

POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH
VOTE 2, MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE
17 MAY 2012: HON SW LUBISI

Honourable Deputy Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Ms VS Siwela;
Honourable Premier of Mpumalanga Province, Mr DD Mabuza;
Members of the Executive Council of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, especially the MEC for Cooperative Governance with whom we are Tabling our Budget Votes on the same day;
Honourable Members of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature;
Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Ikosi Siphohle Mahlangu;
Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Kgošigadi Mohlala and other Traditional Leaders, eMakhosi neMakhosikati;
Executive Mayors, Speakers and Councillors from our local municipalities across the Mpumalanga Province;
Former Presiding Officers and Deputy Presiding Officers of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature present here today;
Former Secretary to the Legislature Mr Linda Mwale;
Acting Secretary to the Legislature, Mr LB Tshabalala, the broader Management and Staff of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature;
Director General of the Province, Mr J Rabodila and other Heads of Departments
Distinguished guests;
Representatives of the different media houses in our province;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
Compatriots;

Good Morning,

Introduction

We have now entered the Medium Term for the fourth (4th) Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and the fourth democratically elected ANC-led government. At the dawn of the fourth Legislature our hopes and aspirations were buoyed by the will to accelerate the social transformation agenda in response to the sterling One Million Three Hundred and Forty-

Three Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty-Three voters (**1,343,253**) in the Mpumalanga Province who went to the polls on the 22nd of April 2009.

At that time we made a commitment to accelerate service delivery to our people through intensified oversight and holding the Executive accountable. When we made this commitment, we were conscious of the electoral mandate accorded to us by all the citizens of this province.

We were also conscious of the fact that we were confronted by a difficult era where our people's desire for a better life for all had risen and their patience was equally on the decline. Our task was, therefore, to bring back public confidence to our institution as the epicentre for democratic governance in the Mpumalanga Province.

In determining the strategic and political future of the Legislature, we reviewed and subsequently adopted our vision, mission and values which are now proudly captured in our strategic and accountability documents.

We believe that the vision of striving towards a *“people-centred African world class Legislature”* is inspirational and it resonates well with all the honourable Members, staff of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and all our stakeholders.

Honourable Members,

During that period; we collectively agreed that our future path ought to include the national strategic and political priorities of our government; these priorities constitute the popular electoral mandate of the 2009-2014 cycle of governance. We also committed ourselves to play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of this electoral mandate.

Consequently, the Five(5) political and strategic national priorities brought about by the popular electoral mandate of the 22nd of April 2009, informed the conceptualisation of the Legislature's strategic-outcome-oriented goals which has continuously underpinned our work (as reflected in our Five-Year Strategic Plan for 2009–2014).

Deputy Chairperson of Committees,

Allow me to reaffirm the seven (7) key strategic outcome-oriented goals during this policy and budget speech of the Legislature as adopted in the year 2009 namely:

- i. To hold the executive accountable on the five government priorities over the next five years(i.e. 2009-2014)*

- ii. *To improve public involvement, especially of the poor, marginalised and disadvantaged in the legislative processes by 2015*
- iii. *To assess the effectiveness of provincial implementation of key socio economic laws and policies related to the five government priorities by 2015*
- iv. *To Improve the capacity of the Legislature to conduct its oversight and public participation functions through strengthened internal business processes over the next five years*
- v. *To improve the integrity and image of the Mpumalanga government through effective oversight of corporate and financial governance by 2015*
- vi. *To promote the implementation of the Nation-Building programme of government and the Legislature to improve social cohesion in the province by 2015*
- vii. *To strengthen participation in inter-parliamentary bodies for improving participatory democracy and co-operation in the next five years*

These overarching seven key strategic outcomes remain at the centre of our work and plans through which we are geared towards the accomplishment of our constitutional mandate. This is indeed based on administrative excellence and good governance.

Ladies and Gentlemen

This medium term does not only accord us an opportunity to make an objective assessment of our progress and challenges towards the attainment of the above-mentioned strategic oriented goals, but to equally map the way forward as we move towards the penultimate session of the fourth Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature.

Indeed we are on course towards the attainment of enhanced service delivery, through intensified oversight. Through our work, i.e. law making; public participation and oversight the people of this province are starting to experience a better life.

We remain steadfastly focused on our core mandates and we shall continue to perform our work without fear or favour. To us nothing comes first but the people. We know our purpose and our destiny.

Support to Committees

In order to enhance our organisational capacity to conduct effective oversight and drawing inspiration from the Sector Oversight Model we have increased our human resource allocation to committees. The days whereby our committees were extremely understaffed are quickly coming to the end.

Each Portfolio Committee in the Legislature shall be allocated with a Committee Coordinator and our desire is to eventually appoint a committee coordinator for each budget vote when we obtain additional funding.

To further strengthen the work of committees we have already appointed a manager for each of the four clusters. All the funded posts supporting committees will be filled with the relevant and requisite expertise in the current financial year.

It is a fact that our committees have performed with diligence under very difficult conditions and indeed they have consistently delivered on our mandate.

They have continuously ensured that the will of the people is met by holding provincial state departments accountable as per the individual and collective commitments regardless of the constraints they endured.

In order to improve our institutional research capacity, we have funded all the posts for researchers and our intention is to allocate a Researcher to each Portfolio Committee during this financial Year. As earlier stated with the committee coordinators we equally desire to appoint a researcher for each budget vote as and when we obtain increased funds.

Furthermore, on the 30th of November 2011 we signed two memoranda of understanding with the Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

These partnerships will be underpinned by collaborative work, shared knowledge, skills transfer and sustained contribution into the development of our organisational research capacity

We will continue to strengthen these relationships and embark on new partnerships, where it is necessary. Our aim is provide best possible research capacity for the institution which will add great value to our oversight work.

Oversight

Writing about Tools for Parliamentary Oversight in the year 2007 Hironori Yamamoto wrote "*As the body that represents the people, parliament is called upon to see to it that the administration of public policy reflects and meets the people's needs.*"

Yamamoto further emphasises the centrality of parliaments in oversight work when he says *“Parliament is also called upon to ensure that agreed policy is properly implemented and delivered to target citizens. This is the role of parliamentary oversight”*

Following our development of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Oversight and Accountability Model, we are pleased to report that the Legislative Sector has adopted a broader sector oversight model.

The implication brought about by the adoption of this model requires us to provide both human and non-human resources in order to ensure that it is fully implemented. We are however certain that with all the posts in the committees and research sub-divisions filled we will be able to roll out the sector oversight model with ease.

In the current financial year we have identified the following priority areas for Sector Oversight Model (SOM) pilot/ roll out i.e. Education and Agriculture and Rural Development. In this regard we endeavour to allocate adequate resources to portfolio committees that cover the priority areas mentioned above in their scope.

We will therefore continue to accelerate the pace at which we to hold the executive accountable on its priorities as per the popular electoral mandate of the 2009 Provincial and National Elections.

Public Participation

Section 118(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa stipulates that *“A provincial Legislature must-(a) facilitate public involvement in the Legislative and other processes of the Legislature and its committees;”*

Public involvement is therefore imposed on us by our duty and designation. The task at hand is to continuously facilitate public involvement in the work of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and its committees.

The Petitions Act No6 of 2000 further provides a mechanism by which the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature shall handle petitions from individuals and collectives.

This is also in line with our constitutional mandate to facilitate public participation and involvement and providing mechanisms by which the public can participate in our work. Clearly, public participation and petitions are critical elements of our mandate.

In order to improve public involvement, especially of the poor, marginalised and the disadvantaged in the legislative processes; we will continue to roll out our Sectoral Parliaments and Taking the Legislature to the People Programme.

These activities ensure that the voice of our people is heard in all the work that we do. Our people must continuously be afforded an opportunity to identify with the Legislature as their hope and guarantor for a better tomorrow.

We have noted with appreciation that most of the issues raised during the previous sectoral parliaments have relatively been able to find an expression in the service delivery programme and Agenda of the ANC Led Government.

Honourable Members

During this financial year we have planned to roll out 54 public education workshops and to enhance our utilisation of the electronic media including the Public Broadcaster and Community Radio Stations

Furthermore; in promoting public participation we will work in partnership with bodies supporting parliamentary democracy to strengthen public participation which includes convening the first Public Participation Symposium for the Mpumalanga Province, later this year

We will continue to mobilise the public to attend our committee meetings and Legislature sittings so as to ensure that they experience and observe our business process first hand.

Honourable Deputy Chairperson of Committees

Allow me to pay a special tribute to the people of Dr JS Moroka and Mkhondo Local Municipalities for their massive response and active participation during our "Taking the Legislature to the People" Programmes held in Ga-Morwe and Thandukukhanya respectively.

I wish to report to this august house that through this exercise we have been able to meet with many people in these two municipalities, and this is a product of our increased public education and mobilisation exercise

In this regard, we profoundly appreciate the work that the Honourable Members of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and our staff have done thus far to ensure that our vision

and mission become a possibility and most significantly, for ensuring that the targets we set for ourselves for this term are achieved.

Petitions

In relations to petitions; I am glad to report to this august house that in the past year we have received 316 Petitions, this figure includes the 249 petitions that we received during the Taking the Legislature to the People Programme at Mkhondo Local Municipality from the 28th of February 2012 to the 2nd of March 2012. This is one of the positive returns on the resources, energy and time invested on the Taking the Legislature to the People Programme.

Between April 2011 and March 2012 we have processed and closed a total of 45 petitions. We are still handling 28 petitions accrued from the previous year. I must say our intention is always to conclude petitions timeously however it takes longer to deal with each petition especially where the respondent does not provide a satisfactory response to the enquiry.

We will also continue to strengthen the personnel capacity of the public participation and petitions sub-division in response to the increased number of petitions received and public awareness of the petitions process.

Law Making

Honourable Members

During the 2010/2011 financial year we passed the Financial Management of Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Act, an Act which sought to provide for the financial management of the Legislature and matters connected thereto; which we considered an important milestone in asserting the autonomy of the Legislature

On the 22nd of March 2012 the Constitutional Court gave a ruling that Legislatures do not have the constitutional competency to enact Legislations that regulate their own financial management thus declaring our Financial Management of Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Act passed by the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in 2010 unconstitutional.

It must however be noted that this judgement does not only affect the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, but it affects all Provincial Legislatures in South Africa. In order to

avoid a Legislative lacuna the invalidity of the Act has been put on hold for 18 months until September 2013.

The Speaker's Forum of South Africa is already considering alternative options to assist Legislatures to attain their objective of becoming truly autonomous which include Parliament amending its financial management Act to incorporate provincial legislatures or assigning the authority to provincial legislatures to pass their own financial management legislations

In order to improve our legal support for law making processes and committee work; we will increase the personnel in this sub-division as per the organisational structure of the Legislature.

Honourable Members

The above mentioned constitutional court judgement reaffirms that of our democracy is functioning very well. It further says we must accept that democracy put in place institutions that will not only safeguard our Constitution but will also protect and at time put to test the laws that we make. Those are the hallmarks of democracy.

We wish to report to this august house that in the past financial year, 2011/2012, we passed four (4) pieces of legislation, the Mpumalanga Appropriation Act, the Youth Commission Repeal Act, the Ingoma Act and the Mpumalanga Adjustment Appropriation Act.

The Youth Commission Repeal Act repeals the Youth Commission Act in line with the policy decision to have youth matters dealt with at national level to ensure uniformity across the country.

The Ingoma Act seeks to regulate the holding of izingoma in the province in an attempt to both protect this important customary practice, and also to protect the community from unscrupulous people who illegally hold izingoma.

We also participated in the national legislative process by conferring negotiating and final mandates on the delegates representing Mpumalanga in the NCOP in respect of the Division of Revenue Bill, 2011, the Sectional Tittles Schemes Management Bill, the Community Schemes Ombuds Service Bill, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill, the Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Bill and the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill, amongst others.

Organisational Structure

Honourable Members

It is unfortunate that this budget allocation does not enable us to fully implement the organisational structure. We have, therefore, raised funds from own revenue to finance some of the most critical unfunded vacant positions. We do acknowledge that this situation puts a strain on our business operations as we had to reduce our goods and services budget in this regard.

As earlier stated; in order to ensure that we are able to support our institutional strategy in general and our parliamentary committees in particular, some of the funded positions have been filled while some are in the process of being filled.

Employment equity

Through our recruitment and placement processes, we also ensured that we address our employment equity requirements. We have increased the number of females in our senior and middle management levels.

However, we must still embark on an intensified process to recruit and employ more persons with disabilities. We will continue to strengthen our employment equity regime to ensure that the Legislature further contributes to the advancement of the transformation agenda of our province and country. In fact we must lead by example in this regard.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)/SAP

In the past financial year we implemented a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system i.e. SAP. The implementation of the SAP system brought about challenges which included data migration, systems configurations, review of financial process flow and implementation thereof.

These challenges necessitated a data migration and systems audit, which was used as a tool by management in putting mitigating challenges where our controls were found to be weak or lacking.

The ERP system that has been implemented is a powerful, effective and efficient system that can be useless if it is not maximally utilised. To reap the benefits of this system and to ensure returns on investment, the Legislature has to undertake a massive training programme for personnel. We'll do this by directly working with SAP South Africa to build the required internal capacity.

This will reduce the need to retain consultants to provide network and system support. The training intervention requires R1.4 million. The strategy is to fund this from the expected European Union Legislative Sector Support allocation for 2012/13 which will be further outlined in this address.

Audit Committee

As part of the commitment we made during the previous policy and budget speech for 2011/212 we have appointed a new audit Committee from the 1st of October 2011, that is constituted by the following members: *Ms Helen Thrush: Chairperson; Ms Anna Badimo; Mr Aukie Keyser and Ms Gaylene Deiner*

We have also decided to extend the size of the Audit Committee to six in order to ensure that they also assist us in dealing with the function of Risk Management in line with corporate governance principles. The two additional positions in our Audit Committee will be filled in the current financial year

I must say since their appointment the Audit Committee has been hard at work in ensuring that we respond positively to the control environment as envisaged by the Office of the Auditor General

Internal Audit and Risk Management

In order to promote good corporate governance we will appoint a sub-divisional head to jointly coordinate internal audit and risk management internally, while the function of internal audit will continue to be outsourced. This is an attempt to provide risk management the attention it deserves.

Clean Audit Maintenance

In the previous financial year we reported of the bigger target that we had set to obtain a clean audit without any matter of emphasis by the year 2014.

We are proud to report to this august house that the Auditor General's statement for 2010/11 indicated that the financial statements of the Legislature for 2011 were found to be accurate, complete and in accordance with the generally accepted standards of accounting principles (GAAP) without any matter of emphasis i.e. ***clean audit.***

Whilst we acknowledge this great achievement we are conscious of the mammoth task that lies ahead of us to maintain the clean audit. We have thus committed ourselves to implement the Clean Audit Maintenance Plan (CAMP).

IT Governance Committee

We have assigned Ms Anna Badimo with the task of leading the process of putting in a place the information technology governance sub-committee in the Legislature. It is our hope that this function will help enhance the management of our IT infrastructure and continuously improve our business process models.

The challenges experienced at the commencement of the SAP programme must be history and I am happy to report that such incidences have rapidly declined. We are also conscious of the need to continuously improve our IT systems and I have thus advised administration to consider introducing wireless routers in the precinct of the legislature including the chamber so that our work environment becomes wireless.

Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) and Disaster Recovery Facility:

As part of our institutional strategy, the Legislature has developed its DRP in line with the best practices. The next phase of this project is to establish an off-site Disaster Recovery facility within the new Provincial Disaster Management Centre.

This phase of the project is however, currently not funded and we will therefore continue to engage the Provincial Treasury in order to secure the required funding.

Improvement, upgrading and maintenance of the Committee Rooms and Video Conferencing facility

The Legislature Chamber and all our Committee Rooms including the Video Conferencing facility need to be upgraded from analogue to digital systems and regularly maintained.

Once again, we were unable to secure funding for this project. We'll try to raise funds within the resources of our own revenue to implement a phased approach which will primarily start with the replacement of the current recording system with digital devices.

We'll also continue to engage the Provincial Treasury to provide funding for a major upgrade of our committee rooms infrastructure

Funding for Political Parties:

It is our firm believe that the Legislature has a constitutional responsibility to provide resources to political parties represented in it in order to strengthen constituency work and further deepen democracy.

We have therefore cut our operational budget to increase the funding of political parties by 10% instead of 5% to an amount of **R 19 404 000** regardless of our inability to secure additional allocation from Provincial Treasury.

Inter-Parliamentary Relations

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature continues to make strides within various interparliamentary bodies. I am proud to announce to this house that the Following MPLs were elected into the Executive Committee of the Association of Public Accounts Committee in October 2011:

- ***Hon AF Mahlalela :Chairperson of APAC***
- ***Hon RC Mahlobogoane: APAC executive Committee member***

Furthermore we wish to congratulate Hon AF Mahlalela on his election as Chairperson of the Southern Africa Development Community Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC) in November 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen

Following our successful hosting of the 41st CPA Africa Region Conference in the year 2010; I am pleased that the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in Partnership with the Association of Public Accounts (APAC) of South African will have the honour to host the 2012 SADCOPAC Conference on the 3rd to the 6th of September 2012.

It is therefore important for all of us to continuously work together towards the successful hosting of the Conference and to promote the Mpumalanga Province as an ideal destination for every aspirant tourist in the continent and the world.

Through our participation in the interparliamentary bodies and gatherings of today's leaders, experts, and policymakers we have been able to share with other Parliamentarians and Leaders on the best solutions to issues confronting our legislatures, regions and states.

We will continue to seek solutions to the toughest problems confronting legislatures, by providing platforms for our legislators and legislative staff to interact with their counterparts from around the world to build strong legislative networks and institutions.

Legislature Support Programme and Capacity Building for MPL's

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature is reaping rewards from the South African Legislative Sector (SALS) and European Union support. In the past year six honourable Members of the Legislature completed the course in Governance and Leadership (NQF Level 5) with the University of South Africa.

We congratulate them on this achievement which was accomplished under strenuous and challenging working conditions. It is our belief that this course will assist honourable Members as they perform their duty. Honourable Members will be offered another opportunity to do a Certificate Programme (NQF Level 7), starting later this year with the University of Witwatersrand.

Honourable Members will also have an opportunity to undergo a Masters Programme with the same institution from June 2013.

Accordingly the capacity of members and officials of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature is critical in the performance of their roles to enhance the constitutional functions of the Legislature.

The above is affirmed by Jean Giraudoux when he says "*Real leaders are always improving- and raising their bar on how superbly they can perform and how quickly they can move*" We must therefore continue to raise the bar on how best we can perform our work through acquisition of skills and knowledge.

The implementation of this Programme is aimed at creating a virtual legislature academic environment in order to create the areas of knowledge required in its activities and to strengthen oversight function and effectively hold the executive accountable.

Provincial Speaker's Forum

In order to strengthen participation in inter-parliamentary bodies for improving participatory democracy and co-operation and further ensuring that Speakers in the province advance and strengthen co-operation between the Provincial Legislature and local municipalities in the province we have in the past year re-launched the Provincial Speaker's Forum.

The forum also serves as a platform where Speakers are able to extensively engage and sharpen systems in their respective institutions and cross-pollinate knowledge in critical areas such as lawmaking, oversight function, public participation on and other related public governance aspects.

Accordingly we are initiating a process to empower the leadership of municipalities in the province through capacity building in areas of separation of power, ethics, transparency and accountability.

The first joint program is planned for the period towards the end of June 2012, this activity will be co-funded with external partners supporting the Legislative Sector and I must indicate that the negotiations are at an advanced stage.

100 Years of Existence for the African National Congress (ANC Centenary)

Deputy Chairperson

We take this opportunity and pay special tribute to the African National Congress on its completion of 100 years of existence. I would like to repeat what I have consistently said before that the history of the African National Congress is synonymous with the history of the South African People.

16 Years of the Constitution of South Africa

This year marks the 16th anniversary of the Constitution of South Africa, in recognition of this milestone we pay tribute to all Honourable Members of this august house who took part of the constituent Assembly which includes Hon JL Mahlangu, Hon AF Mahlalela and of course yours truly the Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature

We also pay tribute to all South Africans for achieving this milestone. In recognition of this milestone and recognising the need to popularise our supreme document i.e. the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa; our public participation will embark on an intense public education drive as we advance to the 20 years of the Constitution of the Republic Of South Africa

We all have an overarching responsibility to ensure that all persons who live within the borders of the Republic of South Africa subscribes to and respects the Constitution of the country as a supreme law of our state and a guarantor of our liberty and democracy.

Creating a lasting legacy for the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature

Over the past year we have build solid partnerships with the private sector who have invested resources in support of our Legislature Legacy projects across the province. In this regard we would like to recognise all our business partners for their ongoing support: *SAB Ltd; ABSA; Union Motors; First National Bank and Standard Bank*

As we reported our intent to implement three Legacy Projects across the Province during Nelson Mandela International Day, it gives me pleasure that in the past year we implemented three projects during the Nelson Mandela Month in July 2011 namely:

- ***Siyakhula Project in Thaba Chweu Local Municipality: Where four Vegitunnels were erected;***
- ***Thembisile Protective Workshop in Thembisile Local Municipality: Where four Vegitunnels were erected and the Centre renovated;***
- ***Ukukhanya Cooperative in Lekwa Municipality where we also installed Vegitunnels***

The total capital injection to the above Projects was valued at **R305 918.00**

I wish to invite all Municipalities and partner departments to ensure that the lifespan of these projects is expanded by providing relevant support and expert knowledge, as I speak to you today one project is at its weakest state due to lack of support, however SAB has also made a commitment to continuously support these projects especially where there is potential to grow.

Furthermore on the 24th of February 2012 we awarded financial injection to specific community projects to ensure that recapitalise their business processes namely:

- ***Buhlebethu Piggery Primary Agricultural Cooperative***
- ***Phakani Primary School's Early Childhood Development Centre***
- ***KaBhokweni Football Academy - Mbombela Local Municipality***
- ***VOS Mazibuko Bakery, eMgwenya-Emakhazeni Local Municipality***

The total capital injection to the above Projects was valued at **R100 000.00**

In this Financial Year We will continue to roll out Legacy projects in joint partnership with our business partners, local municipalities and government departments. Going forward as per the advice of the Legislature Service Board we shall allocate specific resources towards implementation of the Legacy project

It is therefore hoped that through the Legacies that we have implemented, we shall invoke individual responsibility of citizens in a manner that appreciates that South Africa's Freedom was a product of a challenging, difficult but also very long struggle for liberation

Tributes

Honourable Members,

As we move forward we are from time to time reminded by Mother Nature that our life on planet earth is finite and shall indeed reach a point of closure in a moment in time. As we present this policy and Budget Speech we are reminded of some of the patriots who have passed on prior to this day

- **Mr Sicelo Shiceka** *Former cooperative governance and traditional affairs minister and serving member of parliament who passed on the 30th of April 2012*
- **Mr Radhakrishna Lutchmana "Roy" Padayachie Minister of Public Service and Administration** *who passed on the 4th of May 2012*
- **Rev Motlalepula Chabaku** *last surviving leader of the 1956 women's march to the Union Buildings and first Speaker of the Free State legislature who passed on Friday the 11th of May 2012*
- **Ms Florence Ntombizodwa Nyanda** *Member of Parliament from Mpumalanga province popularly known as "Mam Flo" who also served as the member of this august house who passed on the 6th of May 2012*

We dip our banner in honour of these fallen ambassadors for a better life for all for their selfless sacrifice and service. We also extend our deepest condolences to their families, friends, the African National Congress and the country at large. In honour of their memory we will continue strive for a better life for all in our lifetime.

Deputy Chairperson,

During this Policy and Budget Speech, allow me to express our profound appreciation to all men and women who have led the Mpumalanga Provincial since 1994 worth mentioning are the following: **Mr EN Ginindza (former Speaker), Ms C Maropeng (former Deputy Speaker), The late Mrs Thoko Mabena (former Deputy Speaker), Mrs YN Phosa (former Speaker), Mr. Boy Nobunga (former Deputy Speaker) and Mr Jackson Mthembu (former Speaker)**

We also recognise the retired former Sergeant at Arms of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature and our veteran who is amongst us; Mrs Beauty Mkhize (MaMkhize) in her we draw inspiration and courage; may God grant her a longer life.

We are also humbled by the support provided by the Deputy Speaker, Ms VS Siwela, and Leaders of all political parties represented in the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, especially the ruling party, the African National Congress.

We thank the Acting Secretary to the Legislature, Mr LB Tshabalala; the Management and the entire Legislature staff for their support.

It is important to acknowledge the role of the Portfolio Committee on Legislature Oversight; Premier's Office and Finance, chaired by the Hon VVZ Windvoël, for the robust engagement and advice every time we meet the portfolio committee.

Many thanks to my family, especially my wife and children, for the unwavering support they provide to me as I continue to serve the country and the Mpumalanga Province in particular.

Again, we wish to thank the Office of the Auditor-General for its continued support and informed professional advice in ensuring that we enhance our institutional performance worth mentioning are all the Official in Provincial Office of the Auditor-General under the stewardship of Mr Brian Madliwa.

To all Honourable Members of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, I want to say much of the progress we have achieved is the product of collective work, frank engagements and openness - plus knowing our destiny. We thank you for the support and commitment shown thus far; the journey that lies ahead demands increased vigour and commitment, and in the Words of Dr Nelson Mandela, "*The Long walk continues.*"

During this Workers' Month we also pay a special tribute to all the workers of South Africa; we must say that the history of this country is incomplete without the chapter of the Workers' Struggle.

On this day we also wish the Christian community a Happy Ascension Day.

Conclusion

*Policy and Budget Speech, Vote 2: Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature 17 May 2012:
Hon SW Lubisi*

Madam Deputy Speaker, allow me to request this honourable House to approve the amount of **R 213 600 000 Million** allocated to the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature for the following programmes: -

Programme 1

Leadership and Governance including statutory obligations to MPLs and transfers to political parties: **R 59 011 000**

Programme 2

Parliamentary Committees **R 3 645 000**; which covers goods and services for committees

Programme 3

Strategic Management **R 9 567 000**

Programme 4

Parliamentary Operations: **R 59 265 000**

Programme 5

Financial Governance: **R 19 042 000**

Programme 6

Corporate Services: **R 63 070 000**

Total: **R 213 600 000**

Honourable Members,

This budget allocation to the various programmes and sub-programmes occurred within the context of very limited financial resources. We, therefore, have to achieve more with less at hand as we seek to implement our plans during the course of the 2012/13 financial year

However, an attempt has been made to allocate more budgets to the programmes that constitute the core business of the Legislature thus **58%** has been allocated to the core business of the Legislature, i.e., Leadership & Governance, Parliamentary Committees and Parliamentary Operations and **42%** allocated to Support Services.

Honourable Members,

Our task is to ensure that the people of South Africa, i.e., the impoverished and destitute child, the abused woman and the unemployed men and women, finally enjoy the fruits of their liberty.

The above was reaffirmed by Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela on the 24th of May 1994 when he said *“It is these things that we must achieve to give meaning to our presence in this Chamber and to give purpose to our occupancy of the seat of government. And so we must, constrained by and yet regardless of the accumulated effect of our historical burdens, seize the time to define for ourselves what we want to make of our shared destiny.”*

Indeed, the purpose that must drive this august House shall continuously be to work together to intensify oversight to foster service to the people of Mpumalanga Province; and indeed, push back the frontiers of poverty and social and inequality.

Honourable Members,

Allow me to direct your thought to the book of Hebrews 11 Verses 1 to 39, reading the first verse only: *“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.”*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have faith that this collective will deliver on its commitment, the energy and courage I see on a daily basis is a reassurance that we do not, by any chance, seek to fail the will of our people. Indeed, the journey towards a better life is not easy; but we shall soldier on tirelessly.

Thank You Very Much and God Bless You all.