



**MINISTRY  
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**REMARKS BY THE MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, MMAMOLOKO KUBAYI,  
JBCC CONFERENCE, 26 OCTOBER 2022**

**Programme Director, Ms Kelikile Mteto**

**Mr Kumarsen Thamburan, Chairman of the JBCC**

**Mr Paul Kgole, Deputy Chairman of the JBCC**

**Mr Rakesh Singh, Chief Executive Officer of the JBCC**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

**Good morning,**

I am very pleased to join you, virtually, this morning as you celebrate your 25th Anniversary in the Built Environment sector. This is a significant milestone and I would have liked to join you physically in your celebrations. As a non-profit organization with a Committee that is representative of building owners and developers, professional consultants and general and specialist contractors - you are a very critical stakeholder for the Department of Human Settlements sector and the construction sector in general. The construction industry is a significant contributor to employment and growth in South Africa. We have to work together to revive the construction industry which has been on slump since the completion of the World Cup infrastructure.

You have asked me speak to you about the important issue on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). The New Urban Agenda, as you know, is a globally shared vision for a better and more sustainable future for people within equitable and inclusive cities. In brief, the New Urban Agenda "...lays out standards and principles for the

planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas along its five main pillars of implementation: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation.”

Two weeks ago, we hosted the Executive Director of UN-Habitat together with Ministers of Housing from various countries to the launch the Global Action Plan Framework on informal settlements and slums. The intention of the Global Action Plan Framework is to take coordination, collaboration, commitments and partnerships to the next level. It consolidates and amplifies efforts for accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda in the Decade of Action. It provides a joint vision to inform actions framed by partnerships and is the basis for Member States to elevate commitments in form of a resolution to be pledged in the UN-Habitat Assembly process.

There is a recognition globally that we are running out of time with regards to the achievement of SDG 11 to **Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**. This is happening in a context in which urbanisation is rising rapidly and cities are becoming centres of social ills and health risks, as more and more people are relegated into slums and informal settlements.

Each country is expected to localize the New Urban Agenda, once adopted by the General Assembly the Global Action Plan framework on informal settlements and slums. Although the envisaged outcomes of these programmes are expected to be the same everywhere, how they are implemented will be determined by the conditions that are prevalent in each country.

It is estimated that, of the 1 billion global slum dwellers, 238 million are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Africa’s population is projected to double between now and 2050 and two-thirds of this growth will be absorbed by urban areas. In our country, in 2021, over 67.85 percent of South Africa's total population lived in urban areas and cities. More than 23 per cent of urban dwellers are estimated to live in informal settlements. In South Africa, we have to tackle the challenge of rapid urbanization in a context of a history of Apartheid whose

pattern of development was the exclusion of the majority from cities through social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation.

It is within this context that South Africa has formulated its national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design. Further to this, South African cities The UN-Habitat III Pretoria Declaration on Informal Settlement Upgrading signed in South Africa in 2016, recognises that the informal settlements challenge must be tackled through an integrated approach to sustainable urban development - taking into account the national policy frameworks, legal, financial resources and spatial issues. Our country, through an inclusive process, has made tremendous progress in implementing this policy and our approach includes the following steps:

- a. We started by identifying and verifying informal settlements in the country gathering real-time data, monitoring the growth patterns, so that we could get a better understanding, and planning for, the extent of the challenge we are faced with. Presently, informal settlements are estimated to over 2600 informal settlements accommodating about 1.4 million households according to Statistics South Africa estimates.
- b. We completed a baseline assessment of informal settlements whereby we defined variables for monitoring and evaluating informal settlements.
- c. We have established Provincial Forums on Upgrading of Informal Settlements in all 9 provinces of the country. The forums facilitate alignment of upgrading processes with all municipalities and monitor progress in implementation, as well as knowledge exchange with various stakeholders in each province.
- d. To entrench an understanding of informal settlement upgrading among practitioners and public representatives we have developed a 13-module course called Introduction to Informal Settlement Upgrading that unpacks the critical processes required for undertaking informal settlement upgrading.

- e. We are rolling out an intensive capacity development programme to all our provinces, municipalities, civic organisations and communities. Furthermore, we have undertaken activities to ensure that the modules are accredited and incorporated into our tertiary institutions.
  
- f. The majority of our informal settlements have access to services. Moreover, municipalities have implemented various methods for security of tenure, such as a Letter of Occupation to informal settlement dwellers. This affords the dweller the opportunity to engage in economic activity and entrenches government's commitment to dignity for all South Africans.
  
- g. We have established our Community of Practice to engage with our civic organisations and academia and share good practice, exchange knowledge, and disseminate information.

Our vision strives for the establishment of viable, socially and economically integrated communities, situated in areas that allow convenient access to economic opportunities, health, education and social amenities, and to which all South Africans will have access on a progressive basis.

The JBCC has a critical role to play in helping us to achieve the SGD 11 through the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and the Global Action Plan Framework on informal settlements and slums. More specifically, you have to help us to reimagine our cities and create new cities to accommodate the growing numbers of urban dwellers.

As part of your deliberations in this conference, you have to help us answer the question: what is that we need to do as a country to accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, especially in relation the upgrade of informal settlements?

I wish you well in your deliberations.

I thank you!