



**RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENCY BUDGET VOTE
DEBATE BY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CAPE TOWN
24 JULY 2014**

Deputy Speaker,
Honourable Deputy President,
Honourable Members,

Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to respond to the vibrant debate on the Presidency Budget Vote which took place yesterday.

I would like to touch on a few points raised by Honourable Members.

BRICS BANK

The Honourable Lekota asked where South Africa would obtain the money to pay our contribution to the capitalisation of the BRICS Development Bank. The capital contributions to the New Development Bank will come from the fiscus.

These capital contributions are similar to the ones we make to other multilateral institutions such as the African Development Bank and the World Bank, where we are members.

Initially, South Africa's contribution is in the form of paid-in capital of 150 million U S Dollars. This amount is part of the schedule of instalments agreed to among all members.

The Bank will have authorised capital of 100 billion US dollars with 50 billion US dollars subscribed. All countries will contribute equal capital to the Bank.

It is important to note that the benefits of participating in the New Development Bank by far outweigh the costs of establishing it.

The Bank will complement existing sources of financing to cater for the ever increasing development needs in areas of energy, rail and road, and other economic infrastructure.

SILOAM HOSPITAL

Honourable Malema said we had misled the people of Vhembe that we would build a hospital and that the promise of water to the people of Giyani had also not materialised.

Actually, work has begun on the two key projects.

The redevelopment of Siloam Hospital in Vhembe is being implemented in two stages, namely new staff housing and a 350-bed new district hospital.

The tender process has begun and it is anticipated that construction will begin in August 2015, and the project will take 30 months to complete.

The estimated cost is 750 million rand. The commissioning of the new hospital is scheduled to be completed by April 2018.

Tenders for the building of the staff housing units closed on 11 July 2014. The estimated cost of construction is 140 million rand.

GIYANI WATER SUPPLY

Giyani Town in Limpopo is water stressed as a result of lack of proper maintenance of the infrastructures including boreholes, reticulation pipeline, stand pipes, water treatments works, and booster pump stations.

The Mopani District Municipality is refurbishing the Giyani Water Works at a cost of 20 million rand. Work is expected to be completed by September 2014.

LAND OWNED BY FOREIGNERS

Honourable Filtane and Honourable Godi raised concern about the ownership of land by foreigners.

The Green Paper on Land Reform, sets out a new Land Tenure System, namely a 4-tier system of which foreign land ownership is the 3rd tier.

In this regard, Government proposes no ownership of land by foreign nationals as a principle. We also propose to convert current foreign ownership into a long term lease after the land audit has been finalized.

To give effect to these proposals, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform is currently drafting the Regulation of Land Holdings Bill which seeks, amongst other things, to regulate land ownership by foreigners.

PAYMENT OF SCHOLAR TRANSPORT FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN IN MPUMALANGA

Honourable Filtane alleged that government had not paid a bill of 400 million rand to the Mpumalanga Scholar Transport Organisation leading to children walking 10 kilometres to school.

The Mpumalanga provincial government has denied the existence of 400 million worth of invoices. The provincial government says all service providers were called in by the Premier after the claims of non-payment. All invoices were submitted and verified and all legitimate invoices were paid in full. It appears that one out of the 111 contractors had not paid his sub-contractors.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Honourable Shenge raised the need for a youth ministry. In fact, we do have a youth ministry. As indicated, the youth development function falls within the portfolio of the Minister in the Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, assisted by the Deputy Minister in the Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

What we shall do differently now as stated, is to expand the function of the Department beyond oversight on the NYDA to championing the socio-economic development and empowerment of the youth across government.

Deputy Minister Buti Manamela gave an overview of what the Ministry will address.

Members of the House will be able to engage from time to time on these issues in this House.

WE HAVE A GOOD STORY TO TELL

The Deputy President, Ministers and the Deputy Ministers outlined eloquently all the indisputable achievements of the ANC government.

These are the achievements that enable us to boldly state that we have a good story to tell and that South Africa is a much better place to live in now than it was before 1994.

Honourable Maimane and his family are therefore very fortunate to be living in a free South Africa, a freedom that was attained through the blood, sweat and tears of many selfless freedom fighters, in a liberation struggle that was led by the ANC.

Through the hard work of the ANC government, young people are assured a better life.

Millions more South Africans have access to houses, water, sanitation, electricity, houses, free health care, social grants for the poor, unemployment insurance, better schools and many more services thanks to the hard work of the ANC government working with the poor.

Minister Patel shared with this house the statistics indicating that even the Western Cape was better managed under an ANC government. Facts speak for themselves.

Honourable Maimane and his family are better off in South Africa today because the ANC is running this country.

The very fact that Honourable Maimane is in Parliament today leading the Opposition, is due to the opportunities that freedom and democracy brought to young people in this country, thanks to the ANC.

So Honourable Maimane, enjoy the freedom brought to you by the ANC, with our full compliments, or step aside.

THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

I am pleased that as parties we agree in the main on the Israeli-Palestinian question, that the violence must end and that there can be no military solution except negotiations.

I am sending two special envoys to the Middle East. They are the former Minister of Social Development and former High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Dr Zola Skweyiya and the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Aziz Pahad.

We are concerned about the plight of women and children in Palestine. In this regard, South Africa will make a financial contribution of one million US dollars towards humanitarian assistance.

We strongly urge both Israel and Hamas to work towards a ceasefire agreement, which will be the basis for the resumption of negotiations towards a permanent resolution to the conflict – a two-state solution of a viable Palestine existing side-by-side and in peace with Israel.

BUILDING THE SOUL OF THE NATION

I spoke about the need to build the soul and identity of our nation. That task should not be taken lightly.

The Honourable Chief Whip of the Majority Party reminded us of the sterling political achievements of our country.

These include our vibrant multiparty parliamentary system, election processes that are declared free and fair, a strong sense of constitutionalism supported by Chapter 9 institutions, various mechanisms of accountability, a functioning public service and platforms where the public participate in government.

We can thus state boldly that 20 years on, our democracy is in very good health. We are a successful State, built on a strong foundation of human rights, equality and freedoms.

Moving further, we should now work on building the fibre of our nation.

We should make it our responsibility as leaders to teach our children and the youth, basic human values of respect and tolerance.

We also need to cultivate basic values of community service, selflessness, hard work, integrity and ethics as part of our nation building programmes. This is not the task of government alone.

It is the responsibility of every leader in our country, in whatever field.

When our children are asked to recite the preamble to the Constitution and fly the national flag, it is part of building a new citizen who will understand the history of this country, where we come from and where are going as a nation.

It is a citizen who will understand the basic values that are expected to be espoused by a South African citizen. That is what building a new nation and a new national identity would entail.

It is an important investment in the future of our country.

Sifuna ukwakha isizwe esinenhlonipho, ukubekezelelana, nokwazi ukuthi umuntu kufanele aziphathe kanjani.

Kufanele amaqembu ezombusazwe akufundise lokhu kumalungu awo ukuze sibambisane ekwakheni isizwe esinesithunzi.

I would like to thank all Honourable Members for participating in the debate and for supporting the work of the Presidency.

Together let us move South Africa forward.

I thank you.