



MINISTRY

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THEMBI SIMELANE

MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, MP

**ON THE OCCASION OF
THE MAYORAL LEKGOTLA OF KING SABATA DALINDYEBO
MUNICIPALITY ON
9 FEBRUARY 2026**

ON A VIRTUAL PLATFORM

Programme Director;

His Worship the Executive Mayor of the King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality, Cllr. Nyaniso Goodman Nelani;

The Speaker of Council and Council whip;

Members of the Mayoral Committee;

Councillors;

The Municipal Manager and Officials of KSD;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Thank you so much for the invitation. I am really honoured and privileged to address this Mayoral Lekgotla of KSD.

Quite frankly, I am inquisitive to know when His Worship was cogitating about inviting me whether he invited me as the former Mayor, the former President of SALGA, the former Minister of CoGTA or in my current capacity as the Minister of Human Settlements.

However, and as a matter of fact, I will always be intrinsically linked to the municipal landscape, and I am unashamedly proud.

We all know that since its inception, the District Development Model (DDM) has played a pivotal role in ensuring that we work closely together as the three spheres of government leveraging the intergovernmental relations framework (IGR) and cooperative governance.

The intergovernmental relations framework Act establishes a framework for cooperation among national, provincial, and local governments in South Africa, promoting effective intergovernmental relations and dispute resolution.

The Act emphasises the principles of cooperative governance, as outlined in the South African Constitution, ensuring that all government levels work together towards common goals.

When you were hit by devastating disasters in June last year, we managed to combine our limited resources as government, and through our collective efforts as the three spheres of government, we managed to assist our communities to mitigate the disasters which left a trail of destruction to a disproportionate number of households.

We thank everyone who came to lend a helping hand, the NGOs, community-based organisations, and traditional leaders for their guidance and in contrast, their leadership.

As a service delivery department with a concurrent function working together with provinces and metros in the delivery of our human settlements' programmes, we have a responsibility to plan wisely and differently especially for disasters and proper settlement of our people.

We are now compelled to ring-fenced funds to plan for the eventuality of the unpredictable extreme weather conditions through the building and improvement of robust infrastructure capable of withstanding the inclement weathers due to climate change and global warming.

To respond to disasters and overcrowding, additional funds have been ring-fenced for emergency de-densification and dignified temporary relocation areas, ensuring minimum standards such as one stand per household, water within 100 metres, and no more than five families sharing a VIP toilet.

The matter of capacitating municipalities remains increasingly important to enable them to effectively deal with issues of illegal land occupation within the prescribed period.

This will help us to prevent some disasters which occurs because of people building in flood line areas and be susceptible to harm.

The amendment of the PIE Act Bill is currently before parliament for consideration, in its substitution sections, it states that no person may:

- (a) directly or indirectly receive or solicit payment of any money or other consideration as a fee or charge for arranging or organising or permitting a person to occupy land without the consent of the owner, organ of state or person in charge of that land
- (b) incite, arrange, or organise or permit any person to occupy land without the consent of the owner, organ of state or person in charge of the land

Our municipalities must build internal capacity to be able to respond with agility and speed against any illegal land occupation and prevent further harm to the environment and the people.

Last week, we convened an inaugural and historic Summit on Mainstreaming Innovative Building Technologies in Johannesburg.

The Summit was about focusing on identifying practical solutions that can reshape the trajectory of human settlements delivery in South Africa.

It affirmed a shared understanding that South Africa cannot achieve accessible, affordable, and sustainable human settlements at the scale required unless we decisively embrace and mainstream IBTs across the entire value chain, from research and manufacturing, to funding, regulatory alignment, construction, and community acceptance.

It was the view of the Summit that the scale of our housing demand, the urgency of climate resilience, and the imperative of inclusive development require us to adopt Innovative Building Technologies not as an alternative, but as a central pillar of our national approach to human settlements.

We want to move with speed and faster in resolving the housing backlog in South Africa which continues to undermine the efforts and strides made since 1994 to deliver adequate houses to the deserving beneficiaries and addressing the apartheid spatial planning.

At the end of the Summit, we signed a Social Compact which its principal function is to Mainstream IBTs within South Africa's human settlements system; align policy, regulation, finance, research, skills and implementation across the value chain; establish shared commitments, roles and accountability mechanisms; translate Summit deliberations into coordinated, post-Summit, evidence- based programmes of action; build public trust, social acceptance and community ownership of IBT solutions; and Position IBTs as a core instrument for sustainable, resilient and inclusive human settlements.

We are putting aside a minimum of 2% of our Human Settlements Development Grant for IBT solutions in the delivery of houses as of 1 April 2026.

We are currently reviewing the Housing Subsidy System (HSS) to develop the National Digital Human Settlements Management System (NDHS MS) in collaboration with the State Information Technology Agency (SITA). The NDHS MS aims to modernize data management, improve coordination, and enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability in managing human settlements.

It is important to note that government is undertaking major reforms to the housing grant and subsidy framework to make homeownership more accessible to working families. There is a significant and historic redesign of the First Home Finance programme.

The redesign of the First Home finance will enable 20 000 households to buy or build homes in areas of their choice. Adjusted income bands, simplified segments and alignment with building cost increases will significantly strengthen housing affordability for the gap market, while enabling closer integration with employer-assisted schemes.

To expand well-located rental opportunities, government will be deploying consolidated capital grants to support new units in restructuring zones and unlock stalled developments affected by rising building costs.

The Community Residential Units (CRUs) programme is undergoing comprehensive reform to introduce capped construction subsidies and

operational support that ensures financial sustainability and protects vulnerable tenants.

All Provincial Rental Housing Tribunals are being digitised through a massive investment, standardising dispute resolution processes and enforcing 90-day resolution for rental-related cases.

We are putting more efforts in addressing the legacy of spatial injustice and this requires bold, sustained action. More than 1.2 million households, representing nearly five million South Africans, continue to live in informal settlements, often in areas vulnerable to fires, floods, and insecure land tenure. KSD is a case in point.

Government is accelerating a national upgrading programme that will transform 500 informal settlements by 2030, beginning with at least 100 settlements each year.

Let me not take much of your time. I wish your Mayoral Lekgotla well. May your deliberations find enduring solutions to the problems confronting our citizens in KSD. Let's fix local government and make it work for the betterment of humanity. Let our efforts work towards giving local government a human face.

I thank you.

