

**State of the Province Address (SOPA) by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr  
Zamani Saul,  
on the occasion of the Second Session of the Sixth Legislature  
27 February 2020  
Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley**

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**The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature;  
Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mrs Sylvia Lucas  
The Speaker of the Western Cape Provincial Legislature, Ms Masizole Mnqasela;  
Members of the Executive Council;  
Members of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces;  
Members of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature;  
Chairperson of the Karas Region, Mr Jan Scholtz  
Member of the Namibian Parliament and former Governor of the Karas Region, Mr  
David Boois  
Members of the Diplomatic Corps - Consul Generals of China, Netherlands, Britain,  
Botswana and Namibia  
Judge President of the Northern Cape, Judge Pule Tlaletsi;  
Heads of State Security Services;  
Chairperson of the South African Local Government Association Northern Cape  
(SALGA NC)  
Mayors and Councillors  
Our Honoured Traditional Leaders;  
Veterans of our Liberation Struggle;  
Heads of State Institutions supporting our Constitutional Democracy;  
The Director General and Heads of Department;  
The Acting Vice Chancellor of Sol Plaatjie University, Professor Jean Baxen  
Secretary of the ANC and opposition parties;  
Leaders of the Alliance;  
Government Officials;**

**Captains of Industry;**

**Distinguished Guests;**

**My special guests, Sebastian Tshepo Mojanaga, who has been selected to attend the International Models and talent event in New York, Olerato Majoro and in absentia Tlotlo Lekgoba and Hungry Lions Soccer team**

**Fellow citizens of the Northern Cape;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

**Good morning**

**Honourable Speaker**, let me first start by thanking everyone present for your attendance. And for those at home, thanks for listening to this live broadcast. I am deeply grateful for your commitment to be part of this annual address about the future of our province. We have an extraordinary beautiful province, and we need to work together across racial lines, political affiliation and geographic locations to bring development in the province. Poverty and unemployment does not ask which political party you belong to, which racial group you belong to or where in the province you are stationed.

This month marks 30 years since the release from 27 years of imprisonment of the founding father of our democratic country. And therefore, I invite all of us to draw courage from his wise words on the occasion of his first State of the Nation Address as first President of the democratic South Africa when he said: **“We must, 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.”**

This call is more relevant to us in the Northern Cape. In my inaugural speech and the SOPA 2019 I articulated a vision of a Northern Cape that we must build, a vision that must constitute our shared destiny; that is building a modern, growing and successful province.

This is what I said in SOPA 2019 about a MODERN, GROWING AND SUCCESSFUL province:

**“A Modern, Growing and Successful Province. Such a province will care for the vulnerable and make life worth living for them, such a province will be at the cutting-edge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and prioritizes quality education and training. Such a Province will strive to improve the health profile of its residents. It will be a province whose youth have reasonable opportunities and are allowed to dream.**

**Furthermore, Madam Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, a Modern, Growing and Successful Province is one where our people, especially women and children, can freely enjoy their streets without fear of being molested or abused. In such a province, people who are differently-abled or disabled are embraced and equitably given opportunities. This will be a province with a strong and caring government that actively fights corruption and laziness. Such a province will build partnerships between the different sectors of society for shared growth and development. The elected leaders of this Modern, Successful and Growing Province are hard-working, they pay attention to detail, are incorruptible and shun self-indulgence such as red carpets, blue-lights, security upgrades, State houses, etc. Such a province gives hope to the hopeless in a very a practical way.”**

Building a modern, growing and successful province should serve as a blue print in our minds. Building such a province will always be a daunting task and requires hard work and courage from all of us. As I mentioned in SOPA 2019 this generation of leaders have a great opportunity to rethink and dare to reinvent the future by identifying opportunities and pursue them vigorously with courage.

Madam Speaker, allow me to again quote Ralph Waldo Emerson on courage in his beautiful poem titled **COURAGE:**

**Whatever course you decide upon**

**There is always someone to tell you  
that you are wrong, it is impossible**

**There will always be difficulties  
That will tempt you to believe  
Your critics are right**

**To map out a course of action  
And follow it to the end  
Requires of the same courage  
That a soldier needs**

**Honorable Speaker**, during the past few months, since the inauguration of this 6th Administration we met and engaged with many people who are immensely inspired, excited and fired-up about the vision. Whilst at the same time ; we met some people who fear this vision of building a Modern, Growing and Successful Province, as they think that it is too big, and sounds impossible.

**Honourable Speaker**, what our founding President said about fear is instructive here “**I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear**”

**Honourable Speaker**, through my Facebook page and Twitter account I had an opportunity to engage with the people of the Northern Cape, in the main young people. The dominating issues were the following :

- Land for middle income group who do not qualify for an RDP house and mortgage bond, the missing middle.
- Youth unemployment / job creation.
- SMME assistance (funding, workshops etc.)
- The state of our municipalities.

- The state of roads in Laxey and Heuningvlei.
- Development and support for female sporting codes in the Province.
- Insourcing to create decent employment.
- PSL soccer team to enable the province to leverage the traveling soccer fan tourism.

Gcobani Peterson from Britstown in the Emthangeni Municipality is concerned with the slow development in Britstown. He is also worried about the state of ambulances.

Lerato Mothibi from Kimberley would like Premier to address issues of youth development programs, mental illness and drug abuse amongst young people.

Jeandre Goliath wants to hear more about the plan for unemployed graduates who completed internships in government departments. He would also like to hear more about the plans for representation of LGBTI community in the Government.

**Honorable Speaker**, from these engagements it is quite clear that there are many fronts that we must respond to as a caring government. I am here to report to the people of the Northern Cape that despite all the challenges ; the work to build a Modern, Growing and Successful province its unfolding, its on course, its irreversible, unstoppable and its gaining tremendous momentum. Hence, this SOPA will focus on practical things that we are doing and what is on our desk as the 6th administration.

**Honorable Speaker**, to build on this vision we started with small but very symbolic things. That was to free ourselves from indulging in Executive Luxuries such as new cars, official residences, blue lights and officials portraits. The naysayers thought that this was a political stunt. We did all of these because we knew that the precarious financial position of the province does not allow for such indulgence by elected leaders. As elected leaders we must serve as a force of example in cutting wasteful expenditures and inefficiencies in the system. Not because we want to be seen to be revolutionary in our outlook, but

because the levels of poverty and the development challenges in the province do not allow for such.

**Honorable Speaker**, we were the first amongst the provinces to advocate for the revision of the Ministerial Handbook and we welcomed the publication of the revised benefits for the Premiers and MECs. We do all of this in the spirit of servant leadership which requires of leaders not to be self-centered, but to be people-centred.

**Honourable Speaker**, the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019-2024 provides the policy direction for government and supports the objective of the NDP 2030 to address the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty. Economically, culturally and spatially we need to transform the current trends and path dependencies to switch into a new development trajectory, one that sees more people in jobs, reduction of the wealth gap between the rich and the poor and raising household incomes across the board.

The MTSF 2019-2024 aims to address this through three pillars of the NDP:

- Driving a strong and inclusive economy;
- Building and strengthening the capabilities of South Africans; and
- Achieving a more capable State.

The Provincial Growth and Development Plan will ensure alignment to the MTSF by articulating the seven Priorities that constitute government's overarching policy framework derived from the 2019 Electoral Mandate and the National Development Plan Vision 2030.

**Honourable Speaker**, in order for us to realise the objectives of our on-going struggle for economic liberation, human security and prosperity for all, we have crafted a 20 Year Vision for the Province namely, "**Building A Modern, Growing and Successful Province**" as contained within the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP - Vision 2040). It is a plan which is spatially referenced within the Provincial Spatial

Development Framework (PSDF) and grounded within the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Freedom Charter.

**Honorable Speaker**, we are entering a new era in our political landscape, therefore it is important that our people are actively involved in contributing towards the realisation of the Provincial vision. It is imperative that we all join hands. Let us take up the challenge for renewal and rebuilding of our amazing Province. We must work together to grow this Province.

**Honourable Speaker**, since I took office as Premier of this beautiful Province, I have initiated certain strategic interventions to address the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment. We have engaged in Social compacts, through ongoing discussions with mines in the province to ensure that we reach our objective of a Modern, Growing, Successful Province.

**Honourable Speaker**, our endeavours to empower the youth are bearing some fruits. You will recall that soon after assumption of office as Premier we commenced with a campaign in Lerato Park where we identified approximately 700 out of school and unemployed youth for different vocational and artisanal training programmes. We have been successful in registering 617 youth on the database we established. To this end, 151 youth were enrolled at the TVET colleges in vocational and artisanal training. In addition, the Security & Safety SETA has committed to train 50 youth in End User Computing Skills and 20 to acquire their Learners and Drivers Licence Code 10 from. All these young people are sourced from the data base that we established. These seemingly trifling interventions are a game changer in the lives of the beneficiaries; many have found inspiration and developed a meaningful purpose.

Simultaneously, a general database of unemployed youth who are seeking work opportunities has been established by the NYDA through the Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP). This online system will enable unemployed youth across the Province who seek employment to apply for jobs. It will also help prospective employers

to headhunt and be connected with young job seekers. We also have law graduates who have been placed within various law firms to do their articles. The success rate of this programme is impressive.

**Honourable Speaker**, through the implementation of the CASP and Ilema Letsema Funding Programme 726 work opportunities have been created mainly through infrastructure development and vineyard development.

Young farmers have been deployed to various commercial enterprises for training and mentoring on established farms for a period of two years. The objective is to develop a pool of young producers, to provide a platform for active participation of youth in Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. During this period, commercial farmers are expected to transfer farming knowledge and skills to young graduates. Eighty (80) young graduates are employed at various commercial enterprises for this purpose.

The province continues to make financial resources available to students in need through the provision of bursaries. For this financial year 366 bursaries were awarded in the province by the state, SETA's, government Departments and the Premier's Trust Fund. In addition to this 6418 TVET students were awarded bursaries through NSFAS.

**Honourable Speaker**, in an effort to prioritise the implementation of our vision in the province, I had indicated that the state house would be sold and the proceeds thereof will be redirected towards the Premier's Bursary Trust fund. The state house was placed in the market but thus far no buyer has been secured.

This Administration's priority is to ensure that government resources are not wasted or under-utilised, thus the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism is currently occupying the state house as their designated office accommodation. The savings realised of R624 000 per annum on rental by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism will be surrendered to the revenue fund, which in turn will be directed to the bursary fund.

As this sixth administration, we made a commitment to the citizens of the Province during the Inaugural Address and the State of the Province Address in July 2019 to prioritize youth development by putting youth at the centre of our economic agenda. Through partnerships with SETA's and other stakeholders the following skills development programmes are being implemented:

- Learnerships: 3321
- Internships : 626
- Work Integrated Learning: 338
- Skills Programmes for employed officials: 1305
- Skills programs/short courses for unemployed youth: 3385
- Artisan/Apprenticeship development 1134
- SMME development: 1075

In addition to the above, **Honourable Speaker**, we have funded the training of unemployed youth in Basic refrigeration (88) and security training (44) in Kimberley, Colesburg, De Aar and Petrusville. This Programme was concluded in February 2020.

We are in the final stages of phase 1 of the digitalisation of funded Youth Service Centres for their conversion as Wi-Fi hotspots that will enable young people to access much needed electronic information for job opportunities, training, etc. This will also unleash the entrepreneurial drive and latent innovation that is characteristic of young people. All 26 existing Youth Service Centres will be Wi-Fi hotspots by end of September 2020.

**Honourable Speaker**; our observation is that youth employment initiatives are occurring in a fragmented and unplanned basis; hence rapid progress is underway towards the establishment of a fully functional Youth Directorate in the Office of the Premier. A comparative study has been done for functioning and resourcing of the youth directorate.

**Honourable Speaker;** the Provincial Macro Organisation of the Government (PMOG) was initiated as part of the broader national processes. In the province we are focusing on the following:

- The streamlining the Premier's Bursary Trust Fund for both strategic and operational efficiencies. This entails considering options available to enhance the effectiveness of the Trust towards productive outcomes aimed at advancing the skills revolution. In this way resources will be allocated to address government priorities and gaps in our human resources development plan.
- The feasibility study has been concluded on the rationalisation of entities which includes the merger of the Gambling and Liquor Boards.
- The provincial processes relating to the merger of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development will unfold once the Proclamation has been passed by the President.

**Honorable Speaker;** the opening of the New Northern Cape Mental Health Hospital in September last year was long-awaited. This has allowed for major improvement for patients on two fronts. Firstly, we have been able to transfer the mentally ill patients from the old West End Hospital to the brand new facility. Secondly, it has allowed us to transfer the 72-hour mental health assessment patients from Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital to the new Mental Health Hospital.

**Honorable Speaker,** allow me to once more congratulate all 9 138 candidates that sat for the 2019 National Senior Certificate Examinations and highlight some of the key achievements:

- The pass rate for the Northern Cape Province is 76.5% in comparison to 73.3% in 2018, which is an increase of 3.2%
- Eleven (11) schools obtained a pass rate of 100%, compared to the 4 schools in 2018;

- One thousand six hundred and thirty three (1633) candidates obtained distinctions, compared to the one thousand five hundred and sixty two (1562) in 2018;
- Two thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine (2 769) candidates obtained access to Bachelor Degree university entrance, compared to the two thousand five hundred and eighty nine (2 589) in 2018;
- All Districts achieved above 70% pass rate
- We have reduced the number of underperforming schools from 32 schools in 2018 to 20 schools in 2019;

We are pleased to acknowledge in absentia, Tlotlo Lekgoba one of our excellent performers, she was a Grade 12 learner at Baitiredi Technical School. She is currently studying towards a degree in Actuarial Science at Wits University in the hope that she can one day give back to the community, which moulded her into the person she is today.

**Honorable Speaker**, the cost benefit analysis of insourcing has been completed and the implementation will be done through a phased-approach which has started with security services. Phased-approach means that this process will unfold over several years so that we do not compromise the fiscal stability of the province. Currently, the contract cost on outsourced security services is R239 million with 1368 security guards. As a starting point we have by now insourced 116 of the 1368.

**Honorable Speaker**, we have seized the opportunity and platform that the Investment Conference of 5-7 November 2019 provided by showcasing a number of projects in the Province that are ready for investment through the Northern Cape Investment Booklet. We have engaged with potential investors and business leaders on the prospects of investing in the Northern Cape. Business is eager to partner with the Northern Cape as a locus of future growth. The goodwill that we received is impressive.

Having said this, unemployment, poverty and inequality are not challenges that government alone will address. I heard our people's voices in various areas of the

Northern Cape, struggling with the socio-economic consequences of underdevelopment. Government, private sector and communities need to join hands to confront the root causes of these challenges. As partners we must be jointly committed to find long-term solutions.

**Honorable Speaker** according to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, unemployment in the Northern Cape decreased in quarter 4 of 2019 from 29% to 26% compared to Q3 of 2019. The number of employed persons increased by 13 000 to 335 000 and the number of unemployed persons decreased by 14 000 to 123 000, resulting in an unchanged labour force of 458 000 persons. The number of discouraged work-seekers decreased by 9 000 to 67 000 compared to Q3: 2019. Employment increased in 3 of the four sectors in Q4:2019.

**Honorable Speaker** it is important to note that the formal sector recorded the largest employment increase of 8 000 followed by the informal sector (6 000). The increase in employment was largely driven by Trade (10 000), Finance (8 000), and Mining (4 000) whilst the highest employment losses were experienced in Community and Social services (9 000) and private households (4 000). The Labour absorption rate increased by 1.6 percentage points to 41.6%, the highest rate in 5 years. The youth (15-34 years) unemployment rate decreased by 4.3 percentage points to 38.2% in Q4:2019 compared to Q3:2019. All these decreases speak to the efforts that we invested to create work opportunities for the youth in our province.

## **MODERNISING THE PROVINCE**

**Honorable Speaker**, the choices and investments we make for the next 5 years will be based on an understanding between government, labour, business and civil society. The future of jobs is not only driven by digital demands but also human factors, it is important to embrace the new job and skills development opportunities the 4IR has to offer. This will enable us to place the Province on a sustainable development trajectory. Some

interventions has been introduced on a number of fronts. These interventions include harnessing and maximizing the potential of innovation and technology. The interventions include:

- The introduction of robotics and coding by the Department of Education to instil digital era skills in our scholars.
- This year we will also introduce an online learner admission system. This will enable online registration and placement of children. The familiar long queues of parents in search of placement for their children in the searing heat of the summer days and unrelenting freeze of the winter nights will have the sun set on them forever. The Department of Education, will provide the necessary essentials regarding the enactment. The business requirements of the system have been completed, therefore paving the way for implementation
- Sol Plaatje University (SPU) has been at the forefront of providing data analytical skills to undergraduates; offering unique data analysis qualifications. This pool of talent is being absorbed by the financial sector and particularly the big data downloads from the SKA. Sol Plaatje University continues to play an influential role in imparting digital skills to our various towns and communities, by hosting Hackathons, VacWork (vocational work) programmes and skills development outreach programs. This is done in collaboration with lecturers, Geekulcha students and the NCDev ecosystem (the first app developer ecosystem in the Northern Cape).
- Our partnerships with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) led to the establishment of a mLab for applications development in Galeshewe, one of the oldest townships in South Africa. At mLab “application development” skills are being taught, and through the Northern Cape Community Education and Training College, the content is being aligned to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), for NQF levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) is emerging as a catalytic partner for the province, in order to drive the conversion of our natural endowments into new products from which to grow our local opportunities and jobs. We actively support mLab and these outreach

programs and we have worked with our Northern Cape Tourism Authority to introduce digitalization in our local tourism environment.

- The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) is also the key stakeholder of South Africa's participation in the Square Kilometre Array (SKA). SKA too, have been training electrical engineers, fibre optic technicians and continue to place bursars in the Sol Plaatje University data science programmes. We implore our local learners to leverage these opportunities.
- More recently, the DEDaT, with the Department of Telecommunications and Digital Technologies National Electronic Media Institute South Africa and the Vaal University of Technology, have trained unemployed youth from the Northern Cape in cell phone repairs. This is a huge market for entrepreneurs.
- This intervention has extended to the Department of Social Development, who themselves have also been training unemployed youth, across the province, in mobile apps and website development. This emphasis on youth and information technology is critical if we have to close the gap between space and time, harvest young talent for our collective prosperity.
- Pursuant to the call for the insourcing of outsourced services, the Department of Social Development has insourced the De Aar and Springbok secure care centres in November 2019 thereby creating a total of 111 permanent jobs (De Aar -56 and Springbok 55). The Department is currently in the process to finalise recruitment processes to ensure consistency and quality child care and protection services to our vulnerable children in these facilities.
- Our communities have definitively not been left behind in this Internet era. The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture is also actively realising its obligations to promote access to the internet as a right, they connected just about all of our libraries to the internet. However, some need satellite connectivity because there is no terrestrial infrastructure. The Internet accessed at the 150 libraries and the broadcasting delivery systems being utilized by our Department of Education, are live and online, playing an instrumental role in taking education and digital learning to our remotest populations. However, our reach and capacity to deliver rich learning content, would have been far enhanced if we had benefitted from the

telecommunications upgrades performed in all the other provinces, for the FIFA 2010 World Cup.

- Notwithstanding our infrastructure limitations, the Department of Telecommunications and Digital Technologies continues to be at the frontline of rolling out national broadband connectivity in our Pixley ka Seme District Municipality. While our Department of Economic Development and Tourism continues to explore options to increase broadband penetration and WiFi connectivity in public spaces in partnerships, with organizations like Afrovation, our own local Abuntu Networks and telecommunications cooperatives, like Zenzeleni Community Networks.
- Our Department of Roads and Public Works has already initiated a 3D printing environment for engineers and designers to first prototype their designs using computer assisted technologies. These are the stepping stones for us to also raise our skills levels for the use of computer aided technologies in the future and prepare models for our cities to become Smart Cities. Currently, under Sol Plaatje University with support from the Department of Science and Technology, CSIR, Technology Localization Implementation Unit, a Northern Cape Innovation Forum (NCIF) has been established. We acknowledge the NCIF as a platform for academia, government, business, civil society and labour, to address innovation and the impact of technology, and its opportunities and challenges, in our labour intensive environment.
- The drivers of mining and agriculture are further ahead in introducing technology and innovation to improve efficiency and productiveness, and, fortunately we are attentive to the plight of ensuring labour absorbing occupations are not overtaken by technology. We have tasked the NCIF to promote a socially just transition in respect of the introduction of new technologies in order to forestall unintended negative outcomes. The Department of Agriculture is well aware of the innovations and technologies being applied for extension officers and sensors for weather, waste and water conditions, and geographical information systems for land use planning, and foresee in the future that drones will become an appliance for agricultural monitoring. These drones will also be used for other applications,

including the delivery of products for health, monitoring the environment, as well as safety and security

- We have also introduced GovChat which is a social media platform that assists in deepening public participation and enhance response time to service delivery complaints at the level of municipalities. This system is funded by national COGTA and the Northern Cape has been identified as a pilot Province. We have to date trained four municipalities to utilise the system and in the next financial year, we are targeting ten municipalities for training on GovChat
- The Department of Social Development will pilot an online service delivery application to strengthen services to children in conflict with the law, in partnership with the South African Police Service, this will be in line with the Child Justice Act
- The Central Chronic Medicine Dispensing and Distribution (CCMDD) has been extended through the establishment of 67 external pick up points, this figure has more than doubled. This initiative is critical in decanting government health facilities of people who go and queue merely to pick up their regular medication. We shall explore much more innovative ways to accelerate this endeavour, which the MEC of Health, Honourable Manopole will elaborate on. We have exceeded last year's target of 28 000 patients by registering 61 000 patients.
- Plans are at an advanced stage to implement the Computer Aided Ambulance Dispatch system in all EMS call centres. This will ensure that we automate and modernise the communication systems to improve the response time of ambulances. We are also working on the digitization of patient files. This will lead to improved efficiency and enhance the quality of public health care services.

One thing is certain, the future is better than we can imagine!

## **GROWING THE PROVINCE**

**Honourable Speaker**, the issue of land ownership in the province is central to the quest of addressing racialised poverty and inequality. In the Northern Cape Province, 95% of the land continues to be owned by private land owners and 77% of these landowners are

white. This percentage translates into 11.4 million hectares of agricultural holdings whilst blacks only own 1% or 69 350 hectares. This is a clear indication that there is an urgent need for redress in the province. Hence, we support the process that is unfolding in Parliament for the amendment of section 25 of the Constitution to enable the democratic state to expropriate land without compensation.

**Honourable Speaker**, over the past few months we had engagements with different stakeholders, emanating from those engagements are concrete commitments made by the Private Sector. With the Private Sector we are now in a position to jointly construct a Provincial Framework Agreement to tackle the triple challenges of Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment head on. Once the PGDP has been finalised we will establish a War Room within the Office of the Premier with clear Terms of Reference. The War Room will be staffed by core Task Teams comprising researchers, planners and policy developers from the various departments. The War Room and a Provincial Planning Secretariat will be formally capacitated and centralised within the Office of the Premier in the new financial year to support the work of the Provincial Growth and Investment Council.

**Honourable Speaker**, it is important to note that positive results in the main sectors of our economy have contributed to increases in the creation of jobs and job opportunities. The Agricultural Sector has seen a quarter-to-quarter increase of 9.8%. This is despite the biting drought that has served as a deterrent to growth and employment. There has also been a quarter-to-quarter increase in other sectors such as Mining with 12.7%, 11% in Manufacturing, 21.4% in trade, 16.7% in transport, and 40% in Finance. In the informal sector, the quarter to quarter change is 18.8%.

**Honourable Speaker**, according to StatsSA (March 2019) the provincial economy grew at 2.84% (2017), an improvement from -1.24% experienced in 2016. Noteworthy, is the fact that the provincial growth of 2.8% in 2017, was above South African GDP growth average of 1.4% for the same period.

**Honourable Speaker**, the GDP of the Province is R 96 billion, of which the mining sector contributes an estimated R19 billion, agriculture R6.8 billion while construction contributes R2.6 billion.

There are huge untapped investment opportunities in our province. The Honourable President Ramaphosa, correctly stated that mining is a sunrise industry, we punctuate that by saying that the next 100 years of mining in South Africa are mainly in the Northern Cape. The sun will rise from the West (in the Northern Cape) as the darkness of our country's economic challenges recedes.

The catalyst for growth in the province entails breaking the resource curse in the economy in which we serve as the extraction point for raw material. We need to ensure that we benefit our minerals in the Province in order to create jobs and grow our economy. We continue to push unendingly for local beneficiation of our raw products and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

**Honourable Speaker**, you would remember that in my maiden State of the Province Address, I made specific pronouncements regarding the change of approach to stimulate growth and strengthen our capacity with regards to infrastructure delivery in the province. As part of achieving this vision, work towards the establishment of the Northern Cape State Mining Company and exploring the establishment of a State Construction Company through the remodelling of Public Works is underway. A due diligence has been conducted providing the way forward for the finalisation of a feasibility study. We foresee that the State Construction Company will help with implementation of not more than 30% of our infrastructure budget and rest will be done by private contractors.

**Honorable Speaker**, above all, we want these state-owned companies to serve as incubators for SMME development as well as skills development for youth and unemployed. It will further encourage meaningful participation of SMME's to collaborate with Government in the fight against the triple challenges.

**Honorable Speaker**, we are planning an Infrastructure Summit in March this year that will bring together all stakeholders in the infrastructure industry to solicit ideas in developing a credible and inclusive Infrastructure Plan that will address the infrastructure backlogs in the Province.

As a province, we welcome the Honourable President's attitude on the importance of infrastructure development as catalyst for growth. The Provincial and Local Government will collectively embark on a massive infrastructure rollout programme to the tune of R11.3 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). This will pump the much-needed energy into the economy, create employment and enterprise development. This rollout will be supported by the remodeling of Public Works and the introduction of the District Development Model.

**Honourable Speaker**, I am pleased to announce that the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) has committed more than four-billion-Rands (R4bn) to road maintenance and improvements in the Northern Cape over the next three years and a large portion of this will go to small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

Of the R4-billion allocated, approximately R500-million is specifically set aside for Routine Road Maintenance (RRM). Between 40% & 60% of this value is specifically targeted at SMMEs, including approximately R50-million for entry-level road maintenance subcontractors.

Fifteen (15) Routine Road Maintenance projects are specifically being rolled out in the Northern Cape, which are expected to generate approximately 1 500 jobs over the next three years.

**Madam Speaker**, the restructuring of the Routine Road Maintenance projects will enable contractors to embark on skills training and facilitate the development of subcontractors. Furthermore, the targeted enterprises will be assisted to institute a quality assurance

system, with provision made for ongoing and adequate training, coaching, guidance and mentoring.

**Honorable Speaker and Members,** preventative maintenance of road infrastructure remains the most important and cost-effective measure to maintain paved roads under constrained funding levels. The Department of Roads and Public Works has set aside R1, 4 billion over the MTEF period. The department has intensified the reseal programme and the benefit of this was the overall conditions of the roads improving from 58% in 2012 to 69% in 2019. Of this, 80 % of road maintenance is implemented internally by internal teams through the utilization of modern machinery.

**Honourable Speaker,** The Bloodhound Land Speed Record attempt took place at Hakskeenpan from 21 October – 30 November 2019, where all expectations were exceeded with the Bloodhound reaching a record-breaking 1,010 km/h. The event employed 200 EPWP workers during the track preparation and an additional 47 work opportunities during the testing of the car. The long-term benefits of the Bloodhound project are expected to be huge. Let me hasten to state that it gave our province an immeasurable exposure as a destination for adventure and extreme sports.

**Honourable speaker,** the construction of the SKA Carnarvon Science Visitors centre has been approved and R64 million in funding secured from the National Department of Tourism (NDT) and the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). NDT and DSI will provide operational funding to the amount of R2.5 million for first 5 years. Construction of the centre will commence in the 2020/21 financial year. This will enhance the drive for modernisation and accelerate our ascent as a technological hub of note, not only in the country but also in the Southern Hemisphere. The World must think of us as a home of scientific innovation and African excellence.

## **BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL PROVINCE**

**Honourable Speaker**, we are in the process of establishing a multi-nodal corridor in the province, which stretches from the Gamagara mining corridor to the proposed Boegoebaai deep-sea port. This corridor will provide substantial opportunities for Growth and Development in the Province.

To highlight some few anchor projects, which will provide opportunities for potential public private partnerships and yield the requisite investment and employment opportunities for the province, the projects are:

- Kathu Industrial Park,
- Namakwa Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and
- Northern Cape Metals Industrial Cluster.

As I have mentioned during the SONA debate, we appreciate our President's commitment in convening the Investment Council as this platform enabled us to secure an anchor investor for the proposed Namakwa SEZ. This investment amounts to R26 billion translating to 6 000 temporary and 1 850 permanent jobs. The current zinc mining activities will trigger a new wave of industrial and economic development in the region. The envisaged number of direct and indirect jobs to be created across this multi-nodal corridor is 30 000.

**Honorable Speaker, Ladies and gentlemen**, to enhance investment in the Northern Cape, the envisaged One Stop Shop planned together with Invest SA through the DTI will provide investors with services to fast-track projects and reduce government red tape when establishing a business. It is part of our drive to become investor friendly by improving the business environment to lower the cost of doing business as well as to make the process easier. This will help to remove some of the bottlenecks that investors may face in establishing and running businesses.

**Honourable Speaker**, we are so thankful for the rain that we received in some parts of the Province; however the prolonged drought conditions in Northern Cape has already severely impacted on the provincial economy as well as food security. We declared the drought disaster which was accompanied by R300 million commitment by National Government. This is on top of the provincial government intervention of distributing fodder to the affected farming areas.

Inspired by the Khawuleza Call to Action the District Development Model will accelerate, align and integrate service delivery between the three spheres of Government. Through the development of the “One District, One Plan, and One Budget” we will break down silos in planning at all levels of Government thereby maximising the impact of service delivery through the alignment of plans and resources. This Model will ensure sustainable integrated development and economic growth thereby accelerating initiatives to promote poverty eradication, increase employment and address inequality. To ensure the success of the District Development Model I have appointed MEC’s to steer the process and regular accounting to take place through our Intergovernmental structures

**Honourable Speaker**, earlier this year, we had the opportunity to meet with the Minister for Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation and agreed that the entire Province be declared a Priority Human Settlements Development Area. This is informed by the fact that the province is vast, extremely arid and drought-stricken as well as presenting a unique opportunity for spatial transformation. The Minister agreed that, while the population of the province is small as a proportion of the national population, the housing needs of the people of the Northern Cape warrants a national focus. This means that in the next five years we have determined to:

- Implement multiple-programmes in line with the District Development Model to build integrated settlements and realise spatial transformation.
- Use 10% of the annual human settlements budget of the province to rectify all defective houses in the province.
- Ensure that over the medium to long term, there are no informal settlements, but rather planned smart settlements.

- Mobilise mining companies and other partners to join government in investing in the development of critical and much needed infrastructure.

In this way, the Northern Cape will be placed first in line to be the national site to building integrated, functional and inclusive settlements in partnership with communities, municipalities, mining companies and all our social partners.

**Honourable Speaker**, it is therefore important to inform this house that an Inter-Governmental Steering Committee is already at an advanced stage in preparing a province-wide integrated human settlements development plan. The Steering Committee is led by the National Department of Human Settlements and includes Key Sector Departments and National Agencies and will work with municipalities to improve human settlements development in line with the spatial transformation objectives. Ultimately, the main goal of such a plan is to eliminate housing shortage across all income levels through building Settlements that embrace innovation.

**Honourable Speaker**, local government is the sphere of government closest to our people and is at the coalface of service delivery. In order to promote and maintain good governance at the local level the five district municipalities together with 10 identified municipalities have been prioritised for support in achieving improved audit outcomes. A team comprising senior representatives of the Office of the Premier, Provincial Treasury, Cooperative Governance and Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) has already visited these municipalities.

The Local Government Summit planned for this year will further unpack the challenges and constraints hampering service delivery. This will guide the development of an implementable programme of action aimed at turning around the state of our municipalities.

**Honourable Speaker**, the new energy policy approach announced during SONA provides unique opportunities for industry, government and our people. As a renewable energy hub a direct opportunity exists to realize the ideal of unremitting energy sustainability for our homes and industry.

**Honourable Speaker**, climate change, drought, increasing food prices, unemployment and poverty pose a great challenge to many households in the Province. The Department through food security initiatives supported a significant number of households. A total of 1 760 households benefitted from agricultural food security initiatives through the supply of garden and poultry starter packs and as well as food parcels for rural communities. A total of 744 gardens were established to encourage households to produce own food and promote nutritious diet.

The Fetsa Tlala Food Production programme aims at putting 1million hectares of fallow land under production to address issues of food security and poverty through the supply of staple food in the form of grains.

To date, the Department of Agriculture has during the current financial year, supported 18 crop production projects on 1 314 hectares of land to produce grains, mainly maize and wheat as well as vegetables in Frances Baard and Pixley Ka Seme and Namakwa Districts. Farmers were also supported with Production input in the form of maize and wheat seed, fertilizer and diesel at the total budget of R 13 169 000 for the programme.

**Honourable Speaker**, through our engagements with the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) we have jointly agreed to prioritise the Northern Cape growth project. To this end, a Memorandum of Agreement has been concluded with the Development Bank of South Africa for the establishment of a Project Management Unit (PMU) in partnership with COGHTSA. The aim of the PMU is to accelerate service delivery through support to under resourced municipalities. Work has begun in earnest as Project Steering Committee is in place.

Through the MoU, DBSA will over the next five years provide non-lending technical assistance for the acceleration of infrastructure planning, financing and project implementation, revenue enhancement, township establishment, water service delivery models in identified municipalities. Two aspects that will receive immediate attention are water losses in the reticulation network and enhancement of the revenue-generating infrastructure.

As part of this engagement, the Sol Plaatje Municipality has been earmarked to be the first beneficiary of development support to attend to bulk infrastructure challenges.

**Honourable Speaker**, improving the health of our people demands well-functioning public health-care services. With my work at Robert Mangaliso Sobukhwe Hospital and unannounced visits to many healthcare centres in the province, I realized that we are confronted with massive challenges. We have started attending to all these challenges.

**Honourable members**, it is also for this reason that we have chosen to undertake a major reform of the healthcare system under the banner of the National Health Insurance or NHI. In our Province NHI started with a pilot in Pixley ka Seme District. Together with the experience of other pilot districts in the country, we have learnt how the healthcare system can be significantly improved based on values of justice, fairness and social solidarity to leave no patient without the services they need. We have established an NHI Task Team responsible for the next phase of rolling out NHI.

**Honourable Speaker**, as the province we are making serious headways in tackling HIV/AIDS. The 90-90-90 targets state that by 2020 90% of people living with HIV should know their status. By October 2019 of the persons living with HIV in the province, 92% of these knew their status. This is as a result of the upscaling of campaigns and coordinated provincial action to fight HIV/AIDS. In so doing we are improving the quality of life of persons with HIV/AIDS and ensuring that those who know their HIV positive status are on antiretroviral therapy.

**Honourable Speaker**, our Government will continue to pursue a non-sexist society in which all forms of gender discrimination, oppression, exploitation and violence are eradicated. Key interventions and commitments in SOPA 2019 were the improvement of the capacity to deliver social development services by appointing more social workers, more community development workers and the establishment of two more victim support centres for victims of Gender-based violence and abuse in Seoding and Postmasburg. This work is ongoing. We will constantly remind our male counterparts of their shared responsibility towards the advancement of gender equality across the Northern Cape.

The implementation of the White Paper on the Rights of persons with Disabilities call for an integrated and inclusive action to accelerate transformation and redress for persons with disability.

The President has launched a disability working group. It is our intention to launch a similar structure in the Province. As a province we will through the working group develop an implementation matrix to ensure gender mainstreaming in the administration as well as local government.

**Honourbale Speaker**, I need to iterate that Disability mainstreaming will only be achieved through integrated and inclusive planning, and budgeting aimed at empowering persons with disabilities.

**Honourable Speaker**, the Crime Prevention Strategy 2030 has continued to set the direction for reducing crime and anti-social behavior that goes against the values espoused in the Constitution. If we want to succeed in building safer communities, we need to establish partnerships with civil society, the private sector and the religious fraternity as the criminal justice system cannot do it alone. Emphasis has been placed on the establishment of community safety partnerships to highlight issues such as Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, Gender Based Violence and Violence against Children.

School safety assessments at police stations are important to ensure safety at our schools. There is high prevalence of drug abuse, theft, bullying and teenage pregnancy. Partnerships with School Governing Bodies is essential to root out these and ensure safety of learners in our schools.

**Honourable Speaker**, as you are aware, the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act has been signed by His Excellency, President Ramaphosa. As soon as the implementation date is proclaimed, we will start with the arrangements to reconstitute the current traditional councils in line with the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act. All traditional leaders as well as traditional councillors will be taken through an induction process in order to have informed traditional councils that will work with municipalities to ensure development in their communities.

We will also start with amending the current provincial legislation to align it with the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act. We are anxiously awaiting the recognition of Khoi and San indigenous leaders. The soon to be established Commission on Khoisan matters will deal with the initial recognition of Khoi and San leadership and their communities. We are truly excited about this development.

The Provincial House will in partnership with the Commission on Gender Equality establish a Bahumagadi/ Female Traditional Leaders Forum through which women empowerment can be channelled.

**Honourable Speaker**, there is also ongoing work between the technical teams of our government and the North West on the matter of demarcation of Baga-Mothibi traditional authority and the attendant communities in the Northern Cape. This process was initiated through Gazette of the national government in 2017. It will also inevitably grow our House of Traditional leaders for which we must make necessary preparations.

**Honourable Speaker**, in our endeavor to reposition the Arts and Culture, the Province will unleash three key projects in collaboration with the Cultural, Creative Industries Federation of South Africa (CCIFSA) which will be piloted in the Province and these projects are:

- The establishment and launch of the Provincial Music Hub,
- The establishment and launch of the Provincial Craft Shop which will be based at the Mayibuye centre, and
- The operationalization of the Northern Cape Theatre in ensuring that it provides the sector with a packaged approach in terms of productions for national and international stages.

These projects will contribute immensely towards our aim of boosting our economy through Cultural Tourism. The total budget for the above is an estimated R4million.

**Honourable Speaker**, earlier this year we partly hosted the Under 19 Cricket World Cup and were privileged to stage the opening ceremony and opening games of the tournament. As a Province we pride ourselves to not only be associated with the tournament, but also the remarkable outcomes and benefits that it held for young people across all race groups and social standing. We also wish to express our most sincere gratitude to the International Cricket Council in particular for the confidence bestowed on South Africa by accepting our bid to host the tournament.

**Honourable Speaker**, on behalf of the Provincial Government let me congratulate the Hungry Lions Soccer Team from Postmasburg. The roar of this team reverberated through the country and they mauled their way to the last 16 of the Nedbank Cup Competition. We thank you for your perseverance and look forward to the next game.

Let me further state that we have made substantial progress working with local business people in trying to secure a Premier Soccer League representation for the Northern Cape. This initiative will tremendously boost sports tourism in the province and enable us to uncover and develop the football potential in our communities.

**Honourable Speaker**, the provincial tourism industry is poised to make a bigger contribution to the provincial economy going forward as we continue to build ever-stronger partnerships for development and resource sharing.

Despite infrastructure and other constraints hampering the provincial tourism industry's performance, it contributed R1.336 billion to the provincial economy in 2018. This return was generated on the back of 542 769 trips taken to the Northern Cape by South African and international visitors.

The national Department of Tourism and the Department of Environmental Affairs, ramped up their support to the provincial government making it possible to commence with exciting projects and create fertile grounds for employment creation and improvement of tourism infrastructure.

Speaking of tourism enterprise development, the provincial tourist routes will be enhanced to support tourism transformation and more specifically the beneficiation of black-owned tourism enterprises. The importance of business tourism and events will be elevated to accelerate the growth in arrivals in the province but also to encourage Northern Cape residents to explore their own province.

## **CONCLUSION:**

**Honourable Speaker**, this year, for the first time as part of our Government Lekgotla, we extended an invitation to all Executive Managers from Municipalities and Provincial Government. The vision of this 6th Administration can only be realised with the steadfast support of a public service cadreship that is hardworking, very focused and with impeccable integrity. As the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration we declared an all out war against corruption. Corruption robs the poor.

To engender a corrupt free Northern Cape, we renew our commitment to enhance accountability through subjecting ourselves to lifestyle audits. In this regard we welcome the commendable progress by the Department of Public Service and Administration on the development of Life Style Audits Framework and Guidelines.

**Honourable Speaker**, a democratic government based on the will of the people have a duty to listen to the people including opposition parties. We must constructively engage each other driven by our collective desire to improve the lives of our people in the Northern Cape. This reminds me of the words of wisdom the late Dr. Chiba Okadigbo that **“If you are emotionally attached to your tribe, religion or political leaning to the point that the truth and justice become secondary considerations, your education and exposure are useless. If you cannot reason beyond petty sentiments, you are a liability to mankind”**

As a governing party we owe it to our people that at all times we must occupy the moral high ground. We accept criticisms because we are alert to the teachings of Aristotle when he intimated, **“the only way to avoid criticism is to do nothing, say nothing and be nothing”**. The democratic state is by design an instrument for serving the people. As a result, we cannot afford the luxury of doing nothing, nor saying nothing nor being nothing.

**Honourable Speaker**, we have the best of both Worlds - opportunities and challenges, you can live your life as a witness to the change and get lost in the maze of modernisation and growth that will continue to engulf us. You can therefore choose to become a supplicant to the journey of others. Alternatively, you can roll up your sleeves, be the agent in this unstoppable journey, and be the inventor of our common future. It all starts here in the province of the firsts, the city of firsts with a genuine claim to the clarion call to re-affirm our place in the sun as a Modern Growing and Successful Province.

**This is a call to action!**

I thank you!