



**human settlements**

Department:  
Human Settlements  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **MESSAGE OF SUPPORT**

**BY**

**THEMBI SIMELANE**

**MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, MP**

**ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE TSHWANE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS SYMPOSIUM**

**02 JUNE 2026**

**CENTURION HOTEL, TSHWANE, GAUTENG**

Programme Director,  
Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Cllr Nasiphi Moya  
MMC for Human Settlements, Alderman Aaron Maluleka,  
Leaders from Government,  
Representatives of the Private Sector,  
Financial Institutions,  
Research and Academic Institutions,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

It is a privilege to join you today at this important Human Settlements Symposium convened under the theme, *“Forging Partnerships for Sustainable Human Settlements Development.”*

Firstly, let me start by acknowledging the disasters that occurred a week ago in the City displacing a lot of families in Plastic view and other informal settlements. We have dispatched our team from Emergency to work with the City in assisting the affected families.

Allow me to commend the City of Tshwane for creating a platform that brings together government, financial institutions, investors, researchers, and communities to collectively address the challenges and opportunities facing the human settlements sector.

The theme of this symposium is both timely and necessary.

The reality is that South Africa continues to face significant housing demand, rapid urbanisation, infrastructure pressures and growing expectations from our communities. Last week, we presented our budget for 2026/27 to parliament. Our total budget for the current financial year is R26.972 billion, reflecting a cut of almost R7 billion from the previous financial year.

Programme Director,

The budget reductions will have a significant impact on the achievement of our MTDP targets. This means, going forward, we will have to do more with less and become more innovative in how we deliver human settlements.

These realities require us to think differently.

They require stronger partnerships.

They require innovation.

And most importantly, they require coordinated action.

The future of human settlements delivery depends on our ability to align planning, infrastructure, financing, regulation, and implementation behind a common vision.

Today presents an opportunity to strengthen that alignment.

## **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Housing development opportunities must be understood beyond the traditional delivery of top structures.

They include fully subsidised housing, serviced sites, affordable ownership opportunities, rental housing, social housing, First Home

Finance, mixed-use developments, and the release of well-located land for integrated human settlements.

For the current financial year in line with the Budget we delivered last week in parliament, the Department has set ambitious national delivery targets, including the delivery of 39 058 housing units, the completion of 25 186 serviced sites, the approval of 11 358 First Home Finance applications and the disbursement of 9 231 First Home Finance subsidies.

These are not merely statistics.

They represent families who must gain access to secure tenure, serviced land and sustainable housing opportunities, and restore their dignity.

One of the most encouraging developments has been the performance of the First Home Finance Programme. We are pleased to mention that the NHFC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tshwane Housing Company for a joint delivery of programmes and implementation as delivery partners.

During the 2025/26 financial year, the programme exceeded its target by 200 per cent, assisting 8 544 households against a target of 4 272. This demonstrates not only the growing demand for affordable home ownership, but also the effectiveness of partnerships between government, financial institutions, and developers in expanding access to housing opportunities.

The lesson is clear.

The gap market is real. Demand is strong. Government support can unlock home ownership when it is properly aligned with financing institutions, developers, and beneficiaries. In our recent meeting with the parliament portfolio committee on human settlements, we acknowledged that the current budget for the FHF programme is insufficient to meet housing needs.

We agreed that we should approach the National Treasury to request an increase in the budget allocation for the programme to cater for more households and deepen impact.

The City of Tshwane is uniquely positioned to leverage these opportunities.

The city possesses strategic land parcels, strong development potential, growing market interest and significant opportunities for affordable ownership, rental housing, and mixed-use development.

Our challenge is not whether opportunities exist.

The challenge is how we package them, finance them, approve them, and implement them faster.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE, BULK SERVICE ENABLEMENT AND LAND RELEASE**

Programme Director,

Human settlements delivery cannot move faster than infrastructure allows. South Africa is faced with a huge infrastructure financing shortfall, which is estimated at approximately R13 trillion. Infrastructure especially bulk, is critical to the delivery of human settlements.

A housing project without bulk infrastructure is a promise waiting to fail.

A land parcel without water, sanitation, roads, and electricity is not yet a settlement opportunity.

A well-located land parcel that is not released, serviced, or connected to infrastructure remains potential rather than delivery.

The City of Tshwane correctly identifies infrastructure limitations and fragmented land release processes as key constraints affecting delivery.

Nationally, we have prioritised the unblocking of stalled projects.

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Department identified 212 blocked housing projects across the country. Through coordinated interventions, 85 projects were successfully unblocked, resulting in the delivery of 1 136 housing units across several provinces.

This experience has taught us that projects are rarely blocked by a single issue. The issues are multi-layered and multi-context.

More often, delays arise from a combination of infrastructure constraints, land matters, planning approvals, funding alignment, procurement challenges and coordination failures.

The lesson for all of us is that land release must be linked to infrastructure planning from the outset.

We must move towards a model where housing delivery, infrastructure investment and land development are planned and implemented as a single integrated value chain.

## **REGULATORY REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We recognise that housing delivery is often delayed not because opportunities do not exist, but because regulatory processes remain fragmented and cumbersome.

Government is therefore advancing a programme of regulatory reform aimed at creating a more enabling environment for human settlements delivery.

This includes work currently underway to develop a Human Settlements Act to replace the Housing Act of 1997, the development of a modernised Human Settlements Code, and proposed amendments to the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act.

The PIE Amendment Bill seeks to restore order in the sector. There is no developer, investor and financier who would want to invest in a chaotic environment.

These reforms seek to improve policy coherence, strengthen development facilitation, reduce bottlenecks, and create greater certainty for investors and implementing agents.

The objective is simple:

To reduce unnecessary delays.

To improve coordination across spheres of government.

To unlock development-ready land.

And to accelerate delivery while maintaining sound governance and accountability.

We improve the speed at which things are done, to support and attract investments in our communities. People should not wait forever for approvals of plans. Let us also embrace technology, to improve our systems and service delivery. We need to move with the times!

## **BLENDED FINANCE**

Programme Director,

The scale of South Africa's housing demand requires us to move beyond traditional approaches to financing.

Public resources remain critical, but they cannot carry the full burden of delivery on their own. The solution lies in blended finance.

The human settlements sector already benefits from a range of important funding instruments.

These include the Human Settlements Development Grant, the Informal Settlements Upgrading Partnership Grant, the Urban Settlements Development Grant, First Home Finance, Social Housing, and various subsidy programmes that support different housing needs and tenure options.

The question before us is not whether funding exists.

The question is how we better align public funding, private capital, infrastructure investment and development opportunities to achieve greater delivery outcomes within the fiscal constraints we face as a country.

When structured effectively, blended finance can multiply the impact of limited public resources. Government funding must increasingly be used as a catalyst to unlock additional investment from commercial banks, development finance institutions, pension funds, institutional investors, and the private sector.

Municipalities that can demonstrate a credible project pipeline, well-located development opportunities, integrated infrastructure planning and efficient approval systems will be best positioned to attract investment.

Investment follows certainty.

Where projects are well planned and development-ready, financing becomes easier to mobilise and implementation becomes easier to achieve.

## **SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The scale of our housing demand, the urgency of climate resilience and the imperative of inclusive development require us to embrace innovation.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa stated at the Innovative Building Technologies Summit held earlier this year:

*"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."*

Government has therefore taken a deliberate policy decision to mainstream Innovative Building Technologies throughout the human settlements value chain.

Innovative Building Technologies offer four significant advantages.

- They support faster delivery, particularly in disaster response, informal settlement upgrading and catalytic developments.
- They improve climate resilience and support more sustainable settlement development.
- They contribute to greater cost certainty and improved lifecycle value.
- And they create opportunities for localisation, skills development, youth employment and SMME participation.

Importantly, these technologies are not unregulated alternatives to conventional construction.

They are tested, certified and approved systems supported by standards, quality assurance mechanisms and oversight arrangements.

The 2024 White Paper on Human Settlements provides the policy foundation for innovation, while work is already underway to embed Innovative Building Technologies within the Housing Code, norms and standards, and implementation guidelines.

The Innovative Building Technologies Summit also marked a seismic shift from isolated pilot projects to system-wide implementation through the Social Compact on Innovative Building Technologies.

Through this compact, government, industry, finance institutions, regulators and academia have committed themselves to coordinated implementation and measurable delivery outcomes.

Our call today is simple:

Let us move from pilots to programmes, from commitment to implementation, and from intention to impact.

## **CONCLUSION**

Programme Director,

The true measure of this symposium will not be today's discussions.

It will be the actions that follow.

Success will be measured by the partnerships we build, the projects we unlock, the infrastructure we coordinate, the investments we attract and ultimately the communities whose lives are improved.

Let us leave this symposium with a shared commitment to drive impact and implementation.

Let us strengthen collaboration between government, municipalities, developers, financiers, researchers, and communities.

Let us unlock opportunities, remove barriers, and accelerate delivery.

We welcome the City's concerted efforts in dealing with the scourge of hijacked buildings. This is inline with President Ramaphosa's directives during the SoNA to convert the brown fields and repurpose them for social housing.

Together, we can build sustainable, inclusive, and resilient human settlements that improve lives, restore dignity, and contribute to South Africa's long-term development.

I thank you.