

**STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA  
PROVINCE ON 05 JULY 2019.**

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Legislature;

Honourable Chief Whip of the Majority Party;

Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;

Members of the National Assembly present;

Members of the Mpumalanga Legislature;

Colleagues in the Mpumalanga Executive Council;

Executive Mayors and Councillors present;

Provincial Chairperson of SALGA;

Provincial Judge President Justice Francis Legodi and all esteemed members of the judiciary;

Provincial Commissioner, General Zuma;

The Consular attaché of the Republic of Mozambique

Excellencies Representatives of the Republic of Cuba;

Excellencies Representatives of the Russian Federation;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

His Majesty Ingwenyama Makhosonke II;

His Majesty Ingwenyama Mabhokho III;

Chairperson of the National House of Traditional Leaders, Ikosi SE Mahlangu;

President of CONTRALESA, Kgoshi Mokoena;

Chairperson of the Mpumalanga Provincial House of Traditional Leaders, Inkosi uNgomane;

Acting Director-General Mr Matthew Mohlasedi and all Provincial Heads of Mpumalanga Government, Chairpersons and CEO of Parastatals and other Chapter 9 Institutions;

The Acting Chairperson of the Public Service Commission in Mpumalanga;

The Leadership of the African National Congress, represented by Acting Chairperson  
Cde Mandla Ndlovu;

Veterans of our struggle for freedom;

Distinguished guests; Ladies and Gentlemen;

Sanibonani;

Lotshani; Dumelang; Good Morning;

1. Madam Speaker, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May this year, millions of South Africans went to the polling stations and voted for the political parties of their choice. South Africans overwhelmingly voted for the African National Congress for the sixth consecutive term.
2. We deliver this State of the Province Address in a month wherein the whole world unites to celebrate the life of the gallant fighter for the liberation of our country, uTata Nelson Mandela.
3. uTata Mandela and all other architects and forefathers of our democracy such as Walter Sisulu, Robert Sobukwe, Joe Slovo, uMama Albertina Sisulu and uTata OR Tambo, would have been pleased to see the kind of South Africa that they fought for, fulfilling and successfully concluding one of the most essential tenets of a democratic dispensation.
4. Our people have once more demonstrated to the whole world that we are a country that follows the dictates of our Constitution. Our democracy is solid, safe, guaranteed and rapidly maturing.
5. We are indeed the government of the people by the people and for the people. This means that our people are the source of our democracy and that absolute sovereignty lies with them.
6. Through their votes, our people have, in no uncertain terms charged the Ruling Party with the responsibility of forging ahead in its endeavours to unite all our communities in the fight against the complex challenges of crime, unemployment, poverty, chronic illnesses and inequality.

7. They are demanding that the ANC should continue to lead the National Democratic Revolution as articulated in the Freedom Charter. They are also expecting the ANC to continue working with them to “Grow Mpumalanga Together”.
8. Madam Speaker, we are humbled and truly honoured by the confidence, trust and the huge responsibility that the people of this country and of Mpumalanga in particular, have entrusted upon us.
9. Allow me to express our most profound gratitude to all South Africans and to the people of Mpumalanga in particular for their unwavering support for the African National Congress during the recent general elections.
10. Our people have given us a fresh mandate to go back and work even harder in combating the complex challenges facing our province and our country.
11. We do not and shall never take this show of confidence in us for granted. We also know that our people have clearly conveyed their impatience against the slow pace of implementation when they said **“Khawuleza ANC”**. ***We shall respond accordingly.***

### ***The Mandate***

12. Madam Speaker, as we usher in this Sixth Mpumalanga Provincial Administration, our work will be guided and informed by among others:
  - **Firstly, the ANC 2019 Election Manifesto**; which is a coherent and bold people’s plan for a better life for all, addressing the persistent realities of unemployment, poverty and inequality.
  - **Secondly, the National Development Plan(NDP)** which seeks to unite our people around a common goal of achieving prosperity and equality by promoting active citizenry to strengthen development, democracy and accountability. The NDP also strives to bring about faster inclusive

economic growth through higher investment and greater labour absorption leading up to 2030.

- **Thirdly, the Mpumalanga Vision 2030 Strategic Implementation Framework**, which provides a provincial expression of the key priorities, objectives and targets as postulated in the NDP and;
- Lastly, we are also guided by the **Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path** whose primary goal is to place our Province on a sustainable economic growth path.

### ***The Manifesto and the Seven key Priority Areas***

13. Madam Speaker, Members and Esteemed guests, the government's 25 Year Review report has detailed our success stories and the challenges which form the basis of our future plans.
14. As the leader of society and the guardian of the National Democratic Dispensation, the ANC government in this province has drawn many hard lessons on the choices we have made, their implementation, successes and shortcomings.
15. This has encouraged us to be more focused and rigorous in the implementation and monitoring of our plans as mandated by the overwhelming majority of our people.
16. Madam Speaker, we have heeded to the clarion call made by His Excellency, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa in his State of the Nation Address that all of us, without exception, should focus on the seven key priority areas which are;
  - Economic Transformation and Job Creation;
  - Education, Skills Revolution and Health;

- Consolidating the Social Wage through reliable and quality basic services;
- Spatial Integration, Human Settlements and Local Government;
- Social Cohesion and Safe Communities;
- A Capable, Ethical and Developmental State, and lastly;
- A better Africa and World.

17. We further commit ourselves to making a meaningful contribution to the commitments made by His Excellency, the State President when he said and I quote;

***“Within the next 10 years we would have made progress in tackling poverty unemployment and inequality where;***

***- No person in South Africa will go hungry.***

***- Our economy will grow at a much faster rate than our population.***

***- Two million more young people will be in employment.***

***- Our schools will have better educational outcomes and every 10 year old will be able to read for meaning.***

***- Violent crime will be halved.” Close quote.***

18. Madam Speaker, our vision is centred around creating a Mpumalanga where all who live in it shall have;

- Access to decent employment that allows our people to participate in the mainstream economy;
- Clean drinking water without having to walk long distances;
- Access to adequate sanitation with effective waste water treatment plants;

- Food on the table where no one lives below the poverty line;
- Access to decent shelter irrespective of location;
- Access to quality healthcare that improves the lifespan of the average Mpumalanga citizen;
- Access to quality education aimed at improving numeracy, comprehension and technical skills;
- Access to electricity where no child studies under a candle light;
- Safer communities wherein women, children , people with albinism and the vulnerable feel free to walk on the street; and
- Enjoy harmonious relations with our brothers and sisters from the African diaspora and the world.

19. We will draw our vision from the accumulated experience of the last 25 years which has deepened our insights and understanding of the fundamental tasks of governance.

20. Over the past 25 years, the lives of the people of Mpumalanga have changed for the better. Millions of our people have houses, access to electricity and running water. Children from poor communities have access to free education and free primary healthcare.

21. In the past five years, the number of HIV positive people on antiretroviral treatment has doubled whilst the overall rate of new infections is now decreasing. Over 1.5 million of our most vulnerable citizens receive social grants.

### ***Economic Transformation and Job Creation***

22. Madam Speaker and Honourable Members, our economy has contracted by 3.2 per cent in the first quarter of 2019 driven largely by declines in mining, manufacturing and agricultural sectors.
23. Top of our agenda is to **transform the economy to serve all people**, through shared and inclusive economic growth, expanding ownership in the economy to benefit mostly the disadvantaged sections of our society.
24. This can only be achieved through the collaborative action by government, business, labour and civil society.
25. In an effort to address our challenges, the Province will embark on a path aimed at;
- Increasing our Provincial economic growth;
  - Reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality;
  - Improving the quality of our road network which serve as the artery of our economic activity;
  - Increasing economic empowerment opportunities for women, the youth, military veterans and people with disabilities.
26. Madam Speaker, for us to achieve the above stated goals, this Administration shall;
- **Implement our investment promotion strategy** that will ensure that we attract new investments and improve the level of industrialisation and participation of the private sector.
  - Strengthen and expand our social enterprise development programme to include more SMMEs and co-operatives with a special focus on those owned by youth and women;

- As part of supporting and developing the township economy, we will build industrial parks that will house emerging industrialists in the manufacturing sector;
- We shall serve as their primary market by offering procurement opportunities in all our infrastructural programmes;
- We shall also assist them with bridging finance through our partnership with financial institutions;
- This Social Enterprise programme will be linked to training of SMMEs by MRTT and other institutions;
- We will create a programme dedicated to the development and promotion of women in the built environment.
- The Province will facilitate the investment in alternative sources of energy with the dual aim of reducing dependence on the Eskom grid and creating opportunities for SMMEs.
- We shall create a trading entity that will focus on targeted support programmes for SMMEs and Cooperatives with special focus on rural and township economies.
- In order to optimise the functionality of our Government Nutrition Programme to increase its reach, we will restructure the manner in which the programme functions. To achieve this, we have taken a decision to transfer this function from MEGA to the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs.

27. Madam Speaker, our policy choices and our strategic direction will focus largely on fighting youth unemployment with a specific emphasis on those that are not in any employment, those that are not at school and those that are not in any kind of training or skills development activities.
28. This is by far the largest cohorts of youth that are unemployed or unemployable. These are young people who for various unfortunate reasons dropped, out of school before they complete their matric or have completed matric.
29. We are equally aware of the plight of unemployed graduates. The plan that we shall outline today seeks to address their challenges as well.
30. Madam Speaker, the road ahead of us is long and full of challenges which may have the potential of derailing us, force us to continuously review our strategies and delay us from reaching our targeted goals on time.
31. Despite all these challenges we shall remain focused, steadfast and resolute in our ultimate goal of bringing a better life to our people.
32. Ours is work in progress, and progressively we have done more than any other young democracy like ours could have done.

### ***Youth Development Initiatives***

33. Madam Speaker, the ANC-led government has declared unemployment, especially **Youth Unemployment**, a **national crisis** which needs urgent and decisive actions that will address this scourge.
34. To this end we have decided to take a bold step and launch a **Youth Development Fund** to the tune of R250 million over a period of five years.

35. The Provincial Government shall develop a unit to manage the fund.
36. The fund shall focus on youth development programmes, among others;
- Support small emerging and micro enterprises in particular those that are in townships and rural areas and are owned and run by the youth;
  - Promote innovations, inventions and creativity among the youth through incubation with special emphasis on young people from disadvantaged areas;
  - Provide on the job skilling through learnerships and placements and partner with the private sector as well as SETAs;
  - Provide starter packs for learners who have graduated from skills training to give them an opportunity to start their own businesses; and
  - Provide start-up capital and bridging finance for those who may need it and offer support and technical assistance to SMMEs run by the youth and women.
37. During the current financial year the Department of Economic Development and Tourism through LED Desks will establish Youth Development Centres in all Municipalities that will offer one stop business support services focusing on Youth Development Initiatives.
38. These centres will collect data of unemployed youth and also offer help to those who need registration of entities, access to finance and markets.

39. We will also be working closely with a number of private sector enterprise development funds including but not limited to **Anglo Zimele Development Fund** which has a Youth Development Hub, **Exxaro Enterprise Development Fund** which also houses the Youth Development Initiative and the **Sasol Enterprise Development Fund** which has a leg that focuses on Youth Empowerment.
40. All our other social partners like South 32, Glencore, South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) and others have committed themselves to joining hands with us in aggressively dealing with the crisis of Youth Unemployment and Growing Mpumalanga Together.
41. We have also taken a firm decision that government infrastructure projects must upscale their programmes where they employ young people who are graduates and are looking for experiential work in order to qualify.

### **Strategic Infrastructure Programmes**

42. Madam Speaker, our decision to invest in the socio- economic infrastructure that started 25 years ago and was intensified during the last administration continues to bear fruit.
43. Government will continue investing in our socio economic infrastructure in the next 5 years to boost faster economic growth and improve the lives of many people in this province.
44. We will expand the Provincial industrial base by focusing mainly on targeted sectors that are labour intensive, promote beneficiation with value chain development potential for job opportunities; such as Agro-processing.
45. We will prioritize strategic infrastructure that supports economic development and service delivery, including;

- Bulk water and sanitation infrastructure;
- Road infrastructure network particularly in areas with high volumes of trucks like the coal haulage network systems in Gert Sibande and Nkangala;
- Rural development programme through upgrading of rural and township road infrastructure, but also creating strong urban-rural linkages;
- Support infrastructure that promotes agriculture especially our emerging farmers; and
- Build hospitals, clinics, schools and Early Childhood Development Centres.

46. Madam Speaker, the first phase of the Moloto Corridor Development Programme which entails the upgrading of road infrastructure is nearing completion. The expansion of the road has helped in reducing the number of accidents.

47. The cost of the first phase of the Moloto Corridor Development Programme is R3, 7 billion, creating 12 500 job opportunities.

### ***Agriculture***

48. Madam Speaker, agriculture remains the backbone of our economic system both in terms of employment generation as well as provincial and national gross domestic income contribution.

49. Mpumalanga remains a largely rural province. Our people are still dependent on mainly agriculture for their self-sustenance.

50. We have completed the Mkhuhlu agri-hub, and anticipate completing the Mkhondo agri-hub in the current financial year.

51. During the next 100 days of this administration we will be calling for requests for proposals for entities with expertise who can assist us with implementing our marketing and operational strategy for these agri-hubs.
52. The establishment of the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market (MIFPM) remains a critical lever to stimulate increased agricultural production for both the domestic and export markets.
53. We will identify, isolate and address the shortcomings that have plagued our International Fresh Produce Market.
54. Before the end of this financial year, we will commence with the first phase of the top infrastructure for the Fresh Produce Market which will be operationalised in the next financial year.
55. In line with the dictates of our Election Manifesto, we as the Province of Mpumalanga, will support the amendment of section 25 of the Constitution to clearly define the conditions under which expropriation of land without compensation can take place.
56. This will be done in a way that promotes economic development, agricultural production and food security. We will speed up the resolution of all outstanding land restitution claims.
57. We will continue working with established agribusinesses to ensure that the sector continues to increase its contribution to export earnings and how emerging black farmers can be assisted to meaningfully enter this business on a sustainable basis.
58. We will accelerate the transfer of title deeds to the rightful owners as part of the rapid land release programme that makes parcels of land available for those who want to build houses for themselves.

59. We will ensure security of tenure through adequate recognition and protection of the rights of long-term occupiers, women and labour tenants in communal land tenure.
60. We will advance women's access to land and participation in agriculture and rural economies.
61. We will continue to invest in Agriculture including revitalizing and re-engineering some of the programmes that are currently running.
62. These will include Fortune 40 young farmers programme which will benefit from the addition of 35 new incubation farms, ***Phezukomkhono Mlimi*** and ***Zondindlala*** programmes.
63. Our focus henceforth will be on capacitating and strengthening people that are passionate about farming irrespective of whether they are cooperatives, individual farmers or SMMEs.
64. We have come to the conclusion that some of the people who received our farming assistance in the past, in particular cooperatives, may have been people with fleeting and or an ill-informed interest in farming.
65. We will conduct an audit on all allocated farms and identify those that are unused. These farms can be reassessed with the intention to make them productive.
66. We must use these farms for the purpose of food security, job creation and for attracting direct foreign investment.

67. We will be left with no choice but to compel the owners of unused farms to sign lease agreements with farmers who have capacity and the will to use these farms productively by also transferring skills in the long run.
68. In collaboration with the University of Mpumalanga, we intend to use some of the farms for research purposes by University of Mpumalanga postgraduate students.
69. The owners of the farms will benefit through lease agreements and or profit sharing with the lessee farmers but also learn critical and practical skills of farming.
70. We will change the structure and the face of some of our agricultural programmes so that we maximize their potential.
71. We will **increase primary agricultural production in crops, fruits, vegetables and animal production** through the provision of production inputs, technical advice, training and linkage to the readily available markets.
72. Working closely with the University of Mpumalanga, we will harness our investment in agricultural research, new smart technologies and the training of farmers to enhance the sector's market share in global trade.
73. In the next five years, the Province has planned to fully operationalize the Athole Research Farm and reintroduce its agricultural and research services. We will also renovate and convert the experiential training students' accommodation facilities.

### ***Nkomazi SEZ***

74. Madam Speaker, the Nkomazi Special Economic Zone is one of our catalytic projects that will unlock economic opportunities and change the landscape of our industrial development.
75. This SEZ will create numerous opportunities for the development of SMMEs, with a specific focus on agro-processing.
76. We shall also develop a smart integrated human settlement, which will encompass smart youth digital centres, within the vicinity of the SEZ in pursuit of economic stimulation.

### ***Mining and Environmental Management***

77. Honourable Members, the failure by mining houses in our coal hubs in Gert Sibande and Nkangala to adhere to legislated prescripts aimed at protecting our environment and specifically, the quality of our water supply is a cause for concern.
78. The recently released report by the Centre for Environmental Rights, highlighted a worrying pattern wherein coal mining operations utilise 8million cubic metres of water a year without adhering to the regulations outlined in the National Water Act.
79. In order to mitigate and avert an environmental disaster, I have decided to appoint an Environmental Management Committee that will, amongst others,
- Conduct environmental impact analysis and aspect evaluation.
  - Assess how climate change will impact on our agricultural economy in the near future;
  - Establish mechanisms that shall mitigate underground water contamination , air pollution, and ultimately develop measures to enforce adherence to environmental prescripts.

### ***Township and rural economies***

80. Madam Speaker, the revitalisation of township and rural economies and of the informal sector is gaining traction in our policy formulation at provincial and at municipal level.
81. To date most of the informal and township economies are survivalist, conducted to supplement family income and in most cases are the only source of income.
82. What is missing is the understanding of why some succeed and are sustainable whilst others fail.
83. We shall, in the next 100 days, conduct a comprehensive investigation on the challenges facing our informal and township economies.
84. This will allow us to develop a solution based approach aimed at stimulating economic activity in our townships and rural areas.

### ***Manufacturing***

85. Madam Speaker, we call upon our emerging young industrialists to respond to our Social Enterprise Development Programme.
86. This programme has a huge potential to build the capacity of our township and rural manufacturing businesses in the areas of steel fabrication into finished products like door frames, window frames and concrete products like paving bricks, building bricks and blocks.
87. The market for these industrialists is readily available through Government's catalyst projects.

88. In expressing our support for youth and women owned SMMEs, we shall apportion R300 million for the next five financial years for paving of municipal township and rural roads across the Province.
89. The first tranche of funds will be an amount of R100 million in the current financial year. The municipalities earmarked to benefit from this programme are ***Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Dr JS Moroka, Nkomazi, Thembisile Hani, Emakhazeni, Bushbuckridge, Dipaleseng, Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Lekwa and Thaba Chweu Local Municipalities.***
90. This commitment is in line with our Social Enterprise Development Programme. Our strategy will translate our commitment to the localization of production and procurement of goods into concrete plans.

### ***Education***

91. Madam Speaker, we concur with President Ramaphosa that within the next 10 years our education system must have better educational outcomes and every 10 year old child should be able to read for comprehension.
92. We can only achieve this goal if we focus on the early childhood education stage of our children.
93. In the words of our struggle icon uTata Nelson Mandela, and I quote ***“education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. It is the only vehicle to free our people from the bondage of poverty, unemployment and inequality.”*** Closed quote.
94. Honourable Members, I am sure you will agree with me when I say, education is the only means to usher our people towards the 4th Industrial Revolution.

95. Research upon research has come to the same conclusion that a child who has been exposed to and received early childhood development learning experience, is likely to finish high school education, with a better chance of completing tertiary education and succeed in life.
96. We will build 157 Early Childhood Development Centres in our Province and equip them with the necessary e-learning facilities in this Administration.
97. There is also a need to tackle the root causes of the drop-out rates in our schools, especially of the girl child and continue to improve the quality of education and ensure that the curriculum responds to the Provincial skills and training needs.
98. **School Infrastructure** helps to create an enabling environment to enhance teaching and learning.
99. For this reason, we will accelerate the eradication of pit latrines in our schools, operationalize the Thaba Chweu Boarding School, and complete two new schools in fast growing municipalities by September 2019 namely, the Prince HR Nkosi Primary School in the City of Mbombela and the Mogalitoa Primary School in eMalahleni.
100. In this current Administration, our priority is to alleviate **overcrowding in urban areas**. We will add more classrooms in our schools, we will continue with the construction of new schools, commencing with the construction of Volksrust Primary School.
101. In the next 100 days, I shall , together with the MEC of Education, visit schools within the urban areas with the aim of identifying their immediate needs.
102. Our quest to address **skills shortages** in the province remains key. As such, in September this year, we shall be sending an additional 85 students to

Russia to pursue critical fields of study such as Medicine, Civil Engineering, Veterinary Science, Aviation/Aeronautical studies and Information Technology.

103. Out of the 85 targeted students, the **Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector SETA** has committed to fund 35 in the fields related to the sector for the benefit of our Province.

104. In this Administration, we will ensure that there is an exponential increase in this number.

105. Our view is that this endeavour will give the youth of our Province a competitive edge and make them economically active citizens.

106. Honourable Members, I am sure you will agree with me when I say, education is the only means to usher our people towards the 4th Industrial Revolution.

107. We need to position our learners properly as we usher in the **4th Industrial revolution** and as such it will be prudent to ensure that they do not shy away from subjects such as Mathematics, Science and Technology.

108. We will therefore, as government, roll-out fibre or broadband so as to guarantee reliable high-speed internet connectivity in our schools, hospitals and townships in order to ensure that our people are not left behind but also benefit from the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution.

109. To this end, the province will intensify its efforts to improve the intake and pass rate of these subjects through the **OR Tambo Maths, Science and Technology Academy**.

110. We will also supplement this by **providing mathematics laboratories** with relevant state of the art equipment specially designed furniture, to enhance

the teaching and learning of mathematics to ten Primary Schools this financial year.

111. The Province will again this year, from 26 July to 2 August host, in partnership with Sasol, the **Sasol Techno X exhibitions** in Secunda for the third time.
112. Madam Speaker, we are on course to obtain the **82% target in the 2019 Grade 12** results and we will continue to work side by side with our teachers, school governing bodies, our communities and parents.
113. We must work together to **free our schools from all the ills** that seek to divert our attention from our goal. Drug trafficking, gangsterism, violence and vandalism must be condemned and should not find space in any of our schools.
114. We urge parents to work collaboratively with their respective schools. In so doing, we will be on the right path to grow our Province.

### ***Skills Development***

115. Consultation with relevant stakeholders are currently underway on the development of a **Provincial Skills Development Master Plan** that will ensure transformation of the skills set to industry/economic needs.
116. We will work with local government structures and private sector to increase the number of **Vocational Skills Training Institutes** that will offer short-term technical skills training for self-employment, and ensure the establishment of a technical skills training institute in each District.
117. Through University of Mpumalanga, MRTT, DARDLEA and DoE, we'll develop targeted **training programmes in Agriculture and ICT**, ensuring

access to land and market. DEDT will develop business incubator hubs for business operations.

118. We will establish a **4IR Commission** that will consist of both private and public sector which will ensure development, implementation and monitoring of an integrated 4IR and e-learning strategy for the Province.
119. We will establish a **special “Premiers” Bursary Scheme for PhD studies within the next 100 days** , and we will enrol ten (10) students per year more biased towards young women and those under the age of 30 years.
120. We'll conduct a skills audit and implement relevant programs for **skilling and re-skilling of the public sector**, through learnerships and strengthening of relationships with local universities. This will therefore, turn our workplaces into learning organisations as a means towards professionalizing the public sector.

### ***Health***

121. Madam Speaker, as we have indicated, healthcare is one of the apex priorities of this Administration. We need to consolidate the gains that we have achieved over the past 25 years and work hard to deal with the short-comings in our health system. There has been significant improvement in various areas of our health facilities, including;
  - A significant increase in the life expectancy of our people;
  - A drastic reduction in the child mortality rate;
  - A significant drop in maternal mortality rate;
  - A huge drop in mother to child HIV infection rate; and

- Recently we saw a drop albeit not consistent of the new HIV infection rate.
122. During my unannounced visits to healthcare facilities at Witbank hospital and Rob Ferreira hospital our people raised some concerns about their experiences and issues that must be addressed.
123. One of the burning issues is safety in our facilities, this is a matter raised by our people, including Johannes Kambule on Facebook. We can assure Mr Kambule and the people of Mpumalanga that the issue of safety and other concerns are receiving our attention.
124. We shall install turnstiles security gates, metal detectors and digitalise the security systems in all our healthcare facilities.
125. Going forward and in response to the NDP we will amongst others;
- In the current Financial Year, start with the feasibility study and the identification of suitable land to build a fully-fledged tertiary hospital within Emalahleni. The current Emalahleni Hospital shall be converted into a regional hospital upon completion of the tertiary hospital.
  - We will continue to invest in the healthcare infrastructure including but not limited to; completing the **new Bethal Hospital** and hand it over at the end of this financial year.
  - We will also complete and put into operation Primary Health Care facilities in the following areas; **Oakley, Pankop, Vukuzakhe, Nhlazatshe 6 and Schuzendal.**
126. We have listened to our people's concerns about the long queues and the hours they spend before they can access services.

127. Going forward, there shall be **zero tolerance** of ill-treatment of our people in health facilities. We call upon our communities to report any unbecoming behaviour in any of our institutions and we will take the necessary remedial actions.
128. We have also heard our people's concerns about the turn-around time taken by ambulances before they respond to emergencies.
129. Over and above the 17 ambulances we purchased just now in April we have procured an additional 35 new ambulances in this current financial year under review.
130. We call upon our communities to respect and desist from attacking emergency vehicles, emergency services staff and any other public facilities as this results in delays in delivery of services. ***Sicela nani mpakathi ukuthi nisilekelele nibe yiso lamaphoyisa yizinto zenu lezi.***

***Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services***

131. We will further improve the lives of millions of South Africans by working towards a comprehensive social security network, building more houses close to work opportunities, providing affordable basic services and building reliable public transport. We will expand access to social security net.
132. Madam Speaker, women in the rural areas are on the receiving end of the harsh reality of poverty. The SeSotho proverb; ***“Mosadi o tswara thipa kabo haleng”*** is true.

133. We will pay special attention to young mothers in rural areas by opening up work and business opportunities for them to become self-reliant and reduce the burden on state social support.
134. We will prioritise the provision of clean water, decent and safe sanitation for our people who are still without these services. We will reduce the number of informal settlements and increase the social housing projects.
135. We will also restore the dignity of a girl child by prioritizing the distribution of sanitary towels to all girls in Quintile 1 and 2 schools in the Province ensuring that no girl child misses out on school days during her menstrual cycle.
136. We will support the rights of older persons to participate in developmental, political, social, cultural and economic activities of their province and not be regarded as mere beneficiaries.
137. Madam Speaker, **Substance abuse** remains the single biggest challenge in our communities across all of our local municipalities, however some are worse affected than others. These municipalities are ***Emalahleni, Victor Khanye, Govan Mbeki, City of Mbombela, Thembisile Hani and Bushbuckridge.***
138. The socio economic effects of drug abuse are enormous and in most cases have life-long consequences. They destroy families, paralyze communities and adversely affect businesses.
139. As part of our efforts to mitigate the effects of drug abuse and assist with rehabilitation of those affected, in partnership with the private sector and state owned enterprises we have built two treatment centres one in Nkangala and the other one in Ehlanzeni district.

140. The Swarfontein Treatment Centre in Ehlanzeni is now operational and the Nkangala Treatment Centre in Victor Khanye, will start to operate during this financial year.
141. Gender based violence is very common and widespread in our societies. It is the worst human rights violation perpetuated largely by men against women.
142. It manifests itself in many ways including in physical, sexual, emotional, financial or structural ways and mainly committed by intimate partners, acquaintances and strangers.
143. As government we will intensify our efforts in fighting this scourge by strengthening our justice system so that the perpetrators are dealt with accordingly.
144. We will also increase awareness campaigns in particular at school level so that we reinforce and inculcate positive gender relations behaviour at an early stage.
145. We will increase the number of Social Workers and establish a bursary fund to introduce young men and women to go for training on social development whilst continuing to up-skill existing social workers.

### ***Spatial integration, human settlements***

146. Madam Speaker, the NDP advocates that by 2030, measurable progress shall have been made towards **breaking the legacy of the apartheid spatial patterns**. We will therefore, ensure that settlements are built closer to work and economic opportunities.
147. The success of our integrated human settlement plan is depended on effective **Inter-Governmental and Inter-Departmental Relations** which is central in ensuring properly coordinated planning; improved spatial, social and economic integration in new developments; and in ensuring the provision of basic infrastructure projects.
148. In the current 5 year term, we shall build 100 000 housing opportunities.
149. Special attention will be given to the fastest urbanizing towns like **eMalahleni; Steve Tshwete; Govan Mbeki; City of Mbombela; Nkomazi; Bushbuckridge; Thaba Chweu and Victor Khanye**. These towns will soon be gazetted as Priority Housing Development Areas.
150. New Human Settlements Initiatives will focus on **up-scaling the upgrade of all informal settlements** that are within the targeted towns.

### ***Local government***

151. Madam Speaker, we are committed to decisively deal with challenges of social infrastructure that include water shortages, sewer spillages, unsafe pit latrines toilets, and poor road infrastructure. We have listened to the concerns our people raised and we are taking them very seriously.

152. Providing access to clean water for all has been the goal of the ANC government since 1994 and we are satisfied of the progress we have made thus far and we will continue to expand our water infrastructure until every house is connected.
153. Within the five year period of this Administration, as Government, we have taken a decision to;
- Construct a new dam along the Crocodile River in the City of Mbombela. This dam will augment the current supply of water to meet the demand of the growing population in Ehlanzeni.
  - Finalise the construction of a package plant along Moses River in Thembisile Hani Municipality which will supply the community with 5 mega litres of water per day to ease the water challenges faced by the people of Thembisile Hani.
154. Sustainable use of our water resources and making water affordable are central to achieving this goal.
155. We will minimize and work towards the eradication of sewer spillages which are amongst others caused by the ageing and dilapidating infrastructure.
156. COGTA shall be tasked with ensuring the establishment of a Programme Management Unit (PMU) to strengthen the coordination with all municipalities, developing master plans for bulk infrastructure, mobilizing technical engineering capacity to support municipalities for the roll out of the infrastructure projects and to provide support to municipalities on asset management.

157. Madam Speaker, the statistics revealed by the Auditor General in the Municipal audit report are a cause for grave concern.
158. It is an anomaly that only one Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province has received a clean audit.
159. COGTA, Provincial Treasury and SALGA shall effect oversight and ensure that Municipalities develop and implement sustainable audit action plans in an effort to remedy the status quo in the spirit of the integrated municipal support plan.
160. The recently promulgated **Public Audit Amendment Act** vests within the Auditor General, the power to instruct Accounting Officers to take the necessary steps to recover wasted money or risk being found personally liable for the recovery of funds wasted in instances of material breach.
161. We urge our Accounting Officers to effectively manage the public resources entrusted to them, failing which they shall pay back the money, literally.
162. We will no longer be tolerant of officials who fail to utilise allocated grant funding for the development of our communities. Infrastructure grants and programmes allocated are meant to improve the quality of life of our citizens, improve governance systems and to deliver on the promises made through the IDPs.
163. Failure to deliver on these, despite resources made available shall be deemed a misconduct and crime to our people and shall be dealt with harshly in light of the seriousness it deserves. Underperformance and mediocrity has therefore no place in this Government.
164. It is therefore crucial that we also conduct skills audit in all our municipalities and follow it up with a comprehensive skills development programmes, including on revenue collections so that we increase their capacity and capability to provide quality services to our people.

165. We will continue to support the institution of traditional leadership in an effort to create a conducive environment for the execution of their duties.

***A capable, ethical and developmental state***

166. In a society with deep social and economic divisions such as ours, manifesting themselves through the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality, neither social development nor transformation is possible without a capable and developmental state.

167. In line with the NDP, critical interventions are required to build such a state so as to realise Vision 2030.

168. What is unique about the bureaucracy or public servants of a developmental state is that they have the technical skills and competencies to provide the state with the policy making and implementation skills necessary for effective service delivery and governance, especially in the economy.

169. So, a key characteristic of a Developmental State is that the state must have the ability to translate its broad objectives into programmes and projects to ensure implementation.

170. This depends of course, amongst others, on proper training and skills development, orientation and leadership of the public sector and on acquiring and retaining skilled personnel.

171. It is within this context that we indicated earlier that we'll embark on an extensive skills audit at both provincial and local government levels followed by massive learnership programmes as a way of professionalising the public sector and turn them into an employer of choice.

172. We'll also strengthen and capacitate the Human Resource Management Units across the public sector so that they are able to promote and create a conducive environment for the effective implementation of Skills Development initiatives in order to meet the challenges of the developmental state.
173. To further advance this notion we shall endeavour, to inculcate the developmental ideology in the public sector in line with the Batho Pele Principles and Values of the Constitution so that our people could be treated with respect and dignity when they access government services.
174. We will not tolerate practices that are contrary to the interests and general wellbeing of the public. We will hold people accountable and those who loot public resources will face the full might of the law.

***Social cohesion and safe communities***

175. Madam Speaker, we remain fully committed to building a developmental state through the healing of the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
176. We commit ourselves to fighting racial discrimination, prejudice, xenophobia and related intolerance including the marginalisation of the LGBTQI community. We urge our communities to work with police in fighting crime in particular violent crimes against women, children and people with albinism.
177. We have, during the past 25 years, laid solid foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and that every citizen is equally protected by law.
178. Our ultimate goal is to make our streets safe again where every citizen of Mpumalanga feels protected and free.

### ***A better Africa and World***

179. We remain committed to a better Africa, free from the shackles of under-development and the legacy of colonialism. We will continue to advance our progressive internationalism and solidarity around the world.
180. We will promote cross-border infrastructure, tourism and manufacturing value chains in the region with a strategic focus on our immediate neighbouring countries.
181. We will increase the levels of our manufacturing and value-added exports to the rest of the continent.
182. We have signed bilateral agreements with Maputo province and will soon enter into agreements with provincial states in Cameroon and Kenya.

### ***Conclusion***

183. In conclusion Madam Speaker, let us remind ourselves that The African National Congress led government has a historic mission to build a united and democratic South Africa that is non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous.
184. Many people fought a long and hard struggle and sacrificed much to bring about freedom and democracy in this country. The Freedom Charter is the living soul of our country's progressive constitution and is the foundation of Vision 2030 of the National development Plan (NDP).
185. Everything we are doing is in pursuance of the vision of the NDP to address the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. Over the past 25 years, the dignity of our people has been restored however much more still needs to be done on this front.

186. The lives of South Africans have improved. We promoted nation-building, social cohesion and celebrated our diversity as a nation.
187. We pursued world peace and advanced an agenda for a better Africa and a better world.
188. So much remains to be done to bring us closer to the achievement of the Freedom Charter. Our struggle for radical socio-economic transformation is a work in progress.
189. Corruption continues to raise its ugly head, threatening the very moral fibre and ethical basis of our young democracy. Our education, training and health systems still need radical improvements. The ANC acknowledges that we made mistakes and veered off course.
190. As a nation, we have learned the harsh impact of corruption on society and the economy. We have witnessed the loss of integrity in some of the institutions of state, business, political and other organisations. We have learned hard lessons about the vigilance needed to stop lawlessness, greed and selfishness from taking root.
191. We are resolved to work with our people to address this cancer in our society. After a difficult time, we are on the cusp of a new era of hope and renewal – the New Dawn is upon us and we are ready to Grow Mpumalanga Together.
192. The ANC has a unique history of advancing the aspirations of South Africans. The commitments we have made today are in the spirit of Thuma Mina that inspires the New Dawn. At critical moments in our country's history, we have demonstrated that we can mobilise and unite South Africans around the common challenges facing the country.

193. We have shown the capacity to self-correct where mistakes have been committed. We are a movement with experience in governance and a clear resolve to advance an agenda of radical socio-economic transformation.
194. Going Forward, Madam Speaker, we are going to ensure that the Coordinating and Oversight machinery within the Office of the Premier is elevated and strengthened with regard to our work, especially on job creation, economic transformation and empowerment of the youth and women, rural and township economy and related tax incentives, skills revolution, queue management in hospitals and strengthening the capacity of the state and local government to carry out their mandates.
195. I therefore, intend to sign performance and delivery agreements with all the MECs and HODs based on the tasks to be carried out as stated herein.
196. Let me once more take this opportunity to thank the people of Mpumalanga for re-electing the ANC again to continue improving their material conditions.
197. I thank you.