chapter 9 institutions to support our democracy.

Hon members, we must guard these bodies as they must protect the flame of freedom. The Public Protector, SA Human Rights Commission and the Auditor-General are the watchdogs that expose corruption, measure our performance against human rights standards, and speak truth to power without fear, favour or prejudice. The role is fundamental.

The SA Human Rights Commission summons a member of the executive council over a community without water. It executes its constitutional mandate to monitor human rights. When the Auditor-General flags irregular expenditure, it protects the

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public purse meant to realize socioeconomic rights. They are our allies, not adversaries.

Recently, SA human rights reports, highlights severe challenges in places like the Free State and Northwest, but they also provide a road map for intervention. We must implement their recommendations with the political will they deserve.

As we celebrate three decades of freedom, let us not permit current challenges to blind us to our progress. The cynics argue that nothing has changed, this is untrue and insults the millions who have been transformed by the ANC-led government.

Consider this facts briefly, in 1994 only six in the 10 South African had access to clean water. Today, over 90% do. Only 36% had electricity. We have now connected over 90% of households, lifting our nation from darkness.

In terms of housing, our record is unmatched in this continent. Through programmes such as Reconstruction and Development Programme and the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Program. The government has provided over 4,7 million housing opportunities with nearly two million going to women who before 1994 were

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legal minors. Today they hold title deeds and are recognized as economic citizens.

Most importantly, they are rightfully entitled to assume leadership roles, as demonstrated by the appointment of capable women to lead this Parliament of ours today. The judiciary under a qualified woman Chief Justice and indeed women are appointed as of right to take over traditional and Khoisan leadership positions. These more than mere statistics, they represent the lived reality of the ANC's dedication to creating a better life for all.

We transformed a fragmented, racist, apartheid state into a unified public service committed to serving everyone, including the poorest of the poor. We achieved this while establishing the very Chapter 9 institutions that now hold us accountable. That is a legacy we can be proud of.

Nevertheless, pride in our history does not justify complacency. We would neglect our duty if we overlooked the pressure on our service delivery system. The Auditor-General warned that our municipalities are at "breaking point" with too few clean audits.

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The SA Human Rights Commission reports, confirm that citizens in too many municipalities face failure in water, sanitation and roads. The Constitutional Court judgment on the Merafong case reminds us of all that a municipality cannot impose self-charge without providing corresponding services. The reasons are complex, but we must identify them.

We inherited an apartheid spatial layout that placed the black communities on the outskirts, making service delivery costly and challenging. We have faced a global pandemic and ongoing load shedding which have damaged infrastructure and local economies. And yes, we must admit, we face the cancer of corruption and state capture as identified by the Zondo Commission. We are waiting with belated breath for the outcome of the pending Madlanga Commission.

When the state weakens, the poor are the first to suffer. As they depend on it for their basic needs. This is why the ANC-led, Government of National Unity under President Ramaphosa has made a restoring state capacity its main goal.

We are putting a comprehensive plan into action to ensure that basic services are guaranteed reality. Firstly, we are acting

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decisively where municipalities fail. Section 139 of the Constitution allows for intervention and we are utilizing it.

Currently, the government is implementing intervention measures in 32 municipalities in the country. We are collaborating with provinces to support struggling municipalities, deploying engineers, stabilizing finances and repairing wastewater treatment works. These are not just takeovers; they are rescue missions to restore human rights.

Secondly, we are strengthening the district development model. Working in silos is ineffective. This model unites all three spheres of government, national, provincial and local, to plan, budget and to implement collaboratively. It aligns national and provincial budgets with Municipal Integrated Development Plans, IDPs. This is cooperative governance in action, ensuring that functions such as health and housing are delivered seamlessly.

Thirdly, we are professionalizing the public service. The era of appointing cadres based on loyalty rather than capability is over. We are conducting skills audit, establishing administration and attracting skilled professionals into local government. We are implementing the National Development Plan to

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build a capable, ethical state in South Africa, we all want and we need to strengthen therefore local government, hon members.

We all recognise that municipalities reflects the face of government. When a community loses confidence in its municipality, it loses faith in the in the promise of a better life. Our intervention builds lasting capacity. We support municipalities in overcoming apartheid era spatial planning by integrating housing closer to economic opportunities.

We are using the municipal infrastructure grant not just for new projects, but for urgent maintenance, fixing pumps and pipes so water rights are realized daily.

The message from the ANC-led government is clear. There will be consequences for non-performance. The powers of this House to oversee provinces will be exercised with vigour. We will work with Chapter 9 institutions not as adversaries but as partners to uphold Bill of Rights.

As I conclude hon members, service delivery is human rights imperative. It is the practical expression of the Freedom

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Charter's declaration, that "all shall enjoy equal human rights", which was adopted in Kliptown on 26 June 1955.

For 30 years the ANC has been the reliable instrument of the people to drive transformation. We have extended access to water, electricity and housing to millions but build the institution that now keep us on our toes.

We will not shy from our mistakes, but they will not define us. We are renewing our movement and our state. We are determined to build municipalities that work, that treat citizen with dignity and that deliver services as a constitutional right, not as a political favour.

Let us in this House commit to using our oversight to ensure that every province, every local and district, municipalities and every metro fulfils its obligations. Let us ensure that water flows, the light stays on, and the dignity of our people is renewed. Let us make sure that people all over, even the people in Khayelitsha that we saw some of them actually still living in tin houses and actually also having the water and sanitation and relieving themselves in the houses.

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And people are living in squalor conditions in the municipality that we're told is the best in South Africa. Indeed, we were sold dummy with the President.

Clearly, there are challenges that all over South Africa we must actually assist each other as we are determined to assist even the government in the Western Cape to deliver a better life to everyone else, black and white, wherever they are.

And therefore, hon members, today we need to stress and stress again, that people of South Africa, they deserve better. People of South Africa, they must be proud of this country that was saved by the ANC. Heroes and heroines of our country sacrificed their own life so that we can all live together.

And now we must make sure that the enemies of the people of South Africa, the ragamuffins, the criminals and all other people are not given a space to breathe because as we speak, criminals are taking over and they are actually attacking the peace-loving South Africans as we all experience on daily basis.

It is for this reason therefore hon members, that the ANC in its renewal programme want to make sure that, let us learn from my

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mistakes of the past and do better for all our people. And therefore, as far as the ANC is concerned, the people of South Africa, the struggle for a better life continues, and in this struggle we shall not rest.

Portuguese:

Aluta continua [The struggle continues.]

Ms M KENNEDY: Hon Chairperson, greetings to hon members in the House and those on the virtual platform, and to fellow South Africans. Whilst the mood was jovial upon the attainment of democracy in 1994, little did we know that the majority of our people would still be denied freedom and that the blood and sweat of our freedom fighters would be down the drain 30 years on.

Across all provinces, our people continue to suffer serious human rights violations, as our people still lack access to clean, drinkable water. In deep rural areas like Ga-Malebogo and Ga-Kibi in the Blouberg region of Limpopo and across rural Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, and the North West, citizens are still forced to share water sources with livestock.

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Where health care is concerned, most clinics do not operate 24 hours a day. Women are forced to give birth outside the gates of health care facilities because they are told the doors only open at 07:00 and close at 16:30. Of course, we cannot forget the tragedy in Burgersfort, Limpopo, where a woman gave birth outside a clinic's gates because nurses and security guards refused her entry, claiming the facility was closed.

Our children are still being treated like outcasts in the land of their birth because this government refuses to provide scholar transport. Our children walk exhausting distances just to sit in a classroom. The cost of this failure is paid in the bodies of our girl learners, who are hunted, attacked, and raped on desolate paths in remote farm areas. We have learners still learning under trees. Even where there are walls, there is no safety. Schools in provinces such as Limpopo and the Eastern Cape remain death traps, with pit toilets that swallow our children whole.

Is this deepening a culture of social justice and human rights? No. This government is complicit in the bloodbath of gender-based violence. It is indirectly and directly involved because it has built a system that offers no practical protection for

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women and children. The ruling party has abandoned the Bill of Rights and left our citizens defenceless, proving that it lacks the political will to uphold the very Constitution it claims to cherish today.

Chairperson, we stand here today in this Council to say that, for the EFF, deepening social justice requires the nationalisation of mines, banks, and strategic sectors of the economy. Human rights mean land. Human rights mean free, quality, decolonised education. This is not a luxury; it is a right. Human rights mean a state-led economy and the crushing of the tender system, which is a breeding ground for corruption and poor medical service delivery. Human rights mean the insourcing of all government workers – cleaners, security guards, and drivers – to ensure they receive a living wage and the dignity of a pension and medical aid. It means the right to work and an economy that creates jobs for its own people instead of, for example, exporting raw materials to be processed elsewhere. Thank you, Chairperson.

Ms H G S MAVIMBELA (KwaZulu-Natal): Thank you very much, Chief Whip, hon Chairperson, hon delegates, and fellow South Africans, 30-years-ago, our country made a solemn promise to itself and to

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the future generations that never again will South Africa be a land defined by oppression, exclusion, and injustice. That promise, through our Constitution, was not written in ink alone. It was written in sacrifice and in blood.

In the blood that flowed in Sharpeville, where 69 souls fell under the bullets of an apartheid regime that feared nothing more than the humanity of its own people. In the blood that poured in Langa, in Soweto, in Krugersdorp, in Boipatong, in Bisho, in Makhutha, in Edendale, and in countless other corners of our land where the struggle for our freedom was met with brutality.

But today, hon members, we stand not only to remember that dark chapter, but to honour the courage that gave birth to our freedom. We stand not only to recall the tragedy of Sharpeville, but to affirm the triumph of people who refused to be broken. For they did not die as victims of history, but they died as authors of democracy. They died so that South Africa could rise. It is that South Africa, which is imperfect, but free. Which is challenged, but hopeful. Which is wounded, but unbroken. A South Africa we proudly stand in today.

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Hon members, this South Africa, under the leadership of the African National Congress, has journeyed from the depth of oppression to the height of world-renowned constitutional democracy. It is South Africa that has replaced the brutality of pass laws with a Bill of Rights that affirms the dignity, equality, and humanity of all.

A South Africa that has transformed the law from an instrument of oppression into an instrument of justice. A South Africa that has built enduring democratic institutions, from the Human Rights Commission to the Commission of Gender Equality, to safeguard the freedom for which our people fought. It is a South Africa that has extended basic services to millions. Providing housing where there were none. Bringing water to a majority that was systemically deprived. Delivering electricity where there is darkness and expanding access to free education and health care for all.

It is a South Africa that has entrenched political rights where every citizen has the right to vote, to organise, and to participate in shaping the future of this country through free and fair election without fail for over three full decades. Hon members, these are lived realities which are a result of the

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deliberate policy choices of the ANC-led government which has always been guided by the vision of the Freedom Charter and the mission of the National Democratic Revolution to build a nonracial, nonsexist, democratic, and prosperous society. And yes, the journey is not complete. In fact, it is far from it.

Despite this progress, the scars of apartheid remain etched in the structures of our economy and society. Poverty, inequality, and unemployment continue to deny many of our people the full enjoyment of their freedom. Hon members, that is why the African National Congress remains resolute that the struggle for political freedom must be deepened into the struggle for economic freedom. For it knows that the true liberation is not only the right to vote but is the right to live with dignity. It is the right to work. It is the right to opportunity. It is the right to share in the wealth of this country and that is the task that still lies before us. It is precisely why the ANC continues to drive this country with clear, coherent, and comprehensive programmes towards this total liberation, from the reconstruction and development programmes to the National Development Plan.

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Hon members, transformation is not an event, but a process. A structured and deliberate process, which includes our clear national priorities, which were outlined by President Cyril Ramaphosa in our Medium-Term development Plan, MTDP, our ANC January 8 statement, our Lekgotla and the state of our nation address, which includes putting South Africa to work, building an inclusive economy, investing in our people, defending our democracy, and advancing freedom in all its forms.

These priorities have found expression in our ANC-led departments in KwaZulu-Natal, as our Department of Transport is hard at work building groundbreaking roads, connecting economies, and changing lives. In this department, over R216 million has been allocated to address the backlog of more than 3,12 million square metres of potholes, improving mobility, reducing accidents, and restoring dignity to our communities.

Through infrastructure programmes across all our districts, from uMgungundlovu to Kings Cethwayo, billions of rands are being invested in roads, logistics, and connectivity, unlocking economic activity and supporting thousands of jobs. In our Department of Human Settlement, through infrastructure-led development, government is investing over R4,11 billion in

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building infrastructure programmes, ensuring that housing is integrated with roads, water, and economic opportunities.

In our Department of Education, we continue to shape the future of our province. KwaZulu-Natal achieved a historic 90.6% matric-pass rate, emerging as the number one performing province in South Africa, a clear demonstration of a system that is improving and delivering results.

IsiZulu:

Ningangifakazela uma nithanda ukuthi u-Grade 12 wakwaMhlabuyalingana ulingana nesifunda okuyisona esathola unombolo-1 kuZwelonke. Ngakho ke kuyakutshela ukuthi...

English:

... we are proud of ourselves with quality. This department has also strengthened emergency services, adding to 44 new ambulances. I'm talking about the Department of Health, which has just employed more than 4 000 community health workers on a permanent basis, restoring dignity and stability to frontline health care. That is why, even in a complex political environment, even in the government of political unity, it remains the ANC that provides direction, coherence, and

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stability in governance. Through its historic depth, the organisation capacity, and the intellectual clarity to lead South Africa towards true total liberation.

So, as we mark 30 years of our constitutional democracy, we say with confidence and humility that, indeed, the journey is not over, but the path is clear. Hon members, and under the leadership of the African National Congress, we will finish the task.

As I conclude, I must also confront a growing and dangerous reality of those in our society who seek to rewrite history. Those who thrive on anger, division, and opportunism. Today, we see political formation emerging that speak the language of liberation but reject the very foundation of our constitutional democracy. We see the rise of backward thinking that seeks to undermine the institution, weakening accountability, and eroding the rule of law.

The African National Congress...

IsiZulu:

...u mbutho wabantu, inqol' emasondosondo ...

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English:

... will not be silent in the face of such dangers. We thus say today, with conviction and without apology, that we will defend our Constitution, we will defend our democracy, and we will defend the gains of our people.

IsiZulu:

Amandla! {Power.]

Mr F J MASEKO (Limpopo): House Chairperson of the session, greetings to the hon members of the NCOP, and the South African public. Allow me to join our colleagues on the debate here on human rights with the theme: Deepening a Culture of Social Justice. This debate reaffirms our government's commitment to social justice, human dignity, and social cohesion of our society. Social justice is not just an abstract concept; it is a daily lived experience of people who seek fairness, who seek equality and dignity. It is about ensuring that every citizen, regardless of background, language, culture, or economic status, feels valued and included in the lives of our nation.

The arts and culture sector plays a very critical role in shaping this vision. Through music, through literature, theatre,

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storytelling, visual arts and heritage preservations, communities can tell their stories, communities can preserve their identities and strengthen the bonds that unite us as people.

As the great South African state Nelson Mandela once reminded us: "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice". These powerful ways remind us that social justice must be actively pursued and that government, communities, and the cultural sector must work together to create opportunities that empower people socially, culturally, and economically.

When we invest in arts, we are not simply supporting creative expression. We are investing in sustainable development, community empowerment, social transformation, and social justice. The creative industry generates livelihoods, promote tourism, and contributes to the economic growth of our country. Equally important, arts and culture promote understanding, dialogue, and reconciliation.

In a diverse society such as ours, cultural expression helps us appreciate the richness of our differences while strengthening

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our shared humility. Our sector has been at the forefront of promoting social cohesion and nation-building through various initiatives. We have celebrated heritage days, supported cultural and sporting programs that unite people from diverse backgrounds and facilitated dialogue on human rights and reconciliation.

Through arts and culture, we have highlighted human rights issues, historical injustices, social justice topics. Our national entities such as the Freedom Park, Robben Island museum provides spaces for interaction and dialogue on human rights matters. We have mixed strides in transformation, promoting equal access and participation in sports and creative industries for previously disadvantaged groups.

Policies like the Transformation Charter in Sports have increased opportunities for women, youth, and marginalized communities. Our youth development programs empower young people in arts, culture, and sports, providing alternatives to crime and unemployment. We have also addressed social issues like gender-based violence and xenophobia through theatre, through poetry, and through feelings.

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Internationally, we have partnered with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Unesco, and other organizations to advocate cultural diversity and human rights. Our former President, Thabo Mbeki, in his historic I am an African speech, reminded us of the deep connection between identity and belonging when he said: "I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, and flowers of Africa". These words captured the spirit of what social justice arts and culture represent. They remind us that our rights as Africans is rooted in our heritage languages, traditions and stories.

Preserving this heritage is essential not only for our generation but for the future generation to come. Through cultural programs, heritage projects, libraries, community art centres, and festivals, we are building platforms that promote social justice, promote social cohesion, and nation building. These spaces allow young people to discover their rights, sense of belonging, engage with the history, talents, and contribute meaningfully to society.

One of our Pan-African visionaries Kwame Nkrumah once declared: "We face neither East nor West. We face forward". Indeed, as

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Africans, we must move forward together, guided by the principles of social justice, unity, equality, and cultural pride. The creative sector must therefore be positioned as a driver of inclusive growth and social innovation, particularly for young people who aspire to build careers in the arts sector.

Finally, we must remember that justice requires courage. Therefore, we must never be silent when inequality, discrimination, or cultural marginalization threatens the dignity of our people. Through arts and culture, we can challenge injustice, promote dialogue, and inspire positive change.

As government, we remain committed to strengthening partnership with artists, cultural organizations, traditional leaders, youth formations, and community structures to ensure that the arts sector becomes a sustainable pillar of social development.

Together, we must build a society where culture is not only preserved, but actively used as a tool for healing, for unity, and for progress.

Let us therefore continue to champion the arts as instrument of social justice, cultural pride, and national unity because when

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we nurture our culture, we nurture our people. When we empower our artists, we empower our communities. And when we promote social justice, we strengthen a foundation for our democracy. Thank you very much, House Chairperson.

IsiZulu:

Ngiyabonga.

Cllr S MABALE-HUMA (Salga): Hon House Chairperson, hon Deputy Chairperson, hon Deputy Minister, hon Members of Executive Council, MECs present, hon Chief Whip, hon members, fellow councillors. Today we gather to commemorate Human Rights Day, a day that reminds us of the painful history that shaped our democracy and the enduring commitment we have made as a nation to uphold the dignity, equality and freedom of all who live in South Africa.

This day is forever linked to the memory of the Sharpeville Massacre, where ordinary citizens lost their lives while peacefully protesting for their rights. Their sacrifice laid the foundation for the democratic values we celebrate today.

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This year also marks 30 years since the adoption of the Constitution, a milestone that invites reflection on the transformative role played by our supreme law in shaping governance in South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa fundamentally redefined the role of government by placing human dignity, equality and freedom at the centre of public administration.

For the local government sphere, this Constitution was particularly significant. It recognised municipalities not merely as administrative structures, but as a distinct sphere of government entrusted with developmental responsibilities. Through this framework, local government became the frontline of human rights realisation, tasked with ensuring that the rights enshrined in the Constitution are experienced in the daily lives of communities.

As the voice of local government, the South African Local Government Association, Salga, represents municipalities that work every day to translate constitutional rights into practical services and opportunities. Rights such as access to water, sanitation, housing, electricity, and a clean environment are

not abstract principles. They are realised through municipal infrastructure, local planning and service delivery.

Over the past two decades, local government has made significant strides in advancing these rights. Millions of South Africans who were historically excluded now have access to basic water services, electricity connections, sanitation facilities and municipal housing programmes.

Informal settlements have been upgraded, local economic development initiatives have been launched, and municipalities have expanded community services such as libraries, recreational facilities and public spaces.

These achievements reflect the constitutional vision of developmental local government, a system where municipalities actively work to improve the social and economic conditions of communities.

However, we must also acknowledge the persistent challenges faced by municipalities in fulfilling this mandate.

Rapid urbanisation, migration into cities and towns, ageing infrastructure, climate-related pressures, and financial constraints continue to place significant strain on municipal systems.

Many municipalities must respond to growing populations while operating within limited resources and increasing service delivery demands. In some areas, infrastructure backlogs, water security challenges and electricity supply constraints affect the ability of municipalities to fully realise the rights guaranteed in the Constitution.

Yet despite these challenges, local government continues to demonstrate resilience and innovation. Municipalities are increasingly embracing integrated planning, improved governance systems, community participation and partnerships with other spheres of government to strengthen service delivery.

As we commemorate Human Rights Day, it is important to remember that rights must be accompanied by responsibilities. The sustainability of our communities depends not only on the state fulfilling its obligations, but also on citizens actively

participating in building and protecting the spaces in which they live.

Communities have a responsibility to protect public infrastructure, to pay for services where they are able, to participate constructively in local governance processes, and to work together with municipalities to ensure that development initiatives succeed. When rights and responsibilities are balanced, we create the foundation for sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities.

Human rights are ultimately realised not only in courtrooms or policy documents, but in streets that are lit, taps that run with clean water, waste that is collected, and neighbourhoods that are safe and liveable. These are the daily expressions of dignity that local government strives to provide.

As we mark this important anniversary of our constitutional democracy, let us reaffirm our collective commitment to strengthening municipalities so that they can continue to serve as the custodians of human rights at the community level.

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The South African Local Government Association therefore calls for continued collaboration between all spheres of government, the private sector and communities themselves to ensure that the constitutional promise of dignity, equality and freedom becomes a lived reality for every resident in every municipality.

Let us honour the legacy of those who fought for our freedom by building municipalities that are inclusive, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the people. On that submission hon House Chairperson ...

Sepedi:

Ke a leboga.

English:

I Thank you.

Mr B B NXUMAYO (Mpumalanga): House Chairperson, members of the NCOP, fellow South Africans. Human Rights Day in South Africa is meant to be a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made in the struggle for freedom and dignity. However, as we commemorate this day, we must ask ourselves: are human rights truly being upheld in our country today?

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There are key issues that we need to consider, key issues on the human rights; persistent inequality and poverty, despite the constitutional promise of equality millions of South Africans remain trapped in poverty, with limited access to land, employment, and quality education, economic disparities, largely shaped by historical injustices, continue to marginalize the poor and working-class citizens.

Failures in service delivery has seen basic human rights such as access to clean water, electricity, housing, and healthcare remain unfulfilled for many of our communities. Corruption and inefficiency in government structures have denied people their right to dignity and a decent standard of living.

Rising gender-based violence and crime; women and children continue to suffer from gender-based violence, despite the existence of laws meant to protect them. The justice system remains slow and ineffective in addressing crimes against vulnerable groups, it fails.

The rights to protest and political suppression; South Africans have the constitutional right to protest, yet we have seen increased police brutality and suppression of voices demanding

justice by politician and other stakeholders in our government. Workers, students, and activists continue to face intimidation when they raise legitimate concerns about governance and economic hardships.

As MKP the incoming government, we want to restore human rights in the following:

Firstly, economic liberation; we want ensure land redistribution, job creation, and financial inclusion to address historical economic injustices. Accountable governance; rooting out corruption, ensuring efficient service delivery, and holding leaders accountable for failing the people of South Africa. Stronger protection for women and children; we will establish stronger policies and structures to fight gender-based violence and ensuring swift justice for victims.

Freedom of expression and protest; we will make sure that the defenceless are defended by the Constitution. We will defend the right to protest and making sure that the voices of the people are not silenced by force or intimidation.

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The MKP will definitely provide tangible solution because MKP has produced a manifesto that will move South Africa and of course the continent forward towards a developmental agenda, we call it "The People's Mandate"

In conclusion, human rights in South Africa are progressive on paper but the real struggle is in implementation. We urge civil society, government and community leaders to start playing a crucial role in closing these gaps.

The Human Rights Day should not just be a day of remembrance; it must be a day of accountability and commitment to real change.

The government has failed to fully uphold the rights enshrined in our Constitution. It is time for leadership that prioritises people over power, dignity over corruption, and justice over political convenience. Only through a radical transformation can we truly honour the sacrifices of our fore fathers and heroines and build a future where human rights are not just words on paper but lived realities for all South Africans. I thank you.

Mr B J FARMER: Hon House Chairperson, hon members and fellow citizens, I greet you in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ our

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Lord and saviour. Today as we reflect on Human Rights Day, we are reminded that the struggle for human rights in South Africa was never abstract. It was fought in the streets, in our communities and in the daily lives of ordinary people who demanded dignity, equality and justice.

However, hon House Chairperson, the true measure of our democracy is not only how we remember our history, it is how we respond to the lived realities of our people today. For many South Africans especially now in working class communities' human rights remain a promise not yet fully realised.

The PA believe that human rights must be practical, visible, and felt in everyday life, not only protected in legislation but delivered through action. What does this mean in real terms? It means that the right to dignity must include safe communities where families are not held hostage by crime and drugs. It means that the right to equality must include fair access to economic opportunities especially for coloured, black and marginalised communities who continue to feel excluded from meaningful participation in the economy.

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It means that the right to education must translate to functional schools, disciplined learning environments and real pathways to employment, not just attendance but outcomes. It also means that the right to basic services must ensure that our people are not still living without reliable water, sanitation and housing, decades into democracy. It is just sad that this is not a basic human right for South Africans.

Hon House Chairperson, if we are serious about deepening a culture of human rights, we must also be honest about the gap between policy and implementation. Too often communities experience government not as a protector of rights, but as absent, slow or unresponsive.

The PA is clear, human rights without accountability becomes empty promises. We therefore call for firstly, stronger local governance where municipalities are held accountable for service delivery failures.

Secondly, targeted economic inclusion, ensuring that opportunities reach those who are historically left behind.

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Thirdly, community centred safety strategies where law-enforcement works with residents to restore order and dignity.

Lastly, a renewed focus from ethical leadership where public representatives serve with integrity and urgency.

Hon House Chairperson, human rights are not sustained by laws alone, they are sustained by trust. Trust that when a child goes to school will receive quality education. Trust that when a family calls for help the Police will respond. Trust that when a community raises concerns the government will listen and act. Without that trust the foundation of our constitutional democracy weakens.

The PA stands for a South Africa where human rights are not theoretical but tangible in every community, every household and every life. A South Africa where no one feels forgotten. Where opportunities do not serve for a few and where dignity is restored to all our people.

Hon House Chairperson, as we commemorate Human Rights Day, let us move beyond reflection and commit to delivery, accountability and real impact. For the best way to honour those who fought for

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our freedom, is to ensure that freedom is fully lived by this generation.

Hon members, [*moenie baiza nie.*] Salute.

Mr K CEZA: Hon House Chairperson, hon members of the National Council of Provinces, today we rise as the EFF to debate Human Rights Day, a day which we as the EFF marks as the Sharpeville Massacre Day. A solemn commemoration of the 1960s killings of unarmed black protesters. A day to honour sacrifice, to confront a legacy of white supremacy and demand economic freedom and the return of the land.

Hon House Chairperson, so we stand here today in this Council to say that there is no such thing as human rights without the land. There is no such thing as human rights without economic freedom in our lifetime.

Hon House Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, this democratic government has for more than three decades told our people that they live in a constitutional democracy founded on human rights, dignity and equality, but the lived experiences of the majority of our people tell a very different story. Hon

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members, the truth is that South Africa's human rights are not enjoyed by all. They are enjoyed by a few who live in suburbs and enjoyed by those who benefit from the current economic situation. Who can afford private health care, private education, private water supply when the state fails to deliver. For the majority of our people, democracy simply means the right to vote every five years, but not the right to live with dignity every day.

Hon House Chairperson, we know this to be true as the SA Human Rights exposes this painful reality. In Mpumalanga, for instance, there are dozens of unresolved complaints about water shortages, sewer spillages, refuse not being collected, collapsing roads, unsafe housing and electricity failures. What does this mean in practice? It means families are forced to buy water they cannot afford, often from the same water tankers that have replaced their tap water. It means that children walk to school on streets flooded by sewerage.

Hon House Chairperson, section 27(1)(b) of the Constitution, guarantees access to water and sanitation, yet millions of South Africans still wake up every morning not knowing where their next bucket of water will come from. Section 26 guarantees

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houses, yet our people continue to live in unsafe and informal settlements with no services.

Section 24 of the Constitution guarantees a safe and healthy environment, yet communities' breath polluted air. Walk through contaminated water and live with overflowing waste. A case in point is Secunda, Emalahleni and Sasolburg in Metsimaholo Local Municipality. We are told we have the right to life, yet our people die of preventable disease in dilapidated hospitals.

We are told we have a right to dignity, yet our fathers are humiliated by a minimum wage that cannot even buy a month's supply of bread, humiliated by chronic and devastating unemployment.

Hon House Chairperson, to deepen a culture of social justice, we must first acknowledge that political freedom without economic emancipation is a lie. Local government is marred by ethical lapses, no sense of objects of local government embedded on section 152 of the Constitution.

The EFF has been clear from the beginning that political freedom without economic freedom is meaningless. You cannot drink

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constitutional promises. You cannot wash your children with speeches about human rights. A democracy that does not deliver land, jobs, water and sanitation to the people is a democracy that serves the elite. It means communities live surrounded by garbage because refuse is not collected. It means homes collapse whenever it rains. For municipalities cannot provide proper infrastructure. It means communities sit in darkness without electricity and streetlights due to load reduction. This is particularly true for the residents of Dr J S Moroka, in Mpumalanga.

Hon House Chairperson, this is not merely a poor administration, this is systematic violation of human rights. Section 10 of the Constitution speaks to the inherent of human rights. That human right must be protected, yet how can we speak about these human rights and dignity when our people are forced to live surrounded by sewerage.

Therefore, we must insource municipal services. Refuse collection, sanitation, water maintenance and road repairs must be carried out by permanently employed municipal workers. Hon House Chairperson, those motivated and not outsourced by

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politically connected contractors who have demonstrated that they cannot complete the project.

Secondly the public jobs guaranteed must be implemented, you see. Every household must have access dignified work linked to infrastructure maintenance, water system, sanitation and housing development. This must entail having a state-owned construction company.

Thirdly, we must undertake a massive rehabilitation of public infrastructure. Pipes must be replaced. Sewerage must be rebuilt and water infrastructure must be modernised. Preventative maintenance must replace crisis management in this country.

Fourthly, communities themselves must have real oversight and power. Ward committees and civic societies even in the design stage of development, you see. They must form part of the decision-making process, not the dog down approach, hon House Chairperson. They must monitor service delivery with binding accountability mechanism. For the people who experience the crisis are the same people who must have power to hold the government accountable.

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Let us also remember that the crisis are not unique to Mpumalanga or the North West, it reflects a broader national crisis. In South Africa millions are still without reliable water. Across South Africa sewerage flows into rivers. Across South Africa informal settlements continue to expand while unemployment deepens. This is why we say that South Africa's democracy is not working for the majority, it works for those who benefit from the current economic system. It works for the political elites who live far away from the suffering of ordinary people. It works for the corporations that profit from privatised services, but it does not work for the poor majority who are a voting majority but a powerless majority.

Hon members, the question before us today is not whether the Human Rights Commission is correct? The evidence speaks for itself. The real question is whether this Council is prepared to confront the structural causes of crisis? Are we prepared to dismantle the tender system that enriches a few while communities suffer? Are we prepared to rebuild the state capacity and employment of thousands of workers to maintain infrastructure? Are we prepared to place the needs of the people above the interests of profit?

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Water is not privilege. Sanitation is not luxury. Housing is not charity. Dignity cannot be negotiable. These are fundamental human rights and any democracy that cannot guarantee them to the majority of the people is a democracy that must be transformed.

Hon House Chairperson, the people of South Africa are tired. They are tired of promises. They are tired of commissions. Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson. [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon Ceza, stop talking about tiredness now and go straight to Laboria Park now. [Laughter.]

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Hon Chairperson, hon members and fellow South Africans, good day. Bread or electricity, this is a stark reality June faces on a regular basis. Why? Because she simply can't afford both. In that moment, poverty stops being a statistic and becomes something far more troubling, a quiet erosion of human dignity. Statistics SA reported that approximately 10,8 million people in South Africa, fall below the food poverty line. Please note this, there is a 2 million improvement on the number. That means they can't even buy the minimum daily calories that they need. These are not only

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economic challenges but are also human rights challenges. The real question before us today is not whether South Africa has one of the most progressive Constitutions in the world, but the real question is, are we doing enough, or have we allowed the promise of equality to remain trapped in legal text instead of becoming a lived reality?

The preamble which we all cited today, and I'm going to quote just a part of it, commits us to, "heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights". Yet we must confront the uncomfortable truth, rights promised in law, are not always rights realised in people's lives. The Bill of Rights in Chapter 2, is described as the cornerstone of our democracy, and section 7(2) places a direct obligation on the state to respect, protect, promote and fulfil these rights, not selectively; not when it's politically convenient, but consistently, every single day. Unfortunately, across the country, the lived reality of South Africans tells us a different story. Communities continue to experience violations of basic rights, clearly guaranteed under section 27 of the Constitution.

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Oversight visits across the provinces confirm this repeatedly. Communities without water for weeks, wastewater functions and treatment plants collapsing and resulting in polluted rivers infested with maggots, like in Matlosana, more specifically, Hartbeesfontein, roads are so damaged that ambulances struggle to reach patients. Our Constitution is sound and our laws are strong, but the execution of these laws remains a challenge. The rights exist on paper, but justice remains just too far out of reach for too many South Africans. On the one hand, we have this progressive Constitution, and on the other hand, we face persistent failure of governance and accountability, and it is in this gap, between constitutional promise and lived reality where the real struggle for social justice must be fought. Social justice is not just an abstract concept; it is deeply personal. It is in the dignity of a child who deserves to learn in a safe environment; it is the safety of a woman who deserves protection from violence, and it is the right of every family to clean water, safe housing, and functioning public services.

Laws matter, but laws without enforcement cannot create justice. When service delivery fails, dignity is violated; when corruption diverts resources, equality is undermined and when accountability disappears, justice itself, is diminished. Human

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rights and policy documents must not only exist in speeches, especially like these today; they must exist in the lived reality of ordinary South Africans. That, members, will take courage. Courage to confront injustice and enforce accountability; courage to ensure that the promise of the Constitution becomes the lived reality of every South African; the responsibility to close that gap between the constitutional promise, and the lived reality rests with all of us in this House.

So, I want to leave you with the words of Benjamin Franklin: Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are not. Let courage be our password for Human Rights Day, 2026. Courage. I thank you.

Ms G V T THLAPI (North West): The hon Chair of the NCOP, Me Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, the Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP, hon Govender, hon members of the NCOP, the hon Minister and Deputy Minister present here today, MECs present, special delegates, ladies and gentlemen ...

Setswana:

... baagi ba Bokone Bophirima ...

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English:

... receive my humble greetings.

Chairperson, the scholarly discourse underscores the pivotal role played by the civil rights movement in raising awareness of social justice issues. They highlighted the severe deprivation faced by black communities and exposed proven disparities in health, education and the economy, thus calling for decisive action to address inequalities and promote a just and equitable society.

These movements have significantly influenced Africa's struggle. The breakthrough of North African countries like Egypt and Libya from the chains of oppression and colonialism gave much hope, inspiration and strength to Southern African states in their struggle to pursue an egalitarian state founded on freedom, justice and equality.

Precisely 66 years ago, on the 21st of March, thousands of black South Africans, both young and the elderly, gripped by despair, agitation and serious resentment towards a racially oppressive system of government, gathered outside the police station in the township of Sharpeville to peacefully protest against the pass

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law Act and the Group Areas Act that fuelled discrimination and oppression against black South Africans.

These laws enabled the forceful removal of black South Africans to segregated places that ... [Inaudible.] ... access to basic services, with employment prospects severely limited. They deepened systematic control and oppression by placing and constraining black people in advanced living conditions, which makes survival extremely difficult.

Resistance of the brutal apartheid regime was witnessed through a peaceful demonstration by black South Africans against the *dompas* [pass] in March 1960, where the police opened fire on peaceful protesters and killed 69 people, with more than 100 injured.

We also give recognition to and honour the women of *Ramotshere Moiloa* who participated in the pass law resistance campaign.

The collapse of the apartheid government did not absolve the administration of 1994 from the challenges faced by the country at that time. The government of 1994 inherited a violent and

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deeply divided society, with the majority of its people facing poverty and inequalities.

The government of the new dispensation had to confront and address these and ... [Inaudible.] ... problems, while also addressing the severe infrastructural backlog and the consequences of centuries of deliberate deprivation in service delivery to black communities.

The Freedom Charter, which is a foundational document serving as a powerful statement of the aspirations of the majority of South Africans on their fundamental rights and freedoms, was the only guiding document the government could adopt in pursuit of a democratic and nonracial society.

The new government adopted the Freedom Charter and it served as a solid foundation for the country's democracy and the culture of constitutional rights. Although the Freedom Charter is not fully implemented, it has for the most part played a role in guiding government's approach in its service-delivery programme.

The principles of the Constitution of South Africa, which was adopted in 1996, and its associated Bill of Rights, were lifted

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from the Freedom Charter, and many of the charter's core demands find direct expression in the legal framework.

We celebrate this year's Women's rights Month under the theme: Bill of Rights at 30: making human dignity real. The theme reminds us that the celebration of this year's Women's rights Month coincides with the commemoration of 30 years of the adoption of the Constitution of South Africa.

The celebration of the Constitution's 30th anniversary happens at the same time as the seventh democratic local government elections that will be taking place later this year. This is indeed a testament to the resilience and the maturity of our democracy.

Our government has made meaningful progress in protecting and advancing fundamental rights. It has also adopted sound policies and a Budget aimed at realising our socioeconomic rights. This is in pursuit of the dignified and equal society as outlined in Chapter 2 – Bill of Rights in South Africa's Constitution.

In providing dignity to low-income earning households, government provides a child support grant and old age grant to

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all eligible South Africans. The proportion of people receiving social grants grew from 12,8% in 2003 to more than 40% today. Social grants have become a primary source of income to the majority of low-income receiving households.

Taking into cognisance the increasing cost of living, government will, from April this year, increase the child support grant by 3,6% while the old age ... increases by 3,7%.

The government makes provision through the subsidised housing programme. Although there is a backlog in subsidised housing, the number of households residing in formal dwellings as a result of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, RDP, housing programme has increased progressively within ... years.

The government is aware of the increased demand for housing, hence the commitment of the Seventh Administration in the provision of housing and its apex priority.

Despite R500 committed from the Constitution ... for the construction of 1 148 housing units in the province of the North West, the government has also committed to spend 80% of the

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budget allocated to Human Settlements for the completion of all blocked housing projects in the province.

Through the implementation of the no-fee school policy, government provides education to all. Government has also introduced scholar transport to reduce the long distances that learners walk to school and to minimise absenteeism on rainy days.

We have also seen how the implementation of the National School Nutrition Programme has been vital in an attempt to address food insecurity and to ensure access to education for all children.

Implementation of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme remains instrumental in affording previously disadvantaged people access to tertiary education. This scheme is crucial in helping them overcome financial barriers to higher education and thereby contributing to the attainment of social justice and economic development.

Government provides access to medical health care services, which is crucial in ensuring that every individual has the right

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to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Access to medical health care capacity has been increasing progressively within the ... years. ... despite the launch of the Desmond Tutu School of Medicine by April 2025 in our province, which will increase our medical health care professionals drastically.

Every year, through the Nelson Mandela-Fidel Castro Medical Training Programme, the province sends a number of students to Cuba to advance their studies in medicine, which also increases the capacity of the province with medical health care professionals.

Government has also made provision to water ... households with access to municipal taps ... has increased progressively within ... years. Access to tap water provision increased from 78,4% in 2004 to 79,8%, which is an increase of 6,3 million households.

Access to improved sanitation has also increased from 61% in 2002 to 83,1% in 2004.

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Today, more than 90% of households have access to electricity. There has been a notable increase in access to electricity since 2002. Access to improved sanitation has also increased.

The Department of Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation, in honour of this year's Women's rights Month, makes provision for the following activities and programmes: gender-based violence and femicide awareness dialogue, social and moral regeneration activities, the educational and foundation support programmes through libraries, and the programme that preserves culture and artistic heritage, as well as the programme that preserves and promotes African mother tongue languages.

We are prone to be affected by the geopolitical environment. As South Africa, we condemn the war in the Persian Gulf. The rising conflict in the Middle East will have a direct economic implication on us if there is no ceasefire. Oil prices will increase, which will affect our commodities and our cost of living. As such, the Budget adopted a few weeks ago will be negatively affected.

We are a government in progress, and just like any other government we are experiencing challenges. Despite a

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6,2% decrease in our official unemployment rate as a result of the provincial government's commitment and efforts on job creation, unemployment remains a serious crisis, especially amongst young people.

We are experiencing water shortages, sewage spillages and housing backlogs. Some of these problems are perpetuated by vandalism and elements of criminality.

In the same breath, I want to assure the people of the province and South Africa that our government has declared 2026 as the year of decisive action to fix local government and transform our economy.

The provincial local government ... [Inaudible.] ... focuses on various issues that ... also limited to accelerating service delivery, restoring the dignity of our communities and charting a clear path towards improving local government and service delivery in the province.

A clear, comprehensive plan and resolution with timeframes has been developed and given to the municipalities as a clear mandate to address human rights issues such as housing, water,

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sanitation, and as a way of giving our people their dignity back.

As I close ... [Inaudible.] [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): On that note, hon MEC, your time has expired. We have listened very well to what you have articulated concerning the North West. Thank you. The next speaker is supposed to be hon Breedt from the Free State.

Afrikaans:

Haak Vrystaat! Transvalers val!

English:

Ms T BREEDT: I thought you had shifted me. House Chairperson, on Saturday, South Africans will commemorate Human Rights Day and reflect on the events of 66 years ago. Much has already been said about this history today, so I will not repeat it.

As someone who teaches debating, I often encourage learners to unpack a topic, to break it down into something clearer and more practical. Today's theme: Deepening a culture of social justice and human rights, can be understood as moving beyond the legal

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recognition of rights towards embedding fairness, equality and dignity into everyday life.

Chapter 2 of our Constitution is the Bill of Rights, and it exists to guarantee these fundamental rights and dignities to all South Africans. However, as I said during the International Women's Day debate in this House, rights on paper mean very little if they are not enforced in practice.

The Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria captures this reality well. In a human rights op-ed, they note that despite our constitutional guarantees, serious challenges remain. They go further to say, socioeconomic inequality, gender-based violence, racial discrimination and xenophobia continue to undermine the full realisation of human rights. Many communities still lack access to water, health care and quality education, highlighting the persistent gap between legal rights and lived realities.

They further remind us that while we commemorate Human Rights Day to uphold the Bill of Rights, these rights must be actively implemented and protected in our daily life if we are to build a

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society where dignity is not just an ideal, but a lived experience for everyone. I could not have said it better.

However, today I want to take a slightly different approach. Rather than revisiting the well-known and often repeated challenges of social justice, and what I frankly believe should have been addressed a long ago, I want to draw your attention to something more immediate, more local and equally as urgent. I want to focus on the SA Human Rights Commission's recent report on service delivery in the North West, my neighbouring province.

The complaints that prompted this province-wide investigation paint a deeply concerning picture. They include widespread challenges with access to water, unreliable electricity, inadequate housing, failing sanitation systems and sewer spillages, deteriorating road infrastructure and poor refuse collection.

Hon Inkosi Nonkonyana – unfortunately I do not see him here now – you say that 90% of houses have access to water and I would like to tell you that you are mistaken. This report proves it.

The commission found that several municipalities are in direct contravention of section 27(1)(b) of the Constitution, which guarantees the right of access to sufficient water. The findings are stark.

Several municipalities are without water. Maquassi Hills stands at over 90% of water interruptions. *Kgetlengrivier* stands nearly as much at 89%. *Moses Kotane*, *Moretele* and *Rustenburg* are all in the region of 70%.

Illegal dumping remains unchecked in municipalities like *Mahikeng*, *JB Marks* and *Kagisano-Molopo*, undermining section 24 of the Constitution.

Inadequate road infrastructure, as in *Ditsobotla*, *Moretele* and *Rustenburg*, contravene section 21 of the Constitution.

Perhaps the most concerning is that children are forced to walk through flooded streets and unsafe roads, infringing on section 12 of the Constitution.

These are not abstract violations. These are daily realities. Allow me to conclude.

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Afrikaans:

Elke Suid-Afrikaner en elke Noordwester het vanjaar die geleentheid om hierdie probleem uit die kussings te lig. Gaan registreer, gaan stem, want groen kan dit doen.

English:

I thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): ... [Inaudible.] ... note of registration. Thank you. The next speaker at the podium is hon Medupe from *Bokone Bophirima*.

Ms O MEDUPE: Hon Chair, hon members of the National Council of Provinces, hon Minister and deputy Ministers, distinguished guests and fellow South Africans, I rise today to address the very soul of our democracy - placing the needs of vulnerable groups at the centre of social economic development.

For the African National Congress, this is a moral compass of our national democratic revolution. Our success is measured not by the wealth of a few, but by the quality of life afforded to the most marginalised - the women carrying the heaviest burden of poverty, the children with dreams waiting to be realised and

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the persons with disabilities fighting daily for inclusion and dignity. As Oliver Tambo envisioned, the children of South Africa must be free from fear, want and despair. I extend that call to all vulnerable groups. Their empowerment is not a favour we grant, but it is a debt we owe.

The Freedom Charter declares that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. The brave women of 1956 made it clear that freedom is incomplete without the total liberation of women. The inclusion of non-sexist laws in our Constitution was a decisive break from our patriarchal past. It is affirming that the national democratic revolution, a united non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa cannot be achieved while women remain oppressed. To speak of a non-sexist society is to commit to dismantling the hierarchies that keep women at the bottom. You cannot empower a nation while keeping half of its citizens in the shadows.

Hon Chairperson, after 30 years of democracy, we have decisively moved beyond the days when women were relegated to the margins. South Africa is a continental leader in women's political representation. In Parliament, representation grew from 33,0% in

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2004 to 42,8% in 2024. In this very House, hon Chair, we have moved from 41% to 44,4%.

Economically, we are breaking the glass ceiling. The government has committed 40% of procurement to women-owned businesses. The Women Empowerment Fund and platforms like SheTradesZA are opening doors to women entrepreneurs. The number of women in senior management has nearly tripled. These are the foundations of an inclusive economy.

Hon Chairperson, women's empowerment is inseparable from her autonomy over her own body. In 1996, the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act affirmed that reproductive rights are fundamental women's rights. We have expanded access to contraceptives and safe abortion services. Nearly nine out of ten South Africans believe girls who fall pregnant should continue with their schooling - a powerful statement to our progressive values.

We must be honest, however, about implementation gaps. While our laws are progressive, access remains uneven. Reports of stockout, moral gatekeeping by health workers and stigma driving women to unsafe procedures are unacceptable. We must ensure that

constitutional rights are a reality in every clinic, village and township. A women's health and her right to choose are non-negotiable. Our democracy is not a spectator sport; it's a functional democracy which requires that all citizens, especially the vulnerable, be active in participating and in shaping their own destinies.

Civil society has been instrumental in holding us accountable. Campaigns like #TotalShutdown and #AmINext have shaken the corridors of power and forced us to listen. They remind us that the guarantees in the Bill of Rights - equality, dignity and security - are living promises that must be defended daily. Section 9 guarantees equality and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act give effect to that guarantee.

Hon Chair, if we are to build a future we dream of, we must invest in those who will inherit it, who are our children. Section 28 of the Constitution was dedicated to children's rights precisely because children are among the most vulnerable. Children are full citizens with the right to a name, basic nutrition, shelter and health care.

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The principle that children's best interests are paramount must guide every decision. This means going beyond grants to ensure quality education, nutritious school meals and safe communities. When we protect children from maltreatment, we plant seeds for a generation of empowered South Africans.

Hon Chairperson, we cannot discuss vulnerability without confronting gender-based violence and femicide, GBVF. President Ramaphosa rightfully described it as a second pandemic. The statistics remain horrifying. Fifteen women are killed every day and every 63 seconds, a woman or child is a victim of GBVF. We have declared this a national disaster and backed it with action.

The government has dedicated critical resources to the National Strategic Plan on GBVF, enacted tougher laws, strengthened bail conditions and established more Sexual Offences Courts and Thuthuzela Care Centres. But law alone cannot change the culture. This is a clarion call to the men of South Africa. As Zukisani Mxoli stated,

If we kill our women who build and make the nation, it's over for the nation and us at large.

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We need men to become active allies, call out abusive behaviour and mentor young boys in positive masculinity, teaching that strength is found in respect and protection, not in violence. Let us build a nation of men who understand that their liberation is tied to the liberation of women.

Finally, I must speak to the bedrock of our support for the vulnerable. The social protection system for millions, a SA Social Security Agency, Sassa, grant, is the difference between hope and despair. Social grants such as the Older Persons Grant, Child Support Grant and Disability Grant are a constitutional right, not a charity.

They are direct investment in human development, putting food on the table for 19 million South Africans every month, keeping children in school and providing a lifeline for the unemployed, subsidising basic services for indigent households, upholding the dignity of the poor and ensuring that grandmothers do not choose between food and electricity.

We remain vigilant, however, concerns about instructive verification methods that threaten to exclude those who the

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grants are meant to serve must be addressed. We must ensure that administrative processes are enabling, not exclusionary.

Hon members, as the ANC, its allies and all patriots prepare to gather this Saturday, 21 March, 2026, for the People's March in Defence of Our Sovereignty, we remain rooted in the struggle started by our forebears to realise that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, governed by the will of the people.

As the ANC, we are organising this march to protect the Constitution that guarantees the rights of our women, children and most vulnerable. We are marching to declare that our democratic gains are non-negotiable. Placing the vulnerable at the centre of development is an essence of our sovereignty. As we fill the streets peacefully and proudly, we affirm that our national dignity is measured by how we treat the marginalised.

Let us stand together and declare that we will not be bullied, not by those who seek to reverse our gains, nor by the patriarchy that holds our women, or by the inequality that robs our children of their future.

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Hon Breedt, I have been listening to you very clearly. Indeed, there are challenges in local government. However, as we raise all the challenges that are there, we also need to refer to those who are advantaged, who have been keeping money separately from municipal accounts in order to run our municipality as redundant, so as where black Africans are governing, nobody should take them seriously, mainly because there's a serious sabotage from those who have been affording for many years. So, I move. Thanks.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Medupe. The next speaker on the podium ... uh-uh, uh-uh, hon Ndhlovu! Hon Ndhlovu, mm-mm!

Delegates, the next speaker on the podium is hon Kaizer-Philander, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Development from the Western Cape, Wale Street.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (Western Cape): Hon Chairperson and hon members, what a beautiful theme: Deepening a culture of social justice and human rights. It sounds excellent; it looks good on a poster, and it will even trend on social media. The only problem is, it is completely disconnected from the lived

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realities of millions of South Africans because, you see, in South Africa, human rights are not being deepened, they are being drained slowly, systematically, and sometimes protect spectacularly. But of course, here in the National Council of Provinces, we are expected to debate it politely, as if people outside this Chamber are not living through the consequences of political failure every single day. Hon members, we would love to remind ourselves of the Sharpeville massacre, and rightly so, but what would those who died for dignity say if they saw what dignity looks like today?

Would they recognise a country where 44 million people live in poverty, 12 million sit in unemployment queues, or would they say, are so that the struggle changed but the suffering stayed? We are told that politics like Black Economic Empowerment, BEE, are the answer, and in theory, they are noble. But in practice, they have become a master class in how to exclude the many, while enriching the few. Let us not pretend that South Africa's 1,2 trillion procurement system is not empowering the masses, it is functioning like a VIP lounge. Access is limited, entry is controlled, and if you don't know someone, you are not getting in. That is not empowerment; that is discrimination with better branding. If you want the real living case study of how human

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rights are treated in this country, let us take a trip to Knysna, because nothing says deepening human rights quite like it.

The refuse is not collected, water systems are collapsing, and unbelievably, there was a decomposing body found in a water reservoir. Yes, hon members, a body found in a reservoir. But please, let us continue debating dignity, discussing values and pretending that this is normal. Through political gymnastics, the ANC, partnered with the PA, supported by the EFF and the collection of political extras, and together they have managed to turn governance into a disaster movie, and it is funny that the hon member, Mr Farmer, would speak to that, as his party is part of the problem, when the responsible Western Cape Government tried to constitutionally intervene, but it was blocked, right here, by this House. So, again, let me ask, who exactly are we deepening human rights for? Certainly, not for the residents of Knysna.

Also, it is not for the people relying on the Akkerkloof Dam, which is running dangerously low, while mismanagement contaminates what little remains; it is not the communities left without services, and it is, definitely, not for the ANC's one

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family; one loaf. Now, it seems like we are deepening a culture of political protection, a culture where cadres protect cadres, failure is defended and accountability is optional. South Africans are not fools, and after the events the past weekend, I must ask, what game is the hon member, Gayton McKenzie, playing? In every election season, he appears not quietly, not responsibly, but with cameras rolling and microphones ready, he makes promises that always centre around him.

The tragedy of Joshlin Smith is not a campaign propaganda; it is not a stage; it is a grieving family and a shaken community. Yet we see a pattern, sudden new evidence hints at hidden masterminds, and dramatic announcements timed perfectly for political theatre. If this evidence is real, why was it not immediately handed over to the police, instead of flaunting it publicly? Justice is not served at a press conference, and investigations are not Netflix or Showmax trailers. Hon Deputy Minister, through you, Chairperson ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Kaizer-Philander, could you just take your seat, please. Hon Farmer, the rules allow you to echo, but not to drown out the speaker, please. Let us obey the rules and let the debate proceed.

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Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (Western Cape): Hon Chairperson, thank you very much for your protection. Hon Deputy Minister, through you, Chairperson, what action will your department take when an hon member of the national Cabinet is alleged to be withholding information that could assist the SA Police Service, SAPS, in protecting a child? Yet we see a pattern of new evidence because it is election season. What we are witnessing is political grandstanding, urgency before elections and silence thereafter. The leadership is demanding integrity, restraint and respect for victims. This is none of that; it is exploitation, and the South Africans deserve better. In the Western Cape, we are focused on action, not headlines or promises of Disneyland trips.

Through the ad hoc committee on Child Protection Reform in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, we are working to strengthen child protection systems across the province. The committee, hon members, of whom I am the chairperson, is mandated to develop legislative and policy proposals and to co-ordinate across multiple government portfolios, to ensure a more aligned and effective response to the needs of children. This committee is reviewing gaps identified in the child protection multistakeholder report that served before the House. Hon Deputy Minister, through you, Chairperson, I've sent multiple letters,

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letters after letters, to the Minister's office, yet as we know, too often matters reach Pretoria and quietly die there. What I've raised is serious, and that is the attacks on social workers in our province.

Approximately, 54 social workers have been attacked, and this is not normal; this is a crisis. Social workers are living in fear, they are unable to do their job safely, and some are even forced to pay protection money. This situation is completely unacceptable and demands urgent attention. Let us not pretend that this is a minor issue and sidestep it, it speaks directly to our commitment to social justice and human rights. So, I'm pleading today, please take this matter up, hon Deputy Minister. Hon Chairperson, a real culture of human rights would look very different from the reality that we face, and that is why the DA proposes something radical, something truly revolutionary in this context, doing the basics right.

Value for money, so that the poor are not robbed through inflated tenders, economic inclusion, so that opportunity reaches communities, not just boardrooms. Zero tolerance for corruption, not selective outrage, not political convenience. and here is the truth that is often ignored, corruption.

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Corruption violates human rights. Inequality in session ...

[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon member, can you take your seat, please. Hon Billy, on what rule are you standing?

Mr M BILLY: Chairperson, I am rising on rule 68(1). It is very clear that hon Farmer is unable to stomach the truth, and he is consistently drowning the speaker, and Chairperson, you have warned him not to do that, but he consistently continues to do that.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Noted, hon Billy. Hon Farmer, you are being warned for the second time now. We know that people are allowed to echo, but you cannot shout at the top of your voice and drown out the person at the podium. No, no, whether she's lying or not, you can debate that at another point, but you are being warned for the second time. All right, I wouldn't want to ask you to leave the Chamber, but please, let us listen to the speaker. You might not like what she is saying, but that can be debated. No, no, I am not entertaining that, please. No, I'm not entertaining you speaking

to me like that. So, please, remain silent, otherwise, I'll ask you to leave the Chamber. Hon member, please continue.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (Western Cape): Hon Chairperson ...

Afrikaans:

Die waarheid maak seer.

English:

The South Africans are not stupid. Doing the basics rights, value for money so the poor are not robbed through inflated tenders, economic inclusion, so opportunity reaches communities, not just boardrooms. Here is the truth that is often ignored, corruption. Hon members, violation of human rights, inequality entrenches systemic injustice, and incompetence in government endangers the safety, the dignity, and the well-being of our people.

So, before we congratulate ourselves on this beautiful theme, let us answer one final question. Are we building a culture of human rights, or are we rehearsing one? Right now, it feels like a performance, a very polished, well-worded and deeply disconnected performance. The South Africans do not need more

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speeches about dignity, they need water in the taps, jobs in their communities and a government that actually works. Until then, deepening human rights will remain exactly what it sounds like today, a slogan, not a reality. I thank you, hon Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you, hon Kaizer-Philander. Hon members, the next hon member that was supposed to take the podium is, hon Peter. But we've been informed that he is unwell and our thoughts and prayers are with him, and we hope that he will be well enough to be back with us pretty soon. So, we will skip hon Peters and go to the hon Hlophe, the MEC for Social Development from Mpumalanga. Hon Hlophe, you have 10 minutes.

Ms N E HLOPHE (Mpumalanga): Deputy Chair, let me rise on the protocol that has been established prior. Hon Deputy Chair ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon MEC, can you please put on your video so that we can see you?

Ms N E HLOPHE (Mpumalanga): Alright. My apologies, hon Deputy Chair.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Alright. Now we can see you. Go ahead please, hon member.

Ms N E HLOPHE (Mpumalanga): Yes, I was saying that we are gathered here today to reflect on the theme that has been highly indicated in our debate and that is deepening a culture of social justice and human rights.

This is not merely a constitutional item but a lived responsibility that calls on all of us to act decisively in improving the quality of life for our people. Human rights and social justice remain at the centre of the work of the provincial department of social development. They serve as our moral compass in addressing poverty, inequality, and discrimination, particularly for the most vulnerable in our society. Our mandate is firmly rooted in the Constitution, which guarantees dignity, equality, and freedom for all who live in our country. As the department of social development, we adopt a human rights-based approach to development. This approach ensures that our policies and programmes are not about charity or temporary relief alone but about restoring dignity and empowering individuals to claim and realise their rights. It

shifts the focus from dependency to capacity and from exclusion to inclusion.

In terms of social justice, it is not just about not achieving substantive equality. It is not enough for us to say that everyone is equal before the law. Our responsibility is to ensure that outcomes are fair, that opportunities are accessible, and that historical injustices are actively redressed. This requires deliberate and sustainable intervention from the state, working together with all sectors of society. Through our programmes, we continue to advance both social protection and social investment.

However, we recognise that social protection alone is not sufficient. This is why we equally prioritise social investment, an approach that focuses on building the capacity of individuals, families, and communities. It is about equipping people with the skills, opportunities, and support they need to become self-reliant and economically active. It is about breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty and creating pathways towards sustainable livelihoods. Our targeted programmes for women, youth, and vulnerable groups are designed to advance this objective. Through development initiatives, we

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are opening doors to economic participation and skills development. Through women empowerment programmes, we are supporting entrepreneurship and financial independence. Through community-based services, we are strengthening resilience at household and community level.

The legislative framework that guides our work, as indicated earlier by my colleagues, ensures that services are delivered within clear norms and standards and that every individual is treated with dignity and respect. Importantly, they remind us that the protection of human rights is not optional; it is a legal and moral obligation. We therefore continue to strengthen our partnerships with civil society organisations, community-based structures, and the private sector. These partners are often at the frontline of service delivery, reaching communities in ways that government alone cannot do. In the most recent financial year, through collaboration with civil society organisations, we created 800 work opportunities under the Expanded Public Works Programme. These are not just statistics. These 800 individuals now have an opportunity to earn an income. These are families able to put food on the table, and these are communities where hope is being restored. It is a demonstration

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of how targeted intervention can change lives and improve standards of living.

These opportunities are distributed across key programme areas, including youth development, women empowerment, community nutrition, HIV/Aids awareness, and child protection services. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities are not only protected but are actively included in decision-making processes and services. Across all levels, we are intentionally ensuring that these opportunities prioritise women, young people, and persons with disabilities because inclusive development is at the heart of social justice.

As we defend a culture of human rights, we must also confront the persistent challenges that continue to undermine our progress. Poverty, inequality, gender-based violence, substance abuse, and social exclusion remain realities for many of our people. These challenges require us to be innovative, responsive, and accountable in the way we deliver services. They require us to continuously evaluate our programmes and ensure that they meet the needs of our communities and that we redress the imbalances of the past. I heard one of my colleagues here

say the ANC is giving people one loaf, one house. We are coming from a very hard situation. We are trying to redress the imbalances of the past with all that we can as the government of the poor.

In conclusion, the call to defend a culture of social justice and human rights is a call to action. Let us remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind and that every South African can live a life of dignity, equality, and hope. Thank you.

Dr I SCHEURKOGEL: Chairperson and fellow South Africans ...

Sepedi:

... dumelang ...

Afrikaans:

... goeiedag ... [... Good day ...]

English:

... good afternoon.

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Let me begin with a simple truth. We speak about human rights with great eloquence in this House. We invoke the Constitution, we quote Mandela, and we celebrate 21 March, yet outside these walls, in the communities that send us here, human rights remain for far too many a promise deferred. To be clear, this is not a political observation. It is honestly a moral indictment on us as South Africans.

Human rights and development are not separate conversations. They are the same conversation. You cannot speak about dignity without running water. You cannot speak about equality whilst a child walks 4 km to school along an unlit road in the dark. You cannot speak about freedom whilst a family deals with sewage in their backyard. Freedom without development is a hollow word, and development without rights is just infrastructure for the select few.

We must be honest with ourselves. So many South Africans are still being left behind, not by accident but by neglect, by the gap between what we say in this Chamber and what actually happens on the ground. Nowhere is that gap more painful, more inexcusable than in the lives of women. We have some of the most progressive gender protections on paper in the world, yet in our

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communities, women are still spoken about as if they are lesser – still spoken over, still spoken down to, and still told that they have value in domestic work. They are still being killed by men who claim to love them. The femicide statistics in our country is not just numbers. They are names. They are mothers, they daughters, and they are sisters who deserve better from a society that keeps failing them. We have men in positions of authority, in homes, in communities, and sometimes in government, who still fundamentally believe that women exist to serve. This is not culture; this is oppression, and we must name it as it is. Robert Sobukwe says it simply, and he says it well: There is only one race, the human race.

Here at home, in this House, we must also confront what we sometimes prefer not to say out loud. Racial prejudice is still alive in South Africa. Discrimination is still real, and the legacy of apartheid did not just dissolve because we declared democracy. In Midvaal, water flows from taps. In Mafube, it flows from tankers. In Madibeng, it does not flow at all.

Our Constitution should not only live in courtrooms or in speeches. We must reinvest in it. It is not a political instrument but a living commitment to every South African that

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still waits for that promise to reach them, and it is definitely not delivered in a loaf of bread. I challenge every member in this House to do that. Go back to the Constitution this Human Rights Month, not to mine it for political advantage but to ask honestly: What are we doing about the inequality that still exists? What are we doing for women who cannot walk safely at night, for children that struggle to get into school, for people that live differently in this world and are punished for that, for the communities drowning in underdevelopment whilst we debate?

I am glad the hon Nonkonyana has come back here, and I see he is using percentages like the smaller parties. You say we have 90% access to water, but only 60% is reliable. In the Free State, reliable water is only 50%. In the North West, it is only 40%. I also see the hon Nonkonyana has started reading DA policy on cadre deployment. I think Minister Siviwe's strategy on reading for meaning is actually working for you. Let me return to the hon Nonkonyana. I think he sees only shacks in Khayelitsha and then running water. There is no running in your village, so you get it from Acasia Park.

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To the chief whip from KwaZulu-Natal, I don't know if we are in 1999 because we are in 2026. Your speech sounds like the ANC hasn't actually achieved anything. To the South African Local Government Association, I am speechless. You didn't add any value because the dreamland you are talking about and what we see in municipalities is not the truth.

To the MKP, before we can move forward, just first sort out who is leading you or who still has a job. To the EFF, you lecture us about governance but first go back to where you govern: Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Tshwane, Midvaal, Ditsobotla, Madibeng, and Mogale City, all of which you went to destroy when you became the kingmaker.

Lastly, to the hon Farmer ... I think, hon Kaizer-Philander, I do not need to add more "klappe" [slaps] because I think the hon Farmer is still seeing stars from what you brought here. So, maybe, hon Farmer, you can go back the Baiza Circus Party where only spotlights live. I thank you.

Mr P NOE: Good afternoon, hon members. Deputy Chair, firstly, let me thank the Deputy Minister. He wouldn't have opened this debate so sharply by reminding us of where we are coming from

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and where we are and where we are going by reading to us the preamble of the Constitution. That is very much appreciated. Hon Chairperson, the august House and millions of South African citizens in the diaspora, it is befitting that we begin this debate by citing the powerful words of Dr Debasish Mridah, who said, open quotes, "An investment in education pays the best dividends that last for generations."

These words resonate profoundly with the journey of our democratic South Africa. Over the past 30 years, the ANC-led government has made concerted and deliberate efforts to significantly invest in the education of the majority of South Africans. South African citizens, in particular, ebony-skinned people, as a means to rescue them from the deep-seated underdevelopment that was imposed by colonialism and later entrenched by apartheid.

For centuries, the majority of South Africans were systematically denied quality education as part of deliberate strategy to suppress their potential and maintain inequality. I can vividly remember the set books that some of us had to read, hon Scheurkogel, where we were taught to draw locusts, frogs,

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lizards and doves. When I look back, I can't find where they have benefited me or added any value to any South African child.

That is the education system we are coming from, on which my dear hon chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development wants to grandstand and claim as if she doesn't know about it. I will therefore give you, in your honour, the debate that will be ensuing later in this House as far as the B-BBEE is concerned so that you can come and debate. It will give you the statistics more than what we gave you here.

Education remains the most powerful instrument through which we can restore dignity and unlock opportunity. Education equips individuals with the skills, knowledge and confidence necessary to break the cycles of poverty and inequality which continue to affect many communities. For this reason, investment in education has always been central to the vision of building a just, equal and prosperous South Africa.

The people's government over the past three decades has expanded access to education and has been guided by the values of the Freedom Charter and Universal Declaration on Human Rights, UDHR, that affirm education as fundamental human rights. The Freedom

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Charter boldly declared that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened to all. It is clause 8 of the Freedom Charter, hon Breedt, and please read it in conjunction with the Chapter 2 of the Constitution, clause 29.

Compare and you will find that we know where we are coming from, we know where we currently are and we know where we are going.

Afrikaans:

Ons baiza nie. [Laughter.]

English:

It is this commitment that continues to inspire the ANC-led government policy today. This vision has culminated in the construction and refurbishment of over 3 355 schools across our country, particularly in historically disadvantaged communities that were deliberately neglected under apartheid.

Over the past 30 years, in a hard-end democracy, the government has increased National Student Financial Aid Scheme eightfold, translating to approximately R50 billion, benefiting more than 5,5 million students across the country. This intervention has fundamentally changed the social and economic mobility of many

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young South Africans who are the first in their families to enter institutions of higher learning.

Notably, the ANC is still advancing the plight of the missing middle through the policy of discussions and reforms. So, our responsibility as Members of Parliament is not to come here and grandstand; it is to go out there to monitor and do our oversight responsibility to make sure that such policies do see the light of the day and succeed. We must reprimand our children for misusing the money that is meant to educate them.

Equally so, the ANC reaffirms its longstanding position of making History a compulsory subject. We call on the Minister of Basic Education to implement the recommendations of the History Ministerial Task Team, because this will assist in decolonising and amplifying the Afrocentric perspective. In addition, it tremendously aids in advancing social cohesion and in calculating the culture of patriotism in young people of our country.

Inspired by the philosophy of Ubuntu, the *Education White Paper 6 on Special Education Needs: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*, reflects the government's commitment to

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ensuring that education is accessible to all children, including those with disabilities. Inclusive education is a cornerstone of a just and compassionate society that recognises the inherent dignity worth of every individual.

To advance this commitment, there is an expansion to 554 accredited special schools and the number of full-service schools. Inclusive education is not merely a policy commitment; it is a moral obligation and an affirmation of the right to access to education.

The investment made in education continues to play a vital role in skills development and technological innovation within our country and across African continent. As we enter an era of fourth industrial revolution, our education system carries the enormous responsibility of preparing young people with digital and technical skills required to participate meaningfully in a rapidly evolving global economy.

Over the past three decades, the private sector has collaborated with the state to maximize investment in education, and this partnership has become one of the strongest pillars of our democracy. Through corporate social investment initiatives and

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public-private partnerships, more than R10 billion has been invested in the education of our children. When business, government and communities work together, we are able to achieve far more than any single sector could achieve.

Towards honouring the fallen heroes and heroines whose blood gave birth to the right of access to education, it is imperative that we join millions of people in the peace march taking place on Saturday, 21 March 2026, which is Human Rights Day. Their sacrifices remind us that the freedoms we enjoy today were not easily won. Many brave men and women dedicated their lives to the struggle so that the future generations could live in a democratic society where education is a right and not a privilege.

We owe it to the departed to protect the sovereignty of our country and to safeguard the democratic gains that so many sacrificed their lives to achieve. By continuing to invest in education, we honour their legacy and ensure that their vision for a safer and prosperous South Africa leads on.

Just before I leave the stage, Chairperson, allow me to just say to some of the hon members who stood on this podium: They so

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much grandstand when they stand here and actually fail to communicate what they are supposed to communicate to South Africans. You fail to support the budget in this House when the budgets are debated here. You don't support all of the budgets, but you come here and want to tell us about what is not happening in your area.

So, your first responsibility is to support the budget so that Ministers can go and deliver services. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Noe, can you take your seat please? Hon Dlamini.

Mr E NZIMANDE: No chair, I want just ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No, no, no, on which rule? [Interjections.] Which rule are you standing on?

Mr E NZIMANDE: Oh, are you asking hon Dlamini?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No!
[Interjections.] Nzimande, yeah!

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Mr E NZIMANDE: Oh, are you correcting yourself?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Yes!

Mr E NZIMANDE: No! I want to ask whether he is going to be able to take a question that if we were to pass the budget ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): All right!

No, no! Ask whether he wants to take your question, first.

[Interjections.]

AN HON MEMBER: No, stop to steal!

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Will you want to take a question?

Mr P NOE: No, no, no, Chair! There is no time for that.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): You are not taking your question.

Mr P NOE: Chair, I want to remind, lastly, all of them that the elephant in the room is one, and that is the ANC. This is

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because this House, as you look at it, is full of ANC members. It does not matter which colour you are wearing because all of the political parties in this room have got ANC members. So, they are the offsprings of the ANC.

So, there is nothing they can do without the policies of the ANC. That is why some of them have not even gone to conferences because it is in their heads to remove the ANC, so that they come and implement the only policies that they ever knew. There is none that they have come up with to replace the policies that they have learned in the ANC.

Lastly, the Madam is no longer here. Hon member, Adriaanse, I just wanted to tell her, however, in Sesotho, ...

Sesotho:

O tla tseba jwang monate wa kgora, o sa tsebe bohloko ba tlala?

English:

They must learn that in today's South Africa, we know where we are coming from and we know where we are going. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you, hon members. Thank you very much, hon Noe. Hon delegates, when hon Noe was talking about the elephant in the room, I thought he was talking about the IFP. [Laughter.] Hon delegates, thank you all very much for participating in the debate. I will now call upon the hon Deputy Minister to close the debate.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Mr A C Nel): Hon Deputy Chairperson, thank you very much. I would like to start by thanking all the hon members for their deeply passionate and generally very thoughtful inputs. They were sprinkling of campaign speeches that I supposed with elections on the horizon. However, I think for me the important thing is that members in discussing this very important topic really paid heed to the words of Nelson Mandela that I quoted earlier when on the occasion of him signing our Constitution into law on 10 December when he said:

Let tolerance for one another's views create peaceful conditions which gives space for the best in all of us to find expression and to flourish.

Above all, let us work together in striving to banish homelessness; illiteracy; hunger and disease.

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I think in that spirit that members have displayed in this debate you have in a very real way, kickstarted a year long celebration of the 30th anniversary of our Constitution. To stress that when we celebrate, we do not mean an uncritical jubilation. We are saying reflect, because there is a lot to reflect about and to reflect about critically.

There is a lot that we need to renew and certainly we need to recommit.

I think maybe on a very personal note; to say I had a tremendous honour and privilege to be elected as a Member of Parliament in the First democratic Parliament in 1994 and to have been part of the constitutional assembly from 1994 to 1996.

I think the depth of public participation and inputs, really put give a lie the assertion that this Constitution was imposed from somewhere else. It is a peoples Constitution. As the hon Mavimbela says, we must be very cautious of rewriting our history.

I think the hon members Chiloane, Nonkonyane, Mavimbela, Maseko, Mabale-Huma, Thlapi, Medupe, Hlophe and Noe, really spoke with

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passion and in many cases with great detail about the progress that we have made over the past 30 years. They have elaborated that in the fields of health, education and basic service delivery.

On the other hand, the hon members Du Plessis, Kennedy, Khumalo, Farmer, Adriaanse, Breedt, Kaizer-Philander and Scheurkogel, listed a number of challenges. I think both of those approaches are not without merit. I think we would do well to recall the words of former President Thabo Mbeki on 8 May 1996 in his famous I am an African speech on the occasion of the adoption of the Constitution, when he said and I quote:

We should never become despondent because the weather is bad nor should we turn triumphalist because the sun shines.

The process of social progress and especially the transformation of a society is deeply wounded as ours through centuries of colonialism and decades of apartheid, will never be a linear process. It will be characterised by both successes and failures, advances and setbacks. We will stumble. The question is: Whether we as a nation will stand up?

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I think we are a nation that has stumbled often. However, the important thing is that we always stood up. We also need to recognise that the solution to many challenges will give rise to new problems and challenges. Just as the expansion of housing to millions and millions, who never had access to housing will give rise to challenges in the supply of water, electricity and other services.

However, I think we have demonstrated great foresight as a nation to put in place institutions such as the Public Protector and the Human Rights Commission to support that.

I think lastly, and the very few seconds that remain I think where we find common ground in this debate is firstly, the recognition that civil, political and socioeconomic rights are inextricably linked. I think that is the point that the hon Du Plessis made from the outset the recognition that the past of colonialism and apartheid and the present realities that we have with is the very flawed and a complex and a difficult relationship. The divergence between the promise of the Constitution and the lived reality in the words of the hon Nonkonyane that the people of South Africa deserve better. I think it is something that we all agree on. The importance of

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arts and culture. The centrality of the government. The question of trust, the issue of active citizenship raised by the hon Ceza and of course the thread that organised crime and corruption poses to our constitutional democracy. With that, thank you very much. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Once again I would like to thank the hon Deputy Minister, Nel for his presence in the House and leading this debate. We want to also thank all the permanent delegates, MECs and all other special delegates and SA Local Government Association, Salga, representatives for availing themselves for this sitting.

Hon delegates that conclude the business of the day. The House is now adjourned.

Debate concluded.

The Council adjourned at 17:53.