

**2010/11 BUDGET VOTE SPEECH OF THE FREE STATE COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE,
TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, PRESENTED BY MEC, M ZWANE
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE**

15 March 2010

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Honourable premier

Honourable Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and the legislature

Executive mayors, mayors, Speakers, chief whips and councillors

The chairperson of South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in Free State and the executive committee

Heads of departments and government officials

Marena le dikgosi tsa rona

Dingaka tsa Setso

Baruti

Distinguished guests

PEC and REC Members, Comrades and Friends

Mme motswadi, le lelapa la ka ka ho otloloha

Mr Speaker, we converge here today on 15 March 2010, the day which was declared Africa Day in 1958 by the All Africa People's Convention in Accra, Ghana. This day, which is now celebrated on 25 May, is a day on which all freedom loving Africans celebrated and intensified their resolve to fight for a liberated Africa.

The then President of the African National Congress, the late Comrade Albert Luthuli, became the patron-in-chief of this day. In his acceptance speech, he said, "Our goal is a united Africa in which the standards of life and liberty are constantly expanding, a non-racial democratic South Africa which upholds the rights of all who live in our country".

A visionary leader, Luthuli invited "Africa to cast her eyes beyond the past and to some extent the present" to the "recognition and preservation of the rights of man (of humanity) and the establishment of a truly free world".

In the next six days, on 21 March, we will observe the commemoration of 50 years of the Sharpeville massacre. This commemoration continues to remind us that the struggles of our people have always been primarily about human rights and equality. Let us then become torch bearers of the dream that the Luthuli generation had, and ensure that our people are heard; that equality and human rights become a living reality even for those who wake up with nothing to hope for.

Today also marks 87 days before the 2010 FIFS Soccer World Cup kick-off. This brings home a new dawn of reality, that we too can be counted among the few world nations that have been given this rare opportunity. We must therefore show the whole world that indeed we too are capable of hosting a successful world cup tournament.

Mr Speaker, the most memorable image of that day of 15 May 2004 is an emotional Madiba holding aloft the sport world's most famous trophy, and in excitement saying: "We South Africans have to look forward to hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2010. This event has the power to break down barriers and unite people around the world in a way that little else does"

Mr Speaker, our real celebration of the 20th anniversary of the release of Madiba from prison, can only be realised if each one of us can put an effort in a small way to guarantee a successful world

cup. When others are wearing the Bafana-Bafana replica shirts, we will be wearing protective clothing and hard-tipped mountain boots, with whistles around our necks ready to prevent and mitigate any disaster that might occur during this precious tournament.

Mr Speaker, our movement's 8 January statement presented to us by Comrade President Jacob Zuma this year, focused our attention on some of the main tasks facing Local Government in 2010. He emphasised that our primary attention should be on the accelerated provision of services to our people.

The president went further to declare that 2010 shall be the year of "working together to speed up effective service to the people" and that this has particular implications for local government. With this in mind, it is my privilege to present the performance report of the Department of Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements; and table its budget for the 2010/2011 financial year.

Mr Speaker, we acknowledge that this financial year was an unusual year in the calendar of government operation. It was a short year with significant changes that included adjustment in administration, which led to the establishment of two departments from the former Local Government and Housing department.

This had an impact on the implementation of various programmes and called for an innovative way of doing things in compliance with the spirit and aspirations of Operation Hlasela.

Notwithstanding various service delivery challenges, which in some areas led to civic unrest, our people are still hopeful and they are inspired by the achievements of our democratic government. Despite the challenges experienced in the ministry, we made notable achievements.

Mr Speaker, we note with pride that we have been able to sustain our Operation Clean Audit 2014 ambassadors in the 2008/09 financial year. These ambassadors are the municipalities of Tswelopele, Fezile Dabi and Lejweleputswa. They continue to give us hope that this programme is achievable.

As an endeavour to stem out audit disclaimers within our municipalities, we have introduced the programme fully in all our municipalities in the Xhariep District, as the most vulnerable area. This programme already yields results with financial reporting that has improved. This is an indication that the systems we have implemented are functional.

In strengthening the institutional capacity of some vulnerable municipalities, we have balanced the budget of Xhariep District municipality and funded the municipal manager and chief financial officer (CFO) posts in Naledi, Mohokare and Xhariep.

In an effort to increase our support to the institution of traditional leadership, we established and launched 11 representative Traditional Councils in the province. These will enable community participation in matters of traditional governance. We will continue to give support to the institution to intensify their capacity to manage the affairs of traditional communities.

We have engaged our traditional healers in various programmes during 2009/10 to enhance overall traditional medicine knowledge system, and to promote their standing in communities. We continue to advocate for their needs in the localities where they live.

In order to ensure that our communities' access to government services is improved, we have appointed additional 64 community development workers (CDWs). Working with the Development

Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), we have succeeded to replicate our Siyenza Manje deployment of technical experts to work in 14 municipalities.

In our attempt to increase the lifespan of very important persons' (VIP) toilets, we have revitalised more than 31 000 VIP toilets in the area of Mangaung local municipality. We committed municipalities and ourselves to improve our turnaround time on responses to community queries. This is the area where we are of a view that although there is some improvement, we can still do more.

We are at work to turn-around the situation in Thabo Mofutsanyane, Nala and Masilonyana which are currently under provincial administration in terms of section 139 (1) (b) of the Constitution. We were able to pilot and display better and different typologies i.e. designs and plans of houses in various towns. Our aim is to move away from the drab of Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) uniformity.

Our improvement in this area of work includes exploring alternative building methods, using mass based approach in construction, to create jobs and develop skills through mass mobilisation. We have also explored the use of alternative building materials in housing delivery, in selected towns.

In partnership with the Department of Land Affairs, we acquired 10 land parcels in various localities as identified by different local municipalities, for future establishment of human settlements. Through our programme of planning and surveying we had initially planned to develop 8 000 sites, but have achieved more than 12 000 sites.

In 2009/2010, we were able to spend 100 percent of our R962 million allocation of the housing grant. As part of our commitment to building sustainable human settlements that respond to environmental issues, our greening and landscaping campaign has borne fruit; with 21 850 indigenous trees planted in partnership with municipalities and sector departments.

We are also proud to report that in order to achieve accelerated service delivery, targeting key priority areas, our province and municipalities in particular have achieved great success in delivering the following services:

- * Households with access to water: 97.5 percent
- * Households with access to electricity: 86.6 percent
- * Households with access to proper sanitation: 92 percent, inclusive of the work achieved through the Bucket Eradication Programme during the 2008/09 financial year.

- * Households with access to refuse removal: 76.1 percent

Mr Speaker, informed by the state of local government assessment report, government adopted local government turn-around strategy to deal with the root causes of many problems in our system of local government. With the budget allocation of R320 million for this financial year, we will strive to implement the ten points plan of the local government turn-around strategy with focus on these key areas:

* We will intensify and speed up our efforts on service delivery in the area of water, sanitation, electricity, waste management and streets. To this end, government has allocated R869 million to the municipal infrastructure grant (MIG).

* We hope to mainstream Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) principles in all our infrastructure projects to enable the creation of jobs and skills development. Local economic development programmes in municipalities will receive more support from the department in

partnership with the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, private sector and international donors.

* We hope to bring synergy to uncoordinated local economic development projects starting at ward level for more impact of such projects. Working with the Office of the Premier, we want to improve and forge inter-governmental planning process on integrated development plans (IDPs) of municipalities. We will ensure that these plans are the product of communities and reflect the involvement of all sector departments and state-owned institutions.

* We will make R2.8 million available to community development workers to enable them to support the work of the refined ward committees. This will enable us to develop credible ward based household profiles. It will also provide the opportunity for government to update the indigent registers and isolate those who are able to pay for services but are reluctant to do so.

* We will upscale governance communication by effectively utilising public participation platforms and broader media channels. Our people must be encouraged to use all methods of communication including marches. However, government must ruthlessly deal with violent demonstrations that threaten people's lives and damage to property.

* A lot of work has already been done in the last two months in the implementation of the local government turn-around strategy in municipalities. Municipal specific turn-around strategies are being developed to address such identified issues per municipality. We have already interacted with all municipalities in this regard.

Through the turn-around strategy, we will implement a programme aimed at fixing and attending to immediate administrative, institutional and financial challenges faced by municipalities. We have set aside an amount of R5.8 million to assist with payment of salaries for municipal managers and chief financial officers in vulnerable municipalities.

We have made R1.2 million available to develop a standard set of by-laws to regulate municipal activities including illegal occupation of land. As part of Operation Clean Audit 2014, we will introduce mechanisms to ensure sound financial management as well as reduction of municipal debt.

Jwale re kene motjheng, re hlasela ka Mo-Premier le matona a hae, re se re hatetse pele ka ho romella Mo-Premier masepaleng wa Mangaung le wa Matjhabeng. Hlasela Ntate Magashule! Hlasela! Foreistata ke nako!

We will strengthen inter-governmental relations with municipalities and SALGA Free State, improve our capacity to coordinate, monitor and support municipalities, to serve as the single window of coordination for support to municipalities.

We will continue to support the work of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) in their preparations for the 2011 local government elections. In line with this commitment, and to promote community buying, we need to ensure that our people are informed about challenges in the processes of demarcation and delimitation of wards.

We will continue to facilitate the disestablishment of Motheo district municipality and the establishment of Mangaung as a metropolitan municipality. It is prudent to take all stakeholders along as this process has implications for the districts of Motheo, Xhariep and Thabo Mofutsanyane in relation to staff, assets and liabilities.

We will continue to assist municipalities to root out fraud and corruption through developing sound anti-corruption policies and strong anti-corruption units. Our main emphasis will be on strengthening the Supply Chain Management units.

Mohlomphehi Speaker, Foreistata ke naha e kgabileng ka setso le botjhaba. Re tlameha maoto le matsoho ho ipabola le ho bapatsa setso le bonono bo re nang le bona ntle le tshabo ya letho. Re lebeletse marena le dingaka tsa rona tsa setso ho nka karolo ya bohlokwa ho sireletseng botjhaba le ho kgothaletsa batjha ho boulella setso. Sena re tshwanela ho se fihlella ka ho sebedisana mmoho le bohle ba amehang mererong ya setso le botjhaba.

Tjhelete e kana ka R9.5 million e beheletswe ka thoko ho matlafatsa tshehetso ya rona ho marena, hore re tle re eketse seabo sa bona mananeng a mmuso a amang setjhaba sa mahaeng.

Re utlwile selo sa marena mabapi le ditlhoko tseo ba llang ka tsona, mme re tla etsa bonnete ba hore re ba ema nokeng ho matlafatsa tshebetso ya bona. Re se re kene letsholong la mamela-o-arabe bakeng sa morabe wa Bataung le morabe wa MaKhoisan, ho ba thusa ho fihlella ditabatabelo tsa bona tsa ho ananelwa ke mmuso.

Mr Speaker, in his 2010 State of the Province Address, the honourable premier stated: "One of the key challenges of government is to deal with the distorted spatial planning legacy brought about by apartheid. This has located areas where our people live far from areas of economic activity, little or no access to land for housing and limited access to basic municipal services".

Moving from the premise that space regulation responsibility resides in the Department through Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), and space development responsibility resides in Human Settlements. We therefore respond to the premier's challenge by exploring pilots of practical initiatives in selected localities to turn this situation around. To this end, we will identify suitable land to develop mixed settlements, with mixed land use in collaboration with municipalities, sector departments, and state owned enterprises (SoEs).

For example, Vogelfontein in Bethlehem lands itself as an excellent choice for this pilot.

A house is the most valuable asset, which can be provided to an individual household by government. This is a source of economic and social investment if it is well looked after. We therefore urge all our beneficiaries to maintain and take pride in their properties.

Mr Speaker, I now wish to elaborate on our human settlements commitments in the next financial year. Let me state that creation of integrated human settlements is key to ensuring coordinated sustainable development. Prioritising integrated human settlements will yield desired results for better living conditions for citizens.

To this end, our allocation of R1.3billion will be used to construct housing units towards addressing the 200 000 housing backlog; to install municipal services, develop social amenities and acquire land. Creating sustainable human settlements remains our main focus in the 2010/11 financial year. As a commitment to the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs), our aim is to provide 10 000 units towards reducing the backlog of people living in informal settlements.

We will enforce quality in housing construction, in installation of municipal services, provision of social amenities, acquisition of land and creation of sites. We will promote innovation and alternative ways of construction that will promote energy saving.

Together with the national Department of Human Settlements, we will integrate geographic information system into our housing subsidy system that will monitor progress on all our projects. We will continue in earnest with the rolling out of the second and third phases of the Land Restitution programme to claimant beneficiaries, and complete construction in the current financial year.

In partnership with the private sector and the Housing Development Agency, we will explore different ways and means to provide mixed housing options. These options will include rental units closer to places of employment in Bloemfontein, Bethlehem, Sasolburg and Welkom as a pilot. In collaboration with municipalities, we will work towards promoting security of tenure of our people through continuously handing out title deeds to beneficiaries to be completed by the end of September 2010.

We will continue with the programme of empowering women and youth through our housing contractor development programme, but we will isolate those who abuse this empowerment opportunity by engaging in shady deals such as fronting for established businesses.

We will utilise ward committees to create ward based credible housing sector plans as well as living beneficiary waiting lists. This will help us to prioritise those individuals who have been on the waiting list for a long time, especially the elderly. We will aggressively start the process during the month of April 2010.

Together with relevant departments, we will set up a team that will address the continued evictions of our people from farms, and ensure better living conditions of farm dwellers. In promoting service delivery in farm areas, we will facilitate the creation of shelter for professionals such as educators who are currently commuting to work due to lack of accommodation.

We will provide 100 individual subsidies for credit and non-credit linked beneficiaries working together with the private sector and banks in Harrismith. We will aggressively drive the Discount Benefit Scheme programme through targeted campaigns to communities in partnership with municipalities. The campaign will ensure home ownership of former state properties.

Many of our townships were established without socio-economic facilities. We will therefore allocate R70 million to develop such facilities in Phumelela, Maluti-a-Phofung, Moqhaka, Ngwathe, and Matjhabeng local municipalities. R135 million is provided to continue with our rectification of pre-1994 housing stock. This amount is meant to rebuild two roomed houses and to rectify houses with defects.

R30 million is available for special attention to our rural communities and people who enjoy functional security of tenure. R44 million is allocated to support municipalities with funding to install new municipal services and create serviced sites for housing development. R30 million meant to secure prime land for future developments.

R115.2 million allocated for the process of building decent homes for military veterans and restitution beneficiaries. R85.5 million is allocated to provide our people with decent homes through demolition of G hostel in Welkom and Silver City hostel in Bloemfontein in line with the announcement by the honourable premier. R520 million is allocated to address the eradication of informal settlements and the installation of concomitant municipal services.

Mr Speaker, as part of our social responsibility, we will continue to foster social cohesion through choral music, sporting activities and departmental youth forum.

Lerole le a thunya, mosebetsi o tswela pele, maphelo a rona a fetoha!

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, despite the challenges we may be facing, our task is to contribute positively in nation building and serving our people with dignity and integrity. We will therefore strive to be visible, effective, efficient, simple and touchable.

Let me take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the collective in the executive council under the leadership of honourable premier, members of this esteemed house, the leadership in municipalities under the guidance of SALGA in Free State, my two heads of departments and staff for all their unwavering support.

At this stage, I want to call upon each one of us in this house and the people of the province in general, to work with us to create ideal municipalities. Local government is everyone's business!

In the spirit of creating a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world, I would like to quote the words of Karl Marx, in the Letter to his father:

"If we have chosen the position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live quietly but perpetually at work, and over our ashes will be shed the hot tears of noble people".

On that note, I hereby present the budgets for the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and the Department of Human Settlements as Annexure A and B respectively.

Ngiyabonga
Gungun
Foesitata ke nako!