



**MINISTRY
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X645, Pretoria, 0001. Tel: (012) 421 1309, Fax: (012) 341 8513
Private Bag X9029, Cape Town, 8000. Tel (021) 466 7603, Fax: (021) 466 3610

**ADDRESS BY L N SISULU, MP, MINISTER OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS, AT THE ANNUAL GOVAN MBEKI
AWARDS
GALLAGHER ESTATE, JOHANNESBURG
9 NOVEMBER 2017**

Programme Director

Members of the Mbeki Family

Ministers and Deputy Ministers

MECs and MMCs of Human Settlements

Executive Mayors

**Chairpersons and Members of the of the Portfolio and Select
Committees on Human Settlements**

**Chairpersons, Board and Council Members and Heads of all DHS
Institutions and Agencies**

Honourable guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

We need to find a way of communicating our success story of what we have done, because what we have done is nothing short of extraordinary. And this is not us saying this, it is the title of a report issues by die South African Institute for Race Relations. BNG was our way of communicating with our people and sharing our success story. Unfortunately we had an inconvenient slot, but it has now moved to a more popular slot and I hope that this would assist us with communicating our successes.

In the SAIRR report it states that housing delivery has gone up by 131% since 1996. We have built 1 029 houses per day. If we multiply that with an average family consisting of 5 people, we have provided shelter to 5 145 people per day. For every shack built since 1994 we have built ten houses. This is a success story that we took to Habitat III in Quito. These are facts that every South

African should know. Our public engagement at Quito was overflowing with attendees because our success story is internationally acknowledged as best practice. We should not allow anybody to forget that we work day and night to provide our people with shelter.

People who get houses do not make it to the headline news, but the protests of people who have not yet received their houses unfortunately get prime space when it happens. We have got to change this narrative, emphasising what has been done, the remarkable achievements, so that even those who wait would know that they do not wait in vain.

It is my honour to welcome all of you to this, the 11th anniversary of the Govan Mbeki Human Settlements Awards. This is an occasion for us to recognise and appreciate the extraordinary excellent work that has been done by all of us, from the executive to the Portfolio and Select Committee to the National Department to the Provinces and to the local government, to ensure that our people have good, livable and secured human settlements, consistent with the prescriptions of our Constitution and in pursuit of the directives of the Freedom Charter that all have a right to access to housing in a gradual realisation.

Although for today the highlight will be the honour for a few among us, the most important message is that I am grateful to all of you for everything you do every day. Just this year alone we launched two mega projects in Gauteng, one of which is the John Dube Mega Human Settlement, which involves the building of 10 000 houses as well as Ekurhuleni's first university, with a central business district to boot, the Daggafontein human settlements project, which is an integrated housing development expected to deliver over 16 000 housing units on completion. The development includes public facilities, military veterans houses, government fully subsidized houses, Community Residential Units, formerly known as hostels, social houses and affordable subsidized houses, as well as the Westgate social housing project in Pietermaritzburg, which is one of the largest social housing projects in the country and will deliver 1000 units, accommodating 4000 beneficiaries. These are highlights of some of the things we have done.

We need to strengthen our collaboration and partnerships with the private sector, NGOs and communities. We need to embrace innovation and we need to be there where our people protest so that we can deal with their problems. We need to continue to encourage communities to be active participants in the People's Housing Programme as being a delivery method of choice in Provinces and Municipalities. This is geared to create sustainable communities beyond the scope of the project through

development of skills, creating jobs and enhancing local economic development as well cohesive communities that take charge of their development and their destiny.

In the past year South Africa played a key role in adopting the New Urban Agenda at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held Quito during October 2016 and this work set the course for the department in addressing the massive structural reforms that are necessary to improve the way our people live and work.

This year we saw the launch of the Human Settlements Development Bank through the completion of the DFI consolidation process, a process that was trapped in protocols for many years. Contractors and construction companies and our emerging contractors that have been trapped in a particularly racially skewed assessment of whether they are viable and bankable or not and as a result the lower end has not benefited as much as it should have will now have access to support from the state.

The Human Settlements Development Bank would be poised to support the SMMEs, especially women and youth led businesses that are trying to help gain a foothold in the construction sector. The HSDB will have to work with the

NHBRC to ensure that SMMEs are supported to build quality structures, are supported from an educational aspect to deal with the running of a business in this complicated environment which traditional banks have ignored for so long. In order to help this sector to professionalise we have created partnerships with a number of higher learning institutions that offer courses in human settlements, providing a new discipline and all-rounded skills.

This year we can report that we now have a National Housing Needs Register, a database of all those who need houses and all forms of housing assistance and the department together with municipalities are working to ensure that we have a credible national centralized database so that we can ensure that there is credibility in the process of allocating houses.

The centralised database will include military veterans. We have been considering the possibility of taking over the provision of houses to military veterans from the Department of Military Veterans in total. Once negotiations are completed our database will register all military veterans. We would like the Department of Military Veterans to transfer the money for the top-up to the Department of Human Settlements.

In line with this, the GEHS will be transferred to the Department of Human Settlements so that we are able to cater for that segment where FLISP was not able to succeed.

The Human Settlements Ombud was launched in Mpumalanga on 20 October 2017 and I would like to thank all of you who attended and made it possible.

Our SOEs are finally turning the corner and most of the teething problems have been attended to. I personally had occasion to sit down with the Boards and Councils of all the entities, so that together we can structure them to maximally deal with the issues that had held them back. I have had very lengthy discussions with the Auditor-General and thereafter met with the Boards and Councils to discuss his findings.

The Portfolio Committee must be thanked for the thorough work done in assessing the entities. I am certain that in the years ahead of us we will be in full gear and all our major keyboards will be fully functional.

We may not have moved as fast as we should have, especially in some provinces. We have a MinMec scheduled for next week and will then discuss what to do about those provinces that were unable to use up all their resources.

We promised ourselves that we would reach a target of 6 million houses and subsidies by the end of the current government's term of office in 2019. As of 30th September 2017, we have delivered just over 4.6 million houses and subsidies, leaving us with a deficit of 1.4 million. With the mega projects beginning to roll out I believe it is possible that, combined with the energy of the Portfolio and Select Committees and a little bit more hard work from the provinces and the metros, we cannot fail.

To deal with the challenges of urbanisation we have decided on a new approach. We adopted a vigorous, multi-pronged strategy, based on the people's rights and government's rights and responsibilities to them. We will now concentrate on being an enabler to those who can and being a provider to only those who can't. We are accordingly shifting our focus to strengthen our strategies by providing land for people to build with our assistance, coupled with our temporary shelter programme, and assisted in large measure by our municipalities.

I would like to appeal, especially to the private sector that we should strengthen our partnerships, so that together we can help with the transformation of our society.

- We should help each other to transform this industry and ensure transformed ownership, management and control of the industry.
- Work together to enhance youth and women empowerment in the built industry.
- Transform the material supply industry so that black people should also be meaningful participants in this area.
- Help with local economic development and together ensure that township and rural economies are developed and capacitated so that these areas would no longer be centres of underdevelopment and poverty, as has been the case in Apartheid years and even after the democratic dispensation came into being.
- We must have shared interest in increasing investment in infrastructure and sustainable human settlements.
- Together join hands in changing spatial patterns and space economy for good.

I am convinced that the people to whom we bestow awards today, are themselves conscious that they are in this business to be part of an important army as an integral component of agents of change and using housing development as a catalyst. All of us gathered here have a duty, to ensure that the great divide between the rich and the poor that has been exacerbated through human settlements would be the thing of the past.

I have no doubt that we shall walk together, not just to give the much-needed roof over the heads of many who desperately needs it; but importantly, give hope where there is hopelessness; bring dignity where there is degradation; restore confidence where there is despair; replace dejection with cheerfulness and distrust with belief. Doing the correct things in human settlements, I have no doubt that we will achieve all these and more.

I have no doubt that the man after whom we named these awards would be proud of what we achieved and would be even more proud of us once we have reached our targets, I know that we put a lot of strain on the construction companies with our overburdening bureaucracy, but now that we have laid the foundation and sorted out the challenges of our SOEs our next phase will be to deal with the efficiency of the governing structures that the construction industry depends on. This is what we are going to concentrate on next year. With that done, we will earn the approval of Oom Gov.

Finally, the UN-Habitat has a vacancy for its Executive Director and we thus far have one applicant from South Africa. It would put South Africa in a very good position if we were able to secure the position of Executive Director and I would like to urge the Chairpersons of the Portfolio and Select Committees to

consider applying for the post. They have the required knowledge and the expertise and I would personally support their applications.

I thank you