



MINISTRY
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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SPEAKING NOTES FOR DEPUTY MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ZOU KOTA-FREDERICKS AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE JHC'S NEW SOCIAL HOUSING BUILDINGS

18 SEPTEMBER 2013

Programme Director,
The Honourable Mayor of Johannesburg Parks Tau,
MEC Ntombi Mekingwe,
MECs and Legislators present here,
Councillors, community representatives and colleagues.
All protocol observed.

Today highlights yet another important step that the democratic government has taken as part of its endeavours to provide adequate housing for the people of our country.

Honourable Mayor, today's opening of the Ukhamba, Lethabong and Taylors Mansions as well as the Smitshof Extension is testimony that all the three spheres of our Government have taken the challenge of reducing the country's housing backlog seriously.

We have since 1994, built 3.3million housing units and created housing opportunities through the pioneering of social housing projects such as the ones being unveiled here today.

The Government's national subsidy scheme has helped to house about 11 million people since 1994. This accounts to giving roof and proper shelter to over 20 percent of the population which previously had no access to housing.



We have come a long way - celebrating 20 Years of Freedom!



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New forms of integrated development projects are being pioneered across the country making up completely new and different townships than those that we had become accustomed to under apartheid.

Ladies and gentlemen, the housing projects being launched here today will make a huge difference in the lives of our people especially those families who will now live in their own spaces receive services and have access to social and economic amenities.

We can congratulate ourselves on these achievements and we need to applaud the Johannesburg Municipality for its work because it indicates that officials in this Metro are serious about dealing with the problem of inadequate housing.

This initiative also indicates that the City of Johannesburg is not paying lip service to the issues of urban regeneration and renewal. By reviving derelict buildings and turn them into rental homes, the initiative also simultaneously creates new vibrant communities that would require a lot of services from the private sector.

This assist in boosting local economic development as retail and other businesses would also seek suitable spaces nearby in order for them to be able to render the service required by these new communities.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is in line with our Government's new policy approach to housing and the development of new settlements for people. Initiatives like the one being spearheaded by the City of Johannesburg would help us realise the objective of building sustainable human settlements where people would enjoy life by being closer to work, have easy access to schools and health facilities as well as sporting facilities for our children.



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It also helps us to deal with the problem of people who commutes long distances just to get to work. The challenge with leaving too far from the cities and towns is that our people are compelled to use a significant chunk of their income on transportation.

As indicated in our NDP 2030 vision that one of our key objectives in transforming human settlements by providing strong and efficient spatial planning systems and to bring people closer to their place of work.

But in communities like the ones that the City of Johannesburg has been creating as part of the social and rental housing projects spearheaded by the Johannesburg Housing Company, travelling long distances to work will no longer be a problem.

Such projects would also help in fast-tracking the efforts by our Government to build a united and non-racial South Africa whose citizens live together in peaceful communities as opposed to the racially segregated communities that the apartheid government imposed on us.

This also highlights our success stories and achievements as we look forward to our 20 year celebrations of a free and democratic South Africa.

However, we must never forget that our road to democracy was not easy and was achieved because of the unyielding sacrifice of thousands of patriots.

The year 2014 presents an opportunity for the people of South Africa, the continent and rest of the world to join us in celebrating the South African story.

This momentous occasion presents an opportunity for us to reflect on how our freedom and democracy were achieved; the progress we have made the past 20 years; and on how South Africans will work together to implement Vision 2030.



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Because of projects like these ones, a number of other people such as students, young graduates and working youths, would also be able to find decent accommodation within the proximities of the universities, shopping centres and workplaces.

Honourable Mayor, the success of this project should also serve as an invitation to the private sector to join hands with Government and assist in the endeavour to reinvest in our cities, create new job opportunities for local residents as well as help in solving the problem of housing shortage in our country and deal with inner city decay.

The scale of the housing and economic challenges facing our nation should never be underestimated. It requires joint effort by all of us. According to the Census 2011 report, over 1.2 million households live in informal settlements, and the highest concentrations of these are in metropolitan areas, particularly here in Gauteng.

The problem is made acute by the migration of people from rural areas and other provinces.

- Demographic growth and migration is also driving the growth of informal settlements, which today number almost 2 700, compared to 300 in 1994.
- Despite steady increases in the housing subsidy, especially since 2004, actual delivery of houses has declined, largely as a result of building costs inflation, the difficulties of securing suitable well-located land, and rising land process.
- Our need for cheaper land to offset this erosion of subsidy value has meant we tend to locate our new housing projects at the edge of cities and townships, pushing the poor further away from employment opportunities and amenities.

What the city of Johannesburg is doing today, talks directly to objective of providing adequate housing and it is the most practical effort seeking to deal with the daunting challenges highlighted in the Census report.



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I am excited by the work of the City of Johannesburg and the resolute steps being taken indicate that our policy approach is correct and that we will eventually overcome all these challenges.

Thank you



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