

## **Speaking Notes for Deputy Minister Zou Kota-Fredericks**

### **WUF 9**

**9 February 2018, 14h30 to 16h30, Ballroom 1 KLCC**

Thank you moderator. Good morning fellow participants, my fellow panellists.

I am very pleased to be here with you today at the first follow-up session after the New Urban Agenda was adopted and the UN-Habitat Governing Council reflected on the implications thereof for its programmes. South Africa has long been championing the issue of informal settlements and slum upgrading as an important means to address poverty, inequality and access.

That is why we hosted a Habitat III thematic meeting on informal settlements which resulted in the Pretoria Declaration. So we are very pleased at the strong references to the approaches to informal settlements and slum upgrading in the New Urban Agenda.

Therefore, I feel that we know what needs to be done. And we know how it should be done. What I hope we will come away with today is a

stronger sense of who should be doing it, and how we can structure partnerships to ensure we get to where we need to go.

We have been emphasising that the New Urban Agenda is an all of government, all of society agenda, with roles and responsibilities for all relevant stakeholders. This includes national, provincial and local government actors, community-based organisations, community members, planners, academics, and the private sector. A continuous process of stakeholder engagement and sharing of information will ensure that we are all empowered to participate meaningfully in the creation of our future.

In line with the global commitment in SDG 11 and the sections in the New Urban Agenda dealing with informal settlements and slums, South Africa has placed informal settlement upgrading as a pivotal focal point for the creation of sustainable human settlements. In our endeavours we are undertaking the following activities:

The identification and verification of informal settlements in the country will assist us in having real-time data, monitoring the growth patterns, understanding, and planning for, the extent of the challenge we are faced with.

We completed a baseline assessment of informal settlements whereby we defined variables for monitoring and evaluating informal settlements.

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.

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.

By the middle of this year an intensive capacity development programme will be rolled out 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.

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.

We have established our Community of Practice to engage with our civic organisations and academia and share good practice, exchange knowledge, and disseminate information.

Fellow Participants, I look forward to our deliberations here today, and hope we can come away with some firm ideas on how we can collaborate together going forward to make the achievement of the SDG 1 Target, which is to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums, a reality.

Thank you.