

Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane standing in for the Minister of Human Settlements Ms Lindiwe Sisulu;
Deputy Minister of Human Settlement, Ms Zou Kota-Fredericks
Western Cape MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Bonginkosi Madikizela
Ministers, MECs, Mayors and Councillors;
Religious Leaders;
Mphakathi waseKapa,

Molweni, good day.

Today we proudly celebrate one of our government's important milestones in its efforts to improve the lives of the people of our country.

Not long ago the place where we are today was once a valley full of shacks. There was not even a single formal house.

Residents of this place lived a life of squalor, poverty and homelessness, and were susceptible to all forms of hazards such as floods and fires, which often wreaked tragic losses of life.

However, today the situation has changed dramatically.

And this change will continue as we forge ahead in our mission to fulfill our constitutional mandate to provide adequate and decent housing for our people. Unlike in the past, most of the shacks seen along the freeway from the airport to the city centre have now given way to these beautiful blocks of flats that have blended nicely with Kwa-Langa Township.

Our years of efforts to ensure that our people enjoy a much better life have paid off.

Ngonyaka ka 2005, lowo owayenguNgqongqoshe woMnyango wezeZindlu uLindiwe Sisulu, kanye nalowo owaye nguSodolobha wase Kapa uNkosikazi Nomaindia Mfeketo, bahlangana khona la eLanga Indoor Sport Centre lapho abamemezela khona ukuthi bazoqalisa ngaloluhlelo lwe N2 Gateway okuwuhlelo lokuthuthukisa lendawo esikuyona namhlanje.

Baveza nokuthi lohlelo luzoetha intuthuko nempucuko ezimpilweni zabantu nokuthi futhi lendawo izoba nazo zonke izinsiza ezizomelana nezidingo zabantu.

Baphinda futhi basho ukuthi kuyoba uhlelo lwentuthuko oluhlanganisa bonke abantu lokhu esingathi phecelezi, yiIntegration futhi luzothinta izindawo eziningi ezahlukene lapha eKapa ezifana namalokishi anjengo Delft kanye neGugulethu.

Namhlanje siqinisekile ukuthi uNgqongqoshe noSodolobha babengaqaqambi manga.

Phela siwuHulumeni otheth' inyani, uHulumeni ongaxokisi kubantu bakhe. Siyazifeza izethembiso esizenza kubantu.

Our Government took the decision to improve this place because we realised the hardship that our people faced.

We wanted to ensure that the N2 Gateway project become an important intervention for national housing initiatives and we realised that in order to cater for the needy residents of the City, there had to be a change of gear and approach in the way of doing things.

We needed a project that would not only create a housing opportunity, but one that would be part of an overall strategy to provide better facilities and to correct the apartheid spatial planning by bringing people closer to their work places, in line with our National Development Plan.

This project provided an opportunity to build integrated and sustainable communities, not only here but in almost every part of the country, where there will be easy access to all essential facilities such as schools and clinics.

We are busy with similar projects in Cornubia, in Ethekweni in KwaZulu-Natal; in Zanemvula in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan in Eastern Cape.

We also have similar projects in Lerato Park in Kimberly in Northern Cape as well as Fleurhof, Lufhereng and Cosmo City in Gauteng.

This is just to name a few, there are many projects that we are undertaking to change this country, ngoba siyasebenza futhi siyaqhuba ngamandla amakhulu.

We have also made tremendous strides with regard to human settlements in the mining towns, thanks to the partnership and support of the mining towns.

As you can see, the N2 Gateway is nearing completion and it has so far delivered fourteen thousand homes, just six thousand units short of our twenty thousand target.

When completed, we believe that this project and many others similar to it, will make a dent on the housing backlog currently experienced in most of the country's major urban centres.

The Department of Human Settlements has made a commitment that the remaining six thousand units will be completed before 2019, before the end of this current Government's term.

It is also my wish that we speed up the process because Cape Town still has a lot of people living in informal settlements, especially the black communities.

Such projects have a positive impact as we have seen the notable improvements in many areas such as Kwa-Langa, Delft and Gugulethu townships where serious construction has taken place.

Bantu bakwaLanga asebehlale kuma-backyard iminyaka, asinikhohliwe neze intuthuko iyeza nakinina.

Government is hopeful that these interventions would drastically help eliminate the existence of informal settlements in which it's often difficult to deliver essentials such as health and education services.

We are also grateful that as we mark the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, an important document that has informed our current Constitution greatly.

And we can in this regard, proudly proclaim that indeed we have lived up to the promise that in a democratic South Africa, that is governed by the ANC, "there shall be houses, security and comfort" as we stated in the Charter in 1955.

Like most mega projects, the N2 gateway initially encountered numerous hitches, including lack of agreements on the housing typologies that had to be built and lack of agreements on who should benefit from the project.

However, experience as they say is a great teacher.

We have learnt from our experiences and we continue to refine our approach and policies in order to ensure that we achieve good outcomes, and that these are achieved in a quicker and shorter space.

As Minister Sisulu and the then Mayor Mfeketho observed at the start of the project, the housing backlogs in Cape Town cannot be eradicated overnight, but need systematic work and partnerships involving government, the private sector and civil society.

I want to also personally thank the private sector companies and our international partners who worked with us to ensure that this project becomes a success.

I thank our people for their understanding and patience, as well as their support in all the projects that we are undertaking here.

Without this support, the Government alone would not succeed. We need to work together to take South Africa forward and bring meaningful change in our communities.

UHulumeni wethu uzoqhubeka nokubhekana nazo zonke lezi zinselelo esingabala kuzo ukunciphisa ukushoda kwezindlu, ukuthuthukiswa kwezindawo eziyimikhukhu noma 'amatshotshombe' kanye nokuthuthukiswa kwamahostela ukuze abe yizindawo ezikulungele ukuhlaliswa kwabantu kanye nemindeni yabo.

Sizoqhubeka futhi njengoHulumeni ngokunikezela ngomhlaba kulabo abangosonkontileka bokwakha nokuthuthukisa ukuze basancedise ekwakheni izindlu.

Sizoqinisa ubudlelwano phakathi kukaHulumeni kanye noSomabhizinisi kanjalo nalabo abasekela futhi banikezele ngezimali (donors) ukuze siqinisekise ukuthi siyaphumelela ekwakheni izindlu ezaneleyo.

We will be doing all these to live up to the principles of the Government's policy of providing adequate housing for all in need, building holistic and sustainable human settlements, restoring the dignity of our people, and ensuring a fair and

inclusive process for allocating houses so that our dream of building a cohesive and integrated society could be realised.

We want to eliminate the artificial racial boundaries created by apartheid and will continue to provide housing opportunities for both the lower-income families as well as those falling within the GAP market, who earn too little to qualify for a mortgage bond but too much to qualify for an RDP house.

We will continue to ensure that you have proper roads, easy access to public transport, electricity, water and that your refuse is removed regularly.

As we build these new and better communities, we will also continue to build schools, ensure access to shops and recreation areas and ensure that at the end this City would be a totally integrated place that brings pride to all its residents.

Currently, over 12 million South Africans have benefited from the 3.8 million houses and serviced sites provided by the democratic government since 1994.

Very soon, we will reach the four million mark in terms of the houses that we have provided, and this is an outstanding achievement given all the odds that we faced since assuming government.

The National Government will also continue with the monitoring and evaluation systems on all our projects to ensure that our people get quality delivery.

This will ensure that the houses, schools, hospitals, roads, power stations and universities that we are building last long to serve future generations.

Kunjalo phela, leSouth Africa esiyakhayo siyakhela izizukulwane zethu. Kumele zithole izwe elisimeme kuyona yonke imikhakha.

I thank you.