



**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

**SPEAKING NOTES BY THE DEPUTY
MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
HONOURABLE PAM TSHWETE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO
UBUHLEBEZWE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
MINING AND ENERGY IMBIZO**

18 MARCH 2023

Mandibulele mphathi hlelo ngeli thuba undiphe lona ndibingelele

Our host and Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy
Dr Nobuhle Nkabane

Deputy Minister in the Presidency Honourable Pinki Kekana

Deputy Minister of Health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo

Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour Ms Boitumelo Moloi

Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Honourable Njabulo Nzuza

Executive Mayor of Harry Gwala District Municipality Cllr Z D
Nxumalo

Mayor of Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality Cllr E B Ngubo

Traditional Leadership and Khoi San leadership present

Councillors

Abahlali neCommunity yase Harry Gwala District Municipality

Ladies and gentlemen

In the next few days, we will be commemorating Human Rights Day. This day compels us to reflect on a journey we have travelled as a country in order to enjoy the fruits of a democratic South Africa. It is true that some of you here today have a good story to tell of how their lives have changed for the better. Equally, others here today are going through difficult times including the inability to provide decent shelter for their families.

Our government recognizes that the right to adequate housing is a basic human right.

It is mainly for these reasons that our government continue to commit and invest resources to better the lives of the indigent through the provision of fully subsidized housing.

In the past two years, I have visited this district and have held engagements in Kromhoek under the Umzimkhulu Local Municipality. I am glad the Deputy Minister invited me so that I get a chance to engage with another local municipality under this District. There is a connection between our Departments, which is why we always work together – when we build houses we then immediately need electrification from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy.

During my last visit to Umzimkhulu in July last year, it was reported that there were about seventy-nine destitute families that needed immediate interventions. During the briefing I received from the team, I was informed that this number has increased to eighty beneficiaries. I am happy to announce that the construction of those eighty houses has commenced and very soon these people that had probably lost hope, will soon be moved into their houses.

One of my focus areas of work is to intervene and provide assistance to destitute families. The Department of Human Settlements working together with the Province and Municipalities will make sure that cases of destitute households are prioritized. A destitute is either an elderly man or woman over the age of sixty years old, a child-headed home and persons with disabilities. What we mean by prioritizing these cases is allowing them to be at the top of the those on the beneficiary waiting list. These should be assisted ahead of other potential beneficiaries on a waiting list. I am explaining all this because I do not want people that will feel disgruntled or think that there is favouritism that is being done. We also have the elderly that have since been waiting for Government support since 1994. We prioritize such cases to ensure that the elderly realize their dream of owning a decent home.

I have been briefed by my officials on the progress regarding Human Settlements matters in Harry Gwala District including budget allocations.

Housing challenges that have been identified include Town Planning requirements which unfortunately the Municipalities must adhere to, and poor performance by service providers.

There are three projects that are on the border of uBuhlebezwe and uMzumbe Municipality where there is no proper coordination

between the local spheres of Government. These projects are Umzumbe Cluster C, Umzumbe Cluster D and Nhlangwini Housing Projects, some of the households in these projects are now falling under uBuhlebezwe Municipality. It is the responsibility of the municipalities and the Department to devise a plan on how these communities are given updates regarding the status of their houses and the reasons for delays.

I would like to zoom into uBuhlebezwe Local Municipality and report as follows:

1. There are cross-border issues that are in the Nhlangwini housing project that must be resolved and the communities must be updated about the status of their houses.

To date, we can confirm that the service provider has been appointed and will be introduced to the community in the next two weeks.

2. The Provincial Department is addressing land legal issues in Hluthankungu, Mahehle, eMadungeni, Nokweja, and Mazabekweni. Once the land owners have given the Department permission to build, we will definitely assist the families that are residing in these areas.

I must add that I was very impressed with the report as all the projects are reported to have commenced, with most of them at 50% completion rate.

Earlier this morning, as part of the Ubuhlebezwe program, we held a stakeholder engagement with Traditional Leadership on ex-mineworkers.

I would like to add that the Department of Human Settlements has a programme called Revitalization of Distressed Mining Communities. This programme has been implemented in twenty three local municipalities in Gauteng, North West, Free State, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Limpopo Provinces.

The intervention requires that we mobilize various economic and social players and to achieve the following outcomes:

- 1) Informal settlements upgrading in and around mining areas in order to address the adverse effects of the migrant labour system as a result of high levels of migration from labour-sending areas into the mining towns.
- 2) Construction and upgrading of bulk infrastructure and provision of basic services.
- 3) Provision of different housing typologies including affordable housing for home ownership and rental opportunities.
- 4) Maximizing job creation opportunities and utilizing youth and women.

While there is currently no specific intervention for the revitalization of distressed mining communities in Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, it has come to my attention that there is considerable mining activity taking place in this Municipality and the broader Harry Gwala District.

We have established that in most municipalities with mining communities across the country, there is currently little or no alignment or coordination of the Government's policies and programmes of mining companies to deliver on integrated human settlements.

Part of our responsibility as the Department of Human Settlements is to also mobilize the participation of other sector departments to ensure the provision of social and economic infrastructure so that these communities can sustain themselves and not depend on mining as the only economic driver.

Therefore in order to enhance the implementation of the District Development Model in this region, my Department will initiate discussions with the relevant spheres of Government, sector departments, mining companies and communities in this area, to better understand the impact that mining activity has on these communities.

More importantly, we wish to explore collaborative partnerships between Government and the mining companies, to ensure that housing, human settlements and the broader development needs of these communities are prioritized and implemented through the partnerships.

We also want to pay attention to the Labour Sending Areas, where most mine employees originally come from, and explore ways in which they can also be assisted should they not wish to permanently stay in the mining communities where they work. This will also require partnerships between Government and the mining companies.

Deputy Minister Nkabane, I did not come here alone, I am accompanied by my senior officials (Acting DDG Ms Rashnee Atkinson, Acting Chief Director Ms Pamela Dili and the Harry Gwala Regional Director Mr Mvuzo Yengwa), who are on standby to respond to specific Human Settlements questions or concerns.

I thank you