**BUDGET VOTE 6 SPEECH FOR 2024/25**

**FINANCIAL YEAR**

**THE HONOURABLE MEC: L V BLENNIES, MPL**

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

**Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker**

**Premier of the Province Dr Zamani Saul**

**Members of the Executive Committee**

**Leader of official Opposition**

**Members of Provincial Legislature**

**House of Traditional Leaders**

**All Senior Government officials**

**Members of the Media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Introduction**

We meet here exactly 80 years since the heroic 1944 generation met and resolved

to form the ANCYL in order to charge a fight against the brutal apartheid system.

This is the generation that changed the face of anti-apartheid resistance and gave

apartheid and its apologists sleepless nights. The ANCYL has undeniably led many

struggles and shaped the ideological posture of our liberation movement and in the

post-1994 era continues to lead the economic freedom struggles. And as the current

generation who have taken the baton , we continue to fight for economic freedom

and social change, Now and not Later. In honour of all the fallen 1944 generation

and all fearless young lions I would like to dedicate this budget speech to all young

people of the Northern Cape province.

**Honourable Speaker**, the 7th administration marks an important epoch in the history of South Africa, a new epoch of collective and inclusive government through cooperation by political parties from across the spectrum in the form of the Government of National Unity (GNU). From this premise it is therefore common cause that our provincial outlook is often influenced by the national framework.

In his opening of parliament address President Cyril Ramaphosa outlined the strategic focus of the GNU which has resolved to dedicate the next five years to actions that will advance three strategic priorities: Firstly, to drive inclusive growth and job creation. Secondly, to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living. Thirdly, to build a capable, ethical and developmental state. These priorities echo the sentiments conveyed by the Honourable Premier Dr Zamani Saul in his inaugural address to the Northern Cape legislature, when he stated that the 7th administration in the Northern Cape will continue on its path towards building a modern, growing and successful province guided by the following priorities:

1. Making South Africa work: our jobs plan;
2. Building our industries for inclusive economy;
3. Tackling the high cost of living;
4. Investing in people;
5. Defending democracy and advancing freedom; and
6. Building a better Africa

The priorities are congruent with the minimum programme comprised of the 3 priorities outlined by the President in his Opening address.

Madam speaker as we present this budget it is imperative that we understand the current state of the economy in order to avoid unscientific skeptics. In order to better understand the Departments’ financial direction, we must reflect on the fact that the global economic environment continues to be characterized by volatility and uncertainty, which are as a result of the devastating Covid-19 Pandemic that claimed the lives of many and brought the global economy to a grinding halt. The after effects of this pandemic have been likened to 2008 global financial crisis, whose aftermath was felt around the globe for nearly half a decade.

**Madam Speaker,** our focus remains on building a resilient, inclusive economy that creates jobs and reduces poverty. Global growth was estimated at 3.2 percent in 2023 and is projected to continue at the same pace in 2024 and 2025, these projections are below historical (2000-2019) annual average of 3.8 percent, reflecting restrictive monetary policies and withdrawal of fiscal support, as well as underlying productivity growth. Economic performance varies widely at regional level, with some regions experiencing robust growth while others lag due to structural weaknesses and geopolitical tensions.

For advanced economies, growth is projected to rise from 1.6 percent in 2023 to 1.7 percent in 2024 and 1.8 percent in 2025. The forecast is revised upward by 0.2 percentage point for 2024 and remains the same for 2025. Growth in the Advanced Economies is driven by robust consumer spending and fiscal support.

**Honourable members,** on a national scale, GDP growth has been modest, at 0.4%, driven primarily by the finance, trade, and manufacturing sectors. However, agriculture and mining have contracted, further contributing to the economic challenges we face.

Nationally, the unemployment rate increased to 33.5%, with total employment decreasing by 92,000 individuals. The Agricultural sector bore the brunt of these job losses, while the informal sector has seen only modest growth. These national trends have not spared our province. The Northern Cape, in particular, has experienced severe economic pressures, recording unemployment rate of 32% in Quarter 2 of 2024, which is a sharp increase of 3,7 percent on a quarter-to-quarter basis. The agriculture sector has been particularly hard hit, mainly due to issues relating to climate Change, drought and veld fires

These issues underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to stabilize and grow our economy. We must focus on revitalizing key labour intensive sectors, supporting job creation, and implementing the necessary reforms to ensure that our province not only recovers but thrives in the coming years.

Honourable Members, we have come a long way in the past 30 years. The 30 years ahead of us, and whatever challenges and opportunities they may bring, are something we should look forward to. Given our difficult past, and some of the inevitable challenges we have faced as a young democracy trying to find its place in a world marked by a number of new and overlapping crises, it would be easy to indulge in extremes; either of blind optimism or crippling pessimism. We should resist both these extremes.

Honourable Members**,** this budget vote speech aligns with the objectives of the OPA, Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), the Provincial Growth Development Plan (2040), and supports the National Development Plan (NDP) as we work towards achieving a sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Consequently, our priorities for the 2024/2025 fiscal year are clear:

1. **Job Creation and Economic Inclusion**
2. **Industrialization and Innovation**:
3. **Infrastructure Development:**
4. **Skills Development and Education:**
5. **Grow Tourism Market Share:**

**Honourable Speaker,** halfway though the year, our economy remains in a phase of transition, facing both global uncertainties and domestic challenges. However, it is precisely within these challenges that we can uncover opportunities for innovation, resilience, and inclusive growth. The budget before you today is not merely a financial plan; it serves as a roadmap for economic transformation and the fulfilment of our collective vision for a successful Northern Cape

**D**uring the 2024 State of the Nation Address (SONA), the President reaffirmed the ongoing efforts to tackle unemployment, highlighting the Jobs Plan. The plan aims to create and sustain 2.5 million work opportunities by providing public goods and services in communities. As a province, our minimum target, based on the national goal, is to generate at least 60,000 jobs over this five-year period. This will be complemented by increased support for small enterprises, entrepreneurs, and cooperatives, particularly in townships and villages, providing additional work opportunity, with specific allocations for women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

**Job Creation and Economic Inclusion: Enterprise Development**

**Honourable Speaker**, SMMEs are major contributors to job creation, especially in labour-intensive sectors. Their ability to adapt quickly to changing market demands allows them to absorb labour, thereby reducing unemployment rates and providing livelihoods to many. It is therefore imperative that our approach to job creation in the province is buttressed by interventions that seek to develop and support businesses that fall within this category.

**We welcome the strides taken** to enhance the implementation and monitoring of BBBEE, several interventions were introduced to support the BEE codes of good practice. These interventions included skills development, enterprise and supplier development, as well as workshops focused on local content, tendering, procurement, and compliance.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**, in terms of the Township and Rural Economy Grant Fund, a total of 1896 applications were received amongst which 836 were shortlisted and a total of 500 successful. From the 500 successful businesses, equipment has been procured for 204 of them. Most of the businesses are owned by women in Frances Baard (57), John Taolo Gaetsewe (21), Pixley Ka Seme (17), ZF Mgcawu (10) and Namakwa (6) while most of the youth owned businesses are in Francis Baard (21). There is only one cooperative and business owned by Person with Disability in ZF Mgcawu that benefited.

The Department signs a Transfer Agreement with the Northern Cape SMME Trust (NCST) annually, for the enterprise development support it provides to enterprises across the province. These services include the following amongst others: Incubation and Business Development Support, Administration costs and Capital equipment expenditure.

Currently, The SMME trust supports 22 SMME’s in incubation at its two incubator facilities in Kimberley, (Kimberley CBD and Kimsec in the Floors area) providing employment to approximately 118 people. The total turnover for the incubation SMMEs is above R10.6 million for the 2023/2024 financial year.

**Honourable Speaker**, I am pleased to report that a total of sixteen (16) SMMEs from Pixley Ka Seme successfully completed PV Green Card training between the 1st and 7th of July 2024. This training covered both theoretical and practical aspects, equipping these enterprises with valuable skills to contribute to our renewable energy sector.

Furthermore, in the first quarter of 2024, our focus was on conducting Socio-Economic Development assessments for Abengoa beneficiary communities in Pella, Pofadder, and Onseepkans. I am proud to say that we assisted these communities in submitting funding applications for projects identified in collaboration with the Department of Social Development in Poffadder. These efforts are a vital step towards fostering sustainable development and empowering local communities.

**Madam Speaker** to achieve manufacturing-led growth and an export-oriented economy, partnerships with the private sector are essential (social compacts). The department has prioritized forming these partnerships, including a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Raisins SA to boost raisin production and export.

**Ladies and gentlemen, i**n order to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the master plans developed nationally, the Department has prioritised the development of the Northern Cape Metals, Machinery and Equipment (MME) sector for investigation and analysis to support the process of developing an Industrial Cluster Masterplan for the MME sector. The implementation of the masterplan will unlock opportunities for industrialisation and growing the manufacturing base of the province which have been dwindling for a while now.

**Industrialization and Infrastructure Development**

**Ladies and Gentleman**, in our province, the largest contributors to GDP are mining, government services, transport, and trade, while manufacturing accounts for only 3%. Recognizing this, the Northern Cape has developed a strategic industrialization plan centred around the NC Industrial Corridor. This corridor extends from the Kathu Industrial Park in the Postmasburg/Hotazel manganese and iron ore belt, to the Upington Industrial Park, the newly designated Namakwa Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and culminates in the planned Boegoebaai Port Development on the west coast. This strategic initiative will drive economic growth, unlock new investment opportunities, and create sustainable jobs for the people of our province.

**Honourable Speaker**, as we begin the 2024/25 financial year, the Northern Cape is set to strengthen its role in green energy and inclusive economic development through key initiatives, notably the Northern Cape Green Hydrogen (GH2) Strategy and Masterplan. With a goal of achieving 40GW of green hydrogen capacity, aligned with the 2024 Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), our phased approach aims to manage risks and deliver significant development outcomes. Collaborations, particularly with SASOL for an initial 5GW electrolyser capacity, are central to this effort, supported by an immediate funding need of R16.050 million and an additional R121.874 million over the 2025 MTEF.

**Ladies and Gentleman**, the GH2 ecosystem projects, under the NCGH2 Masterplan, have seen substantial progress through regional collaborations. The 3 Capes Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Western Cape and Eastern Cape, along with a forthcoming partnership with Namibia, highlights our commitment to regional synergy.

**Honourable Speaker**, the Boegoebaai GH2 Development Programme, led by SASOL, is nearing the completion of its pre-feasibility study. We expect to finalize partnership agreements by November-December 2024 and secure commitments from key stakeholders, including state-owned entities and the private sector, to support the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

**Ladies and Gentleman**, grid expansion is a priority, with active discussions with ESKOM and the Ministry of Energy and Electricity to support the Namakwa SEZ. Collaboration with Namibia is also vital for creating a unified GH2 export corridor, with an MoU nearly finalized.

Regional governance structures, such as the RCPA, are being streamlined to facilitate land access and procurement for port and SEZ developments. The feasibility study aims to unlock R600 billion in investment for the initial phase of green hydrogen production.

The Namakwa SEZ, officially designated in May 2024, will be a cornerstone of the Northern Cape Industrial Corridor. Immediate efforts include formalizing the SEZ operator permit and board appointments. with a funding requirement of R19.140 million and a co-contribution of R157.245 million over the 2025 MTEF.

**Ladies and Gentleman**, the Northern Cape is committed to leveraging catalytic projects to drive inclusive growth, expand industrial capacity, and establish the province as a leader in green energy and sustainable development.

**Key initiatives aligned with our focus on inclusive growth through trade and employment creation include:**

* Expanding the export base with exporter development training; 22 companies have been trained, including 17 women-owned and 5 youth-owned businesses.
* Increasing our market share in Africa by facilitating workshops on the AfCFTA, (Africa Continental Free Trade Area) which provides access to a market of 1.2 billion people.
* Scaling up investment in infrastructure with a comprehensive approach and focusing on Climate Change initiatives.
* Developing a Northern Cape Mining and Mineral Beneficiation Strategy to identify critical minerals that will support our energy and industrialization goals and exporting of finished products as opposed to raw commodities.

**Innovation**

**Honourable Speaker,** innovation is at the heart of the government’s plan to modernize the economy and promote sustainable growth.

**Madam Speaker,** in the first quarter of 2024/25 financial year, we hosted a Smart City Symposium, where stakeholders unanimously agreed on our vision for Kimberley to become a Smart Knowledge City. To advance this vision, we have established a digital platform to keep the conversation going and drive further progress.

I am also pleased to announce that Digify Africa has launched its third cohort of Digital Marketing training specifically designed for unemployed youth. This initiative aims to boost local business growth by equipping young people with essential digital marketing skills. Additionally, in Barkley West, 10 young individuals have completed their training as Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISP) and are now in the process of forming a cooperative to build a community network.

**Madam Speaker**, our Sol Plaatje University students have made us proud by excelling at the IT Web Security Summit, securing top positions, including first place, in the Challenge. In our ongoing efforts to modernize the Northern Cape, SA Connect Phase 2 will play a crucial role in bridging the digital divide, while simultaneously creating opportunities in software development, renewable energy, and Green Hydrogen. I am also delighted to share that the mLab has been accredited as a Skills Development Provider for software qualifications, with the Galeshewe SMME Village in Kimberley being the first site to receive this accreditation.

**BUDGET ALLOCATION 2024/25**

**Honourable Speaker**, I would like to present the budget allocation for the Department for the 2024/25 fiscal year. The department has been allocated a budget of **R360,185 million** to support the promotion of economic planning and drive growth through industry development.

**PROGRAMME 1: ADMINISTRATION**

**Honourable Speaker,** A budget of R85.804 million has been allocated to the Administration sector, marking an increase of R6.906 million from the previous year. This funding will support strategic leadership, management, and support services within the department.

The phased rationalization of NCEDA is set to align with legislative frameworks and organizational systems, focusing on creating a unified value system and normative culture. Significant progress has been made in integrating NCEDA with the Northern Cape Tourism Authority (NCTA), particularly in aligning planning, policies, and financial practices, as mandated by the NCEDA Act 5 of 2024.

The next integration phase will involve the Kalahari Kid Corporation (KKC). Agreements between the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development, and Land Reform are in place, focusing on labour consultations and asset transition to streamline NCEDA’s revenue base.

For the Fleet Management Trading Entity and the Me Re Ka Thusa Trust, discussions are ongoing regarding staff realignment and mandate shifts. These processes are expected to be completed by the end of the 2024/25 financial year, with full implementation in 2025/26.

Overall, this rationalization aims to position NCEDA as a leading public entity capable of driving economic growth and maximizing impact across the province.

**PROGRAMME 2: INTEGRATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT**

**Honourable Speaker**, the IEDS program is allocated R62.507 million for the current financial year to promote economic and small business development through partnerships. The program focuses on inclusivity, benefiting a broad segment of the population.

The IEDS comprises two sub-programmes: Economic Empowerment, Preferential Procurement, and B-BBEE, and Regional and Local Economic Development (RaLED). These sub-programmes provide financial and non-financial support to SMMEs and cooperatives and assist municipalities with economic development planning and implementation, including Red Tape Reduction and EPWP.

Key activities for this year include assistance with company registration, public procurement, funding opportunities, and compliance, business management Training, Access to Finance Workshop and Municipal Support.

The Kimberley Diamond and Jewellery Incubator (KDJI) established six SMMEs and created eight job opportunities. Learners from the KIDJA program are continuing their training, set to complete by November 2024.

**EPWP**

**Madam Speaker**, the Department has allocated a budget of R1.9 million for EPWP projects. The projects aim to create employment opportunities and are monitored through business plans and online EPWP reporting. For 2024/25, 30 work opportunities (WO) each will be created for the paving and water improvement projects.

**Ladies and Gentleman,** to support historically disadvantaged individuals (HDIs), the Department will engage Assmang Beeshoek Mine to assist suppliers access purchase order finance and ensure compliance, while Old Mutual will provide financial literacy training for NC SMME Blended Fund projects.

**Madam Speaker**, the Department is collaborating with the SAB Foundation to expand the Tholoana Enterprise Development Programme in the Northern Cape and with FNB to roll out the "Monetise Your Business" workshops to help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses. A partnership with the Small Retail Development Board (SRDB) aims to revitalize township spaza shops through a brand trade model, shifting ownership back to local communities.

Further engagement with SourceFin will assist SMMEs with purchase order and invoice discounting finance, addressing cash flow challenges.

**T**he Kimberley International Diamond and Jewellery Academy (KIDJA) and the Kimberley Diamond and Jewellery Incubator (KDJI) will merge, with a single board overseeing both entities. The Mining and Mineral Beneficiation unit will focus on localizing opportunities for emerging miners, and the creation of an Emerging Miners Forum is underway to address industry challenges.

**PROGRAMME 3: TRADE AND SECTOR DEVELOPMENT**

**Madam Speaker**, the objective of the Trade and Sector Development program is stimulating economic growth in the province through the development and industrialisation of key sectors as well as the promotion of trade and sourcing of domestic and foreign direct investment. A budget of **R106,483 million** has been allocated for this purpose, with **R79,245 million** designated for Transfers and subsidies.

The induction programme service offerings for 50 SMMEs who received their PV Green Card certificates will take place in quarter 2 of the current financial year. We will be training the last cohort of 16 SMMEs in ZFM District Municipality.

In line with our commitment to addressing youth unemployment and fostering local economic growth, NCEDA, in partnership with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), is implementing the UIF Labour Activation Program (LAP). This initiative targets 1,510 unemployed young people across the province, with 30% of beneficiaries recruited through NCEDA and 70% from the UIF database. With a total budget of R39 million, the program focuses on equipping youth with critical skills in key sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, and civil construction. This skills development initiative spans the five districts of the Northern Cape: Frances Baard, ZF Mgcawu, Pixley ka Seme, John Taolo Gaetsewe, and Namakwa, ensuring broad regional impact.

**Programme 4: Consumer Protection and Business Regulation**

**Honourable Speaker**, A budget of **R45,416 million** has been allocated to support the Office of the Consumer Protector in removing barriers which inhibit business development and to ensure regulation of Consumer Protection in the Northern Cape Province. This allocation aims to assist the programme to investigate, mediate and adjudicate over consumer related matters in the Province of the Northern Cape and refer unresolved matters to the Consumer Court for adjudication.

**Ladies and Gentleman**, the Office of the Consumer Protector will be embarking on outreach programmes, by visiting all the 5 districts throughout the province to educate, empower, assist and protect consumers, within its jurisdiction.

The Office of the Consumer Protection Authority in collaboration with SAPS, Home Affairs, municipalities, the National Consumer Commissioner, Dept of Health and NERSA will be embarking on community outreach programmes to inform consumers about their rights and protect consumers against exploitation throughout the province.

**Programme 5: Economic Planning**

**Honourable Speaker**, for this financial year, a budget of **R19.869 million** has been allocated to support economic transformation through policy development, innovation, and connectivity in the Northern Cape. Key research priorities include investment in inclusive economic growth, the manufacturing sector, funding mechanism and criteria for transformation and boosting tourism sector, and the Northern Cape Green Hydrogen Masterplan focusing on outer battery level production feasibility.

As a means of coordinating the implementation of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan Economic driver and its paths of prosperity, the Department will host a sustainable Oceans Economy Symposium in October under the theme ***“Harnessing and Transforming of the Oceans Economy for a Resilient future of the Northern Cape province”.*** The symposium will bring relevant stakeholders together to deliberate on interventions that could be implemented to take advantage of the economic benefits presented by our coastal line.

**Ladies and Gentleman**, the province will continue collaborating with SA Connect Phase 2 to prioritize broadband implementation in underserved areas and economic growth regions. ICT skills development will be advanced through partnerships with SPU, mLab NC, and others via programs like Ideathons, Hackathons, and VacWork, with this year's VacWork hosted in Prieska. Additionally, the Barkley West WISP cooperative will launch a wireless community network to promote local engagement and economic growth.

**Programme 6: Tourism**

**Honourable Speaker,** the Tourism program has been allocated **R40.106 million** for tourism growth, development, and destination promotion in the Northern Cape. Key initiatives include:

* The Kimberley Diamond Cup (KDC) is progressing, with two skaters supported for Olympic qualifiers, and Boipelo Awah qualifying for the 2024 Paris Olympics.
* A visitor tracking system will be implemented to assess tourism's economic impact, and the township tourism strategy will be accelerated.
* A dialogue on challenges faced by persons with disabilities will be held, promoting universal accessibility in tourism.
* Astro-tourism efforts will expand, with the development of the SKA Carnarvon Exploratorium and training for youth in Astro Tourism.
* Infrastructure projects will include the Carnarvon community square, McGregor Museum Access Road, and stargazing platforms at the Komani San Cultural Heritage Site. The department will also address understaffing in nature reserves and museums through youth employment programs.
* I am elated to announce that the Northern Cape has been selected as the host province for the World Tourism Day Celebrations this year, to be held in Carnarvon, where the Northern Cape Tourism Excellence Awards will also be held.
* **Honourable Speaker,** I am pleased to report that the tourism sector has shown remarkable recovery and we have seen impressive growth, particularly in domestic travel. The Northern Cape's unique tourism brand—characterized by its iconic experiences, expansive and varied landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and strategic marketing initiatives—has been pivotal in attracting both domestic and international visitors. The contribution by the travel and tourism sector of the Northern Cape to the provincial GDP in 2023 is the highest yet recorded. The overall contribution to Provincial GDP grew with 36.4%, R4.5 billion in 2023 vs R 3.3 billion in 2022. (S**ource: South African Tourism Performance Report 2023).**

Honourable Speaker, We will aggressively market our tourist attraction areas. We are boarding four (4) provinces and the Namibian nation as a country, Our Namakwa flowers, The SKA and many more landscapes strategically places our province as a go to province. **To this end, we will be launching #TourismFridays and visit all our tourist attraction areas to properly market these areas.**

To align with NCEDA’s strategic focus on domestic, regional, and select global markets for both leisure and business tourism, our priorities for 2024/25 and beyond will be centred on supporting and accelerating the recovery of the Northern Cape’s tourism industry.

Our Strategic Leisure Tourism focus will emphasize increasing domestic trips, particularly day trips to the Northern Cape, and boosting arrivals from key African land markets such as Namibia and Botswana. During this period, we will maintain our visibility and ensure that the Northern Cape remains top of mind in our selected international markets. NCEDA will actively support the global advocacy campaign of South African Tourism, aimed at enhancing the South African brand and facilitating tourism recovery by advocating for the removal of international travel barriers in our core markets.

**NCGLB**

**Honourable Speaker**, The Gambling Board received R17.416 million, and the Liquor Board was allocated R15.765 million for the 2024/25 financial year. These funds will support the Northern Cape Gambling Board (NCGB) and Northern Cape Liquor Board (NCLB) in creating a socially responsible business environment that promotes economic growth while ensuring effective regulations are in place to prevent negative impacts on communities.

The Northern Cape Gambling and Liquor Act, 2024 (Act No. 6) took effect on April 1, 2024, following approval by the Premier of the province. This Act merges the regulation of both the gambling and liquor industries into one entity, which will be officially listed with National Treasury by September 2024 under Schedule 3(c) of the PFMA. An interim board was appointed in June 2024, with a permanent board to be selected by the MEC. The review of the Gambling Board regulations has also been completed.

**Conclusion**

**Madam Speaker,** the road towards building an inclusive economy requires tenacity and determination. It requires political will from the public sector, trust and support from the private sector and participation from the NGO sector. We cannot walk this journey alone; in order to achieve our goals, we must work together. It must be understood that our work must ensure that both men and women of our province are granted a better a life.

Our commitment to strengthening the economic state of our province is not merely lip service we must implement plans to ensure that over next five years massive improvements will be implemented. We hope that we can galvanise maximum cooperation from all of you as we roll -out these projects and initiatives in the province. Communication must play a central role in ensuring that we close the trust deficit between citizen and government by communicating our plans and intentions.

Let’s spare no effort, let’s roll up our sleeves and place all hands on deck in an effort to empower our people with information, so as to improve the quality of their lives. Lets utilize all available platforms, systems, tools and innovative ways to reach all our people with the message of government in the spirit of **‘Leaving No One Behind’.** We must ensure that our people participate in the programme of building a ‘Modern, Growing and Successful Province as envisaged by the 6th Administration and continued in the 7th administration.

Allow me close off with one of my favourite quotes from the prolific African intellectual, poet, theoretician, revolutionary, political organizer, nationalist and diplomat Amilcar Cabral. When addressing his colleagues through a party directive in 1965 he makes the following remarks which I believe we should carry with ourselves always as we execute our duties: ***“We must practice revolutionary democracy in every aspect of our life. Every responsible member must have the courage of his responsibilities, exacting from others a proper respect for his work and properly respecting the work of others. Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.”***

***Madam Speakers I therefore table this budget for consideration by the house.***