



MINISTRY

**HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

THEMBI SIMELANE, MP

MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE PROPERTY PRACTITIONERS REGULATORY AUTHORITY

PROPERTY SECTOR RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

5 NOVEMBER 2025

HELD AT NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY OCEAN SCIENCES

CAMPUS, GQEBERHA

Programme Director, Mr. Xolile Nomadolo

MEC of Human Settlements, Siphokazi Mani-Lusithi

PPRA Board Chairperson, Ms. Queendy Gungubele

PPRA Board members

PPRA Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Thato Ramaili

NRF Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Fulufhelo Nelwamondo

Vice-Chancellor of NMU, Professor Sibongile Muthwa

National Property Practitioners Council present

Researchers and academics,

Industry leaders,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen

Good day,

It is truly an honour for me to join you at this important gathering which is the result of a partnership between the Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA), the National Research Foundation (NRF) and Nelson Mandela University (NMU). The Colloquium comes at a critical juncture when South Africa is hosting the G20 few weeks from now.

It also seeks to reflect, reimagine, and reposition the property sector as a cornerstone of South Africa's inclusive growth and transformation agenda.

I believe that this Property Sector Research Colloquium also comes at a pivotal time. After more than 30 years of democracy it is increasingly necessary to take stock of how far we have come in the imperative of transforming the property landscape of our country. It goes without saying that it is essential to rapidly transform the property sector to reflect the demographics of a democratic South Africa because doing so addresses the historical injustices, promotes inclusive economic growth, and ensures equitable access to land and property opportunities for all.

Over the past three decades, South Africa has made significant progress in broadening access to land and housing, in recognising property as a driver of wealth creation and in embedding transformation across the built environment value chain.

I must, however, be frank in underscoring that, while significant milestones in the transformation path have already been achieved, it is

important to state that deep structural inequalities continue to persist and undermining our agenda for transformation of the property sector.

While there has been a noticeable, and encouraging, increase in the number of Black property practitioners this growth emanates from a very low, indeed almost non-existent, base. The revised BEE charters, allied with specifically targeted sector funding, are both real and commendable but, alas, these necessary interventions continue to coexist alongside deeply entrenched structural barriers and conflicts of interest which require systemic, sustained, and inclusive solutions.

The Department of Human Settlements, therefore, remains steadfast in driving property sector transformation as part of its broader human settlements agenda.

Colleagues, the convening of this Colloquium by three strategic institutions, the PPRA, the NRF and NMU, demonstrates the strategic power of collaboration between policy formulation, research, and implementation.

Transformation cannot be achieved through legislation and regulation alone. It must be informed by evidence, driven by innovation, and sustained through inclusive partnerships. We have convened here today, to harness the triple helix approach for fostering innovation through the cooperation and interaction of university, industry role players and government.

Continuous focussed research is the engine that helps in evaluating and understanding emerging trends, designing appropriate interventions, measuring progress made and, where necessary, instituting required remedial actions. It is through forums like this Colloquium that strategic policy formulation and implementation can be grounded in scientific knowledge and where academia, regulators, practitioners, and stakeholders can work harmoniously in crafting the next phase of the transformation journey to the benefit of all.

I commend the PPRA, and its Property Sector Research Centre, for taking the lead, together with the NRF and NMU, in creating this space for dialogue, knowledge exchange and thought leadership in the property sector. I am also gratified at the close fraternal and professional

relationship that exists between the Department of Human Settlements and all its agencies in their various research endeavours.

Colleagues, transformation is not only about ownership. It is about empowerment, skills development, and innovation.

Our vision is to build a property sector that reflects the demographics of our country a sector that is inclusive, professionalised and globally competitive.

Research themes in this Colloquium from property sector professionalisation, women's empowerment and job creation to the digital transformation of the sector, are more pronounced and speak directly to these policy priorities.

It is, I believe, essential to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution not as a disruption, but as a strategic opportunity to make the property market more transparent, efficient, and accessible to all. Digital tools can democratise property data, unlock new investment pathways and reduce barriers for small and emerging practitioners. By so doing I have little doubt that the continued transformation imperative will be a successful one.

Undoubtedly, a strong and capable institutions constitute the backbone of transformation, consistent with the priorities of the 7th administration of building a capable ethical and developmental state.

The leadership of the PPRA has made commendable progress in implementing its mandate to ensure compliance, promote professionalism and advance the transformation of the property sector.

Notably, the National Research Foundation, continues to strengthen the research and innovation ecosystem that informs our national priorities.

Nelson Mandela University, under the visionary leadership of Professor Sibongile Muthwa, has positioned itself as a repository of knowledge and a trusted partner in evidence-based transformation.

These three institutions will together continue to assist us in shaping a Property Sector Research Blueprint to guide future policy, investment and capacity development. With their inputs and guidance, I have no doubt that we will be able to successfully navigate a complex and dynamic property environment, create a sustainable basis for inclusive growth and

align with all interested stakeholders in cementing a just, resilient, and professionalised property sector.

The Department of Human Settlements fully supports a collaborative approach of this nature.

As government, we are reimagining our relationship with regulators, researchers and the private sector, not as separate actors but as the co-designers and co-creators of feasible solutions to identified issues. It is in this way that we can unlock sustainable property markets, create decent jobs, and ensure that intended transformation outcomes translate into tangible benefits for ordinary South Africans.

Let us continue to build bridges between theory and practice, between research and implementation and between knowledge and action.

To the young people here today, academics, researchers, students and emerging property professionals, this Colloquium is as much about the future as it is about reflection. The Colloquium is more than simply creating a national platform for inclusive dialogue, evidence-based policy development and strategic collaboration. The Colloquium seeks to drive

systemic change across the property sector and, by so doing, to create sustainable and exciting future career prospects for you.

You are the architects and beneficiaries of the next 30 years of the property sector.

In this light I encourage you to use your research rigour, your curious engagement and your unlimited creativity not only to challenge old exclusionary models but also to design new pathways for growth, inclusion and job satisfaction. It is up to you to envision and construct a property sector that reflects your hopes, wishes and aspirations. You are the designers of the future, and the future belongs to you.

Our country needs your innovation, your energy and your commitment to ethical leadership. Transformation is not a destination - it is a conscious ongoing process that must be led by those who believe in fairness, opportunity, and progress for all.

As I conclude, let me express my appreciation once again to the organisers, the PPRA, the NRF and Nelson Mandela University, for

convening this important platform for dialogue and mutually beneficial collaboration.

I hope that the insights shared here today will strengthen our collective resolve to build a dynamic, inclusive, transformed and professional property sector, one that truly reflects the positive values of our democratic South Africa.

Let us work together to ensure that the property sector not only drives economic growth but also serves as a vehicle for social justice, equity, and transformation.

I wish you all meaningful engagements and fruitful deliberations during this Colloquium, and as Chinese would say: “Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend.”

I thank you for your attention.

