



MINISTRY
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
TANDI MAHAMBEHLALA (MP), DEBATE ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT ADDRESS,
19 JULY 2024**

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Thoko Didiza

House Chairperson of the NCOP, Hon. Refilwe Mtsweni

Chief Whip of Majority Party Hon. Mdumiseni Ntuli

The President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa

Deputy President, Hon. Paul Mashatile

Honourable Members

Fellow South Africans

Allow me to greet you.

Today, I stand on this pedestal to reaffirm our commitment to the progressive policies that have guided our nation over the past three decades. As we address the critiques raised by the doomsayers, (the EFF), and the new political apprentice, (the MKP), it is crucial to highlight the consistent progress we have made and our unwavering dedication to transforming the lives of South Africans for the better. Our efforts in human settlements have played a pivotal role in the broader vision outlined by the President, during his Opening of Parliament Address, on contributing significantly to creating a capable state.

In his Opening Address to Parliament, President Ramaphosa highlighted our nation's resilience and unity in the face of adversity. He spoke of our collective efforts to rebuild and recover from natural disasters and economic challenges. His emphasis on inclusive growth, healthcare reform, and social equity, aligns with our long-standing commitments. He likened us to weaver birds, known for their ability to work collectively to build complex and resilient structures. This analogy beautifully captures the essence of our strength which lies in our unity and collective efforts. Our achievements over the past 30 years are a testament to what we can accomplish when we work together towards a common goal.

President's address underscored our commitment to pro-poor interventions. Our efforts in human settlements, such as providing housing, supporting the indigent households, and ensuring access to basic services, are clear examples of these

interventions. These initiatives are designed to uplift the most disadvantaged, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Mr, President, your focus on driving inclusive economic growth and job creation, mirrors our strategies over the past three decades. Our labour-intensive projects, support for SMMEs, and skills development initiatives are crucial components of this agenda. Our policies have created millions of jobs and provided economic opportunities to those who need them the most.

MADAME SPEAKER,

Our targeted human resource development initiatives, particularly in TVET and skills training, are essential for building a capable workforce. The President's emphasis on these areas underscores their importance in driving economic growth and reducing inequality.

Over the past three decades, the ANC government made significant strides in providing title deeds to millions of South Africans. Homeownership is fundamental to empowering individuals and ensuring long-term economic stability. Since 1994, we have issued over 1 million title deeds, giving many citizens the legal recognition of their properties. This has provided security and enabled homeowners to leverage their properties for economic activities and investments.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS,

Social housing programs have been pivotal in creating inclusive and integrated communities. We have developed over 300,000 social housing units through partnerships with other institutions. These initiatives have revitalised urban areas, reduced informal settlements, and provided quality housing near economic opportunities, improving living standards and fosters social cohesion and inclusivity. Infrastructure development is the backbone of sustainable human settlements.

We have invested significantly in infrastructure, including water and sanitation systems, roads, and public transport. The roll-out of these projects has improved living conditions and created numerous job opportunities. For instance, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has provided over 8 million work opportunities, contributing to skills development and economic empowerment.

The human settlement sector has been a major driver of job creation and skills development. Infrastructure projects, housing construction, and maintenance activities have created thousands of jobs, particularly for the youth and women. Skills development programs associated with these projects have equipped many individuals with valuable skills, enhancing their employability and economic prospects. The sector's contribution to GDP and economic growth cannot be overstated, as it stimulates various industries, from construction to manufacturing and services.

MR PRESIDENT,

Our government investment in the youth is evident through various programs aimed at education, skills development, and employment. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges have played a crucial role in equipping young South Africans with practical skills. Youth-targeted initiatives, such as the Youth Employment Service (YES), have provided job opportunities and work experience, paving the way for their future careers. Over the past decade, these programs have benefited millions of young people, preparing them for active participation in the economy.

Gender equality is at the core of our development agenda. We have implemented numerous programs to support women's empowerment, including access to housing, finance, and employment opportunities. Women-led housing projects and cooperatives have been established, providing both housing and economic opportunities for women. Our commitment to gender equality is further demonstrated by policies that ensure women benefit equitably from government programs and initiatives. Our progressive legislative framework has been instrumental in driving transformation and ensuring social justice.

As we continue, on this path, let us remain focused on our goals and committed to improving the lives of all South Africans. Our achievements are a clear indication that we are on the right track, and with continued effort and dedication, we can achieve even greater success. President Ramaphosa recently emphasised, that "Our well-being and happiness cannot be separated from those of our fellow woman and man." This sentiment echoes our commitment to leaving no one behind as we strive for progress.

Borrowing from the wisdom of former President Nelson Mandela, during a rally in KwaZulu-Natal on 25 February 1990, when he said: **“GREAT ANGER AND VIOLENCE CAN NEVER BUILD A NATION”**.

I thank you.