

**POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH
VOTE 2: MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE
24 MAY 2013 HON SW LUBISI**

Honourable Deputy Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Mr BD Dube;

Honourable Premier of Mpumalanga Province, Mr DD Mabuza;

Members of the Executive Council of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, especially the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Hon SPD Skhosana 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, Kgoši ML Mokoena;

Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Inkosi SG Ngomane and other Traditional Leaders, eMakhosi, Tindvuna neNdlunkhulu yonkhe;

Executive Mayors, Speakers and Councillors from our local municipalities across the Mpumalanga Province;

Former Presiding Officers of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature present here today;

Former Secretary to the Legislature, Mr Linda Mwale;

Acting Secretary to the Legislature, Mr JB Silinda, the broader Management and Staff of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature;

Director General of the Province, Dr N Mkhize and Heads of Departments;

Representatives of the different media houses in our Province;

Esteemed guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Compatriots;

Sanibonani!

Introduction

It is an honour and privilege for me to deliver the 5th Policy and Budget Speech for the 4th Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature here today.

On the 6th of May 2009 we assembled in this august House and made a commitment *to be faithful to the Republic of South Africa, to obey, respect and uphold the Constitution and all other Laws of the Republic; and we solemnly promised to perform our functions as Members of the Legislature of the Province of Mpumalanga to the best of our ability.*

At this moment we should ponder and ask ourselves whether we have done enough to live up to our solemn promise. We should also ask ourselves whether we have individually and collectively placed the will of the people at the centre of our work.

I believe that this Legislature has achieved a lot with little means at our disposal. Our sustained connectedness with the people has taught us to soldier on even at the most challenging times.

Truly, we have in line with our mission statement held the executive accountable through our intensified oversight, enhanced public education and participation and law-making. We have over the past four years of this term of the Legislature ensured that we go to the people and listen to their challenges and sought interventions that brought solutions to the challenges raised.

Today, I am proud to say that we have done all the best we could to make this Legislature an Activist Legislature.

None of this could have been achieved without the collective work, frank engagements and openness by your good selves supported by the employees of the Legislature and the general public that participated in all our programmes.

Honourable Members and Distinguished Guests,

The journey that we travelled since the 6th of May 2009 has taught us that people working together can achieve a lot more, that tomorrow relies on our ability to achieve more today so that we can be glorified in the future.

The above finds true meaning in the words of the first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru as he was addressing the constituent assembly of India, on the 14th of August 1947 when he said, *"The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering...our work will not be over"*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the night is about to fall on the 4th Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, the task of eradicating unemployment, poverty and inequality and to usher in a better life for all, the task of building a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and united South Africa that belongs to all who live in it remains our responsibility

This great ambition was set before us and it may remain beyond us; but as in the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, *"as long as there are tears and suffering...our work will not be over."* As long as our people and the country at large are still confronted by the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment, our work shall never end.

Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment are the biggest threat to our social order, their existence defines the scope of our work. It contributes to social ills like violent crimes and service delivery protests.

It is on the basis of the above considerations that we declare the financial year 2013/14 *“the year of intense public participation and oversight for the improvement of service delivery”*

OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH 2013/14

Honourable Members,

The 2013 Policy and Budget Speech is the ultimate Budget Speech for the 4th Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature. It is a budget that will lead us to the year 2014, a year which shall mark the conclusion of 20 years of our democracy and the year in which our country will be going to the 5th National and Provincial Elections.

This budget is premised on key institutional focal areas for consideration, namely:

- ✓ The revised programme structure adopted after consultations between the National Treasury and the legislative sector of South Africa
- ✓ Accelerated public involvement and participation for the benefit of our communities
- ✓ Accelerated oversight in the context of the Public Sector Oversight Model(PSOM)
- ✓ Enhancing Democracy through voter education
- ✓ Continuous financial support to all political parties represented in the Legislature
- ✓ Continuous improvement of our business processes through systems upgrade and the disaster recovery plan
- ✓ Continued support to the Legislature committees and members
- ✓ Continuous enhancement of our research capacity through partnerships and skills development
- ✓ Ensuring participatory democracy through Taking the Legislature to the People and through Petitions
- ✓ Improved Financial Management and Accounting
- ✓ Celebration of the 20 years of the Legislature and the Legacy Projects of the Legislature
- ✓ Assessment of the progress towards Millennium Development Goals 2015

CHANGES IN THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET STRUCTURE

Honourable Members,

A need to create uniformity in the Programme and Budget Sector of the Legislative Sector of South Africa was identified and after a series of interactions between the National Treasury and the Legislative Sector, a new uniform budget and programme structure was developed for implementation from this financial year.

In order to streamline and to have standardised budget and programme structures within the Legislative Sector our programmes have therefore been reduced from six to two, i.e., ***Administration (Office of the Speaker, Office of the Secretary, Corporate Services and Financial Management)*** and ***Parliamentary Businesses (Law-Making, Oversight, Public Participation, Members' Facilities and Cooperative Governance)***.

The 2013/14 Annual Performance Plan and 2013/14 Budget for the Legislature have been prepared in line with the new programme structure. However, we want to share with the Honourable Members that the Legislature has not incurred any costs for implementing the new programme structure.

Later this year, the Administration will review the new budget structure and the current organisational structure with a view of determining matters of alignment.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING

Honourable members,

As part of the enhancement of our Financial Accounting Procedures the Legislative Sector of South Africa took a decision that all legislatures and Parliament should migrate from the modified cash basis of accounting to the accrual basis of accounting by the end of the 1st quarter of this financial year.

This forms part of the broader Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) roll out project in the Legislative Sector. In the context of the broader SAP-ERP project that commenced in the year 2011.

As part of this exercise and in order to improve our financial accounting we will move from preparing quarterly financial statements to monthly financial statements as from this financial year.

This, we believe, will provide the administration with the necessary practice that will further assist in eliminating errors in the annual financial statements that the Auditor-General always reports about throughout the Public Sector.

To counter the identified skills gap on SAP, our personnel has been enrolled for skills training in SAP Financial Accounting Processes, SAP Human Resource (HR) Processes as well as SAP Supply Chain Management (SCM).

I wish to put it to this august House that I have directed the Accounting Officer of the Legislature to ensure that all service providers are paid within the prescribed thirty days, and furthermore, indicated that there should be consequences for non-compliance by officials henceforth.

Having concluded the process of migration from BAS/Persal to ERP/SAP in the year 2012, we will be appointing a SAP Maintenance Service Provider before the end of the 1st quarter of this financial year and the service provider should be on site at the beginning of the 2nd quarter.

SUPPORT TO COMMITTEES

In line with our commitment to increase resource allocation and support to committees we have filled all the vacancies in the research unit. As I speak to you the capacity building programme for our researchers and other staff members supporting committees has commenced and it will continue throughout the financial year.

In order to continuously benefit from our relations with institutions that conduct research we will in the current financial year formalise our collaboration with Wits University on research and capacity building. Our long-term vision is to transform the Mpumalanga Legislature into a Centre for Leadership and Development, which will benefit all public representatives and personnel supporting them in the province.

Honourable Members,

The legislative sector is currently in the process of developing the Knowledge Management Strategy which is aimed at ensuring that the sector has a strategy that speaks to the core business of legislatures.

As part of the sector knowledge management strategy development, our administration will formulate our input towards the broader sector strategy.

In the past financial year we have reviewed 27 of the 33 administrative policies. The process of consultation is currently underway and our intention is to conclude the policy review process by the end of the 1st quarter of this financial year.

OVERSIGHT

In line with our declaration of the year 2013 as *"the year to intensify public participation and oversight for the improvement of service delivery"* we will continue to roll out oversight activities in line with the Sector Oversight Model of the Legislative Sector of South Africa.

We have also revised our approach towards the Taking the Legislature to the People Programme (TLP) by introducing the Pre-Taking the Legislature to the People Programme which we believe will contribute in achieving service delivery improvement both in the short- and long term.

Our committees will continue to monitor progress made in all issues raised during the TLP programmes by revisiting affected areas to conduct on-site evaluation. This we believe gives life to this project as it will ensure that government departments honour their commitments.

The National Development Plan of South Africa (2012) states the following:-
"The state cannot merely act on behalf of the people it has to act with the people." It further says, *"Government needs citizens to speak when things go wrong."*

Through our TLP programme we have been able to come into direct contact with more than 5828 of citizens of the Mpumalanga Province. This forms part of the total 8443 people who have attended the Legislature sittings during the 2012/13 financial year.

Our honourable Members have visited various service delivery sites and advised the provincial departments through committee reports and House resolutions.

Honourable Members,

In the past year we reported of our plan to roll out the Public Sector Oversight Model (PSOM) piloting Agriculture and education as focal areas for PSOM roll out. This was also dependent on increased resource allocation to the committees.

Sadly we were unable to roll out the PSOM pilot in the past year due to personnel shortages; but I am glad to report that we have currently employed a full complement of research support for committees and we will be making an endeavour to fully implement the PSOM.

In this regard, I have directed the Accounting Officer to put in place a detailed PSOM roll out plan before the end of the 1st quarter.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation is an essential tool by which the Legislature maintains close contact with the people and to maintain active citizenry. It accords our people a voice to be part of the decision making process.

It contributes to sustained public confidence in public institutions by holding state institutions accountable and ensuring fair distribution of public resources.

Participatory democracy contributes immensely to social cohesion and it builds stable communities where violence and crime find limited space to exist.

Following the Public Participation Hearing for the Sector Public Participation framework held last year, this year we will hold a Public Participation Symposium in order to enhance Public Participation in the province.

The Mpumalanga Legislature is performing very well in terms of Public Participation programmes compared to other Legislatures in South Africa. We, however, need to ensure accountability for all the findings and recommendations from the public.

In the past financial year we successfully hosted seven annually held sectoral parliaments and the Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament as per the request of the Minister for Women, Children and People with Disabilities.

We planned to roll out 54 Public Education Workshops and to enhance our utilisation of electronic media and we exceeded the set target.

Through the Legislative Sector Support Programme we have ensured that we increase utilisation of electronic media through our syndicated radio programme "***Sishayamtsetfo Setfu / Isibethamthetho Sethu***" over the past financial year.

In order to continue with this programme we have submitted a request for further funding from the LSS programme to cover the current financial year and in consideration of the 2014 National and Provincial Elections

We will review the progress made on the implementation of the resolutions of all the sectoral parliaments of the 4th Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature since 2009.

PETITIONS

In order to ensure utilisation of the petitions process by the public, we will align the Taking the Legislature to the People Programme with the Petitions Week;

during this week people around the host area will be encouraged to lodge in petitions on service delivery matters affecting them.

The Petitions Week will also be characterised by massive petitions clinic. We will also try to accelerate the turnaround time by which we process the submitted petitions by increasing the personnel in this unit.

In the past financial year 2012/13 we have processed 65 Petitions and we concluded 53 Petitions. It is important that we encourage departments to give the quickest possible attention to every petition forwarded to them as we have noted that petitions contribute to improved service delivery.

LAW-MAKING

Honourable Members,

In the past Financial Year we have passed three pieces of legislation, namely: Mpumalanga Appropriation Act 1 of 2012, Mpumalanga Adjustments Appropriation Act 2 of 2012 and Mpumalanga Finance Act 3 of 2012.

With regard to section 76 Bills, we were able to confer 4 voting mandates to permanent delegates representing the Mpumalanga Province in the NCOP on the following Bills, i.e., *Division of Revenue Bill, 2012; National Health Amendment Bill, 2011; Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Bill, 2012 and Adjustments Appropriation Bill, 2012.*

This year also marks the 100 years of the 1913 Natives Land Act which resulted in the majority of South Africans without land and means of production.

We will, therefore, in the context of the 100 years of this Act hold special debates on the 100 years of the Natives Land Act. This subject will also form part of focal points for all forthcoming Sectoral Parliaments. It is important for us to take stock of the progress we have made in eradicating the impact of this act on the lives of our people.

REVIEW OF THE RULES AND ORDERS

During the past financial year, the Select Committee on Rules and Orders continued with the process of reviewing the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature.

It is with pleasure that I report to this august House that the review process has been concluded and the 2013 of the revised Rules and Orders will be tabled in this House for adoption, before the end of the second quarter.

We would like to thank the Task Team on the Review of the Rules and Orders under the Leadership of the Hon BT Shongwe for the good work that they have done.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Honourable Members,

In the past year we have been able to establish the IT Governance Sub Committee in the legislature. We wish to appreciate the contribution by Ms Anna Badimo (member of the Audit Committee) who went an extra mile in ensuring that this function is established.

In the current financial year we will roll out the Disaster Recovery Facility as the 2nd phase of our Disaster Management Project which commenced with the Disaster Recovery Plan which was put in place in the past financial year.

Disaster Recovery is a very crucial element in the context of the global climate change and natural disaster and all modern organisations should have sound and functional disaster management process as part of the overarching Business Continuity strategy.

We will be setting up the disaster recovery facility within the Provincial Disaster Management Centre. I have been informed by the administration that the process of bid adjudication has been concluded and the preferred bidder will be appointed before the end of the 1st quarter of this financial year.

We have set aside **R2.2 Million** for the IT infrastructure enhancement which includes hardware and software for employees and members of the Legislature.

In order to reduce over-utilisation paper we have in the past financial procured additional labour saving devices for personnel and electronic gadgets for MPLs so as to contribute towards the protection of our trees.

Honourable Members,

In order to upgrade security in our building new security scanners will be fitted at the three entrances to building one. An amount of **R3.8 million** has been put aside for this exercise.

COMMUNICATION

In our bid to reassert the brand of the Legislature, we will review our communication strategy. In order to effectively promote our brand we need to have a strong communication support system for the Legislature.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MPLS

Honourable Members,

In past year we congratulated six honourable members who completed the course in Governance and Leadership with UNISA. We further indicated that honourable members were going to be accorded an opportunity to further enrol on the Graduate Certificate Programme in Governance and Leadership facilitated by PALAMA and provided by Wits University.

Allow me to congratulate the 17 Members of the Legislature who have completed the course within the prescribed period (including yours truly). This achievement represents the spirit of endurance displayed by members as they had to juggle between their tight work schedule and studies over the past twelve months.

This programme will proceed in the current financial year and those qualifying members will now be enrolled for the Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Governance at Wits University, which will be concluded in May 2014.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PERSONNEL

In the past financial year the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature has spent a total of **R1.6 Million** on capacity building for personnel and we will continue to fund short and long term capacity building programmes for personnel in the current financial year.

Honourable Members,

In order to increase the pool of potential personnel that comprehend the Legislative Sector, I have directed the administration to develop an internship programme for the Legislature.

This programme will help us to orientate graduates on the work of the Legislature and it will assist greatly in enhancing support for our core business. This activity will go a long way in enhancing the provincial labour force of Mpumalanga and increasing chances for employment for qualified job seekers.

SUPPORT TO POLITICAL PARTIES AND ENHANCING DEMOCRACY

In order to enhance participatory democracy we have made an increased allocation to political parties represented in the Legislature to continuously strengthen their caucus and constituency work. An additional amount of **R17.5 Million** has been allocated in this regard.

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS

In the past year the Mpumalanga Provincial legislature successfully hosted the 9th Southern Africa Development Community Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC).

We thank our honourable members and personnel for contributing towards the successful hosting of this conference. It is also important to acknowledge the contribution made by Speaker's Forum and the South African Breweries in ensuring that we host the event successfully.

In the past year we also took a conscious decision to host the Africa Day Celebration. An event which included a panel discussion and Cultural Celebration which was attended by representatives of the Parliaments of Swaziland and Mozambique and we will proceed with this activity at Thembisile Local Municipality this year.

The year 2013 marks the 50th anniversary celebration of the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). We Join the people of this continent in celebrating this Golden Jubilee and we would like to voice our support for the call for *"An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena"* by the AU

CELEBRATION OF THE 20 YEARS OF EXISTENCE OF THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE AND LEGISLATURE LEGACY PROJECTS

In honour of founding father of this nation Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela we will continue to roll out the Nelson Mandela Month Legacy projects for the Legislature in July 2013 and beyond.

Amongst us here today are learners and educators from **Bongamlambo, Chakaza** and **Enkhokhokhweni Primary Schools** whom we shall be handing over schools shoes and sanitary pads sponsored by Standard Bank here today.

These are the small contributions that have an effect of changing lives for the better that can only be achieved through strengthened partnerships with the private sector

Our Business Partnership with the South African Breweries has grown in leaps and Bounds; we have continued to support the Rooikoppen Project in Lekwa Local Municipality with additional Vegi-tunnels and water tank in the past financial year and we hope to expand these interventions to other Localities.

Through the support by the first National Bank we will roll out support to three projects in the three districts of the province during this financial year.

Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is an embodiment of Freedom and Ubuntu, a unique South African term given to humanity which is embraced by many across the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As part of the build up to the 20 Years of democracy we will embark on a special project to produce a document on the 20 years of existence of the Legislature.

We have also made a consideration to convene a colloquium on the 2nd decade of freedom as part of these celebrations. Our approach however will be to celebrate with the masses through educational and interactive programmes.

The Accounting Officer will soon appoint a Technical Task Team on the Celebration of the 20 Years of the Legislature as part of our roll out.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As we continue to draw closer to the year 2015, our committees will continue to evaluate our progress towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and targets.

All Provincial Departments will be required to provide a report on the progress towards each goal relevant to their portfolio. The Millennium Development Goals provides an indication of how our country is moving towards eradicating poverty and inequalities.

Our focus on these goals is premised on the fact that the eradication of poverty, inequality and access to basic services including primary health and basic education for all has been a central tenet of our policies since 1994.

The millennium Development Goals are an essential instrument of analysis of the progress made by our province.

CONCLUSION

Deputy Speaker, allow me to request this august house to approve the amount of **R243 434 000** appropriated to the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature for the following programmes:-

Programme 1

Administration which includes compensation of employees, goods and services and capital assets: **R104 366 000**

Programme 2

Parliamentary Business which includes statutory obligations for MPLs and Transfers to Political Parties: **R139 068 000**

Total: R 243 434 000

Honourable Members,

We have once again ensured that our budget is allocated to the core business. Parliamentary Business has been allocated **57%** and **43%** is allocated to Administration which is largely constituted by support services.

We must however report that this allocation does not address some of the priority issues for the legislature e.g. the building of the parliamentary village, increased personnel for committee support and other support areas.

As I conclude allow me to once again quote the words of Jawaharlal Nehru when He says *"We have work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full....."*

Our people are longing for continuously improved livelihoods and I believe we have it within our abilities to deliver on the promise made by the founding fathers and mothers of our democratic state.

"We must in our lifetime be able to change the freedom charter to read: All are enjoying equal rights! There are houses! There is Security! There is comfort for all! There is peace and friendship! And, we must be able to say iAfrika isibuyile!" Chief Albert Luthuli

This statement was made by the former President of the African National Congress in 1956. In this text Chief Albert Luthuli challenges us to live to the spirit of the Freedom Charter as a hallmark of our freedom.

It affirms the notion raised by Nehru that, we have a lot of work ahead of us and that we will not be able to afford a rest for we have not yet been able to redeem the pledge made by our leaders in 1955.

Indeed there won't be a rest for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full so that we can all say "South Africans are enjoying equal rights! There are

houses! There is Security! There is comfort for all! There is peace and friendship!”

Let us all who love this country and its people once again commit ourselves to never cease to work until our pledge to bring a better life for all is redeemed.

Allow me to thank my family especially my wife and children for the support accorded to me as I execute my political responsibilities. We also thank the African National Congress for the guidance and support.

Our appreciation also goes to the leaders of the political parties represented in the Legislature for their support. Let me voice my words of appreciation to all honourable Members and the Executive Council for their unwavering support.

We thank the Presiding Officers of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, members of the Legislature Service Board and our Audit Committee for their guidance and support.

I would also like to extend my innermost felt appreciation to the support staff in my office and the broader administration of the Mpumalanga Legislature for their hard work, commitment and support.

We thank our strategic partners and all business partners for their support throughout the past financial year whose investment has ensured that we contribute in the community upliftment programmes as stated earlier.

Ladies and Gentlemen for us to move forward we obtain our strength from the Lord who gives us courage and power of endurance. This is affirmed in the book of Isaiah 40 verse 29 which reads thus:

He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint”

God Bless Africa. Baie Dankie. Ke a Leboga. Ha Khensa.