

19 Feb 2019

State of the Province Address delivered by the Honourable S.H. Ntombela, Premier of the Free State Province

Honourable Speaker of the Legislature  
Honourable Members of the Legislature and the Executive Council  
Honourable Members of the National Assembly and the NCOP  
Judge President and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary  
Modulasetulo wa Ntlo ya Marena le Marena kaofela  
The Leadership of SALGA and our Municipalities  
Members of the Diplomatic Corps  
The Provincial Commissioner of SAPS  
The Regional Commissioner of Correctional Services  
Leaders of Chapter Nine Institutions  
Leaders of the African National Congress and the Alliance  
Leaders of Faith Based Organisations  
Leaders of Civil Society Organisations  
Leaders of the Business Community  
Leaders of Academic Institutions  
Comrades, Compatriots and Friends  
All our Special Guests  
Viewers and Listeners

**From a new era to a new dawn: The Story of our Democracy**

Honourable Speaker, twenty-five years ago in South Africa, the tide of history turned. The heavens above opened up and soaked us with happiness unmatched. The rain washed away our sorrows, and the sun lit up the sky in an embrace of the new dawn.

Buried in the memories of the past, our sorrow vanished into the hollow of apartheid darkness. Sustained only by selflessness, victory arrived. From the crumbling walls of apartheid and the conquering spirit of the oppressed, a new South Africa was born.

With democracy, South Africa was set for change. In the presence of the world, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as our first ever-democratic President. Setting the journey for democratic change during his 1994 inaugural speech, Tata Mandela told us that,

“Today we are entering a new era for our country and its people. Today we celebrate not the victory of a party, but a victory for all the people of South Africa.”

Twenty-five years later, President Cyril Ramaphosa evoked this inaugural moment when he delivered the ANC’s 2019 January 8th Statement when he said that,

“After a period of doubt and uncertainty, we have arrived at a moment of hope and renewal. The 2019 elections provide an opportunity to restore our democratic institutions and to return our country to a path of transformation, growth and development.”

Honourable Speaker, we have arrived at the moment of the New Dawn under President Cyril Ramaphosa. This is the moment of hope and the age of courage.

The New Dawn reminds us that foremost in our minds should be the urgency to plant the seeds of optimism in our people. As the ANC leadership in government, our everyday actions should nourish their souls and our words should inspire their desires.

Our people should continue to believe in the course of freedom and democracy. Above all, our people should find compassion, humility, honesty, respects and trust in the glory of the ANC, its leadership and government.

We have entered into a new social contract with our people. A contract for better life for all.

### **On Social Transformation**

Honourable Speaker, our social transformation objectives are meant to improve the living conditions of all South Africans, especially the poor. This includes the provision of quality education and developing the skills necessary to grow our country. Simply, our social transformation is about ending poverty and creating resilient communities.

We treasure the value of education in improving the quality of life of our people. Quality education promotes social and economic development. It lifts people out of poverty, unlocks potential, ends ignorance and nurtures democracy.

Education is a pathway to our destination, a mission of human emancipation.

We treasure the value of education in improving the quality of life of our people in the province. Quality education furthers social and economic development. It lifts people out of poverty, unlocks potential, end ignorance and nurtures democracy. Education is the pathway to our desired growth and development destination in the Free State.

Our education aspiration is the provision of quality education. Nowhere is this commitment more visible than in our investment in education infrastructure.

The internationally acclaimed University of the Free State and the Central University of Technology are all part of our landscape. Equally, we take pride in the following Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges:

- Goldfields TVET College
- Motheo TVET College
- Flavius Mareka TVET College
- Maluti TVET College

Matters are no different at our basic education level. A lot has been done to improve access to quality education. We have one thousand, one hundred and ninety-eight schools teaching seven hundred and thirteen thousand, five hundred and sixteen learners. An additional two hundred and seventeen schools are farm schools.

Honourable Speaker, we are proud of the achievements that we have made on the provision of education infrastructure over the last few years. This year we will officially open the following schools:

- Thembalihle Primary School, Vrede
- Silindokuhle Primary School, Warden
- GM Polori Primary School, Hoopstad
- Malebogo Primary School, Hertzogville
- Rehopotswe Primary School, Bethlehem
- Ruang-Tsebo Primary School, Clocolan
- Thuto Ke Thebe Primary School, Bloemfontein
- Grassland Primary School, Bloemfontein
- Grassland Secondary School, Bloemfontein
- Thlolo Primary School, Botshabelo
- Mooifontein Primary School, Zastron

In the new financial year, we will build the following schools:

- A Special School in Trompsburg
- Dr. Sello Primary School in Viljoenskroon
- Vogelfontein Primary School in Bethlehem
- Katlego Mpumelelo Primary School in Sasolburg
- Tsehetso Primary School in Bothaville
- Parys Primary School in Parys
- Tsebo Ulwazi Secondary School in Frankfort
- Refeng Thabo Secondary School Hall in Tweeling

We have hundred and fifty-six schools with pit latrines. Fifty-one of these schools are in Thabo Mofutsanyana followed by Fezile Dabi with forty-three schools with pit latrines. The number of schools in Mangaung with pit latrines is twenty. While Lejweleputswa has thirty-nine schools with pit latrines, Xhariep has three.

To date, we have built thirty-seven hostels in our province. The new boys' hostel at Steynsrus High School was completed in 2018/19. Construction of the following four new hostels will commence during the 2019/20 financial year:

- Leboneng Special School in Welkom
- Boitumelong Special School in Thaba Nchu
- Breda Primary Farm School in Fouriesburg
- New Special School in Trompsburg

Overseeing all these schools is twenty thousand, two hundred and seventy-nine Educators. Two thousand, two hundred and seventy-one positions of Educators are vacant. This places a huge strain on the provision of education. We will this year employ more Educators to fill these vacant positions.

Previously, we promised to absorb temporary Educators in our schooling system. This has been achieved. Since February 2018, we have employed seven hundred and sixteen temporary Educators into permanent positions.

Distribution of these appointed Educators is as follows:

- One hundred and seventy-seven in Thabo Mofutsanyana
- One hundred and seventy-six in Mangaung
- One hundred and sixty-one in Lejweleputswa
- One hundred and forty-four in Fezile Dabi
- Sixty-one in Xhariep

Of all our schools, nine hundred and seventy-three have a School Nutrition Programme benefitting five hundred and eighty-six thousand, two hundred and forty-seven learners. Benefits of the Nutrition Programme include improvements in learner attendance and learning. It also serves as a mechanism to fight hunger.

Today we are celebrating the fruits of our investment in education. What we put out in our investment is what we got back in our impressive Grade 12 pass rate.

Honourable Speaker, for 2016 and 2017, the Free State province achieved position one in the National Senior Certificate Examinations. In 2018, we achieved the second position with the pass rate of 87.5 percent. This is an improvement of 1.4 percent from the 86.1 percent pass rate that the province achieved in 2017.

What is even more reassuring for us is that hundred secondary schools achieved a target of 90 percent National Senior Certificate pass rate and 40 percent Bachelor pass rate. Of these, fifty are township schools.

Our Fezile Dabi district achieved a pass rate of 92.3 percent. This district maintained its position as the best performing district in the country for the second time running.

Our learners have made us proud. Congratulations on your success. We are proud of you. We honour all those behind their success for their hard work and commitment.

Ho lona ba sa atlehang selemong se fetileng, le seke la nyahama. Tsebang hore matsatsi ha atle ka ho tshwana. Ntho ya bohlokwa ke hore ha o wele, ema o itlhotlhore, bophelo bo tswela pele. Ke rata ho le kgothaletsa ho sebedisa leano la monyetla wa bobedi ho netefatsa hore le lona le rwala moqhaka wa tlholo.

Violence in our schools is unacceptable. In some instances, schools have been affected, with learning and teaching disrupted. To some extent, this is because of gangsterism. There is also the worrying lack of discipline in some of our schools.

In August 2018, we convened a meeting with all School Governing Bodies in the province to address some of these ills. Given the declining incidents of violence and ill-discipline in many of our schools, we are satisfied that our interventions are working.

For all these achievements, I want to thank members of the School Governing Bodies for their commitment in investing their time in the education of our learners in the province. This clearly shows that education is a societal matter.

I want to urge parents to pay attention and get involved in their children's education. Not only will this motivate our learners, but it would also improve their behavioural patterns, inspire them and enhance their performance too.

Bomme le bontate, bana ba rona ba hloka tataiso ya rona. Ho bohlokwa hore re ba rute ka diphephetso tsa dithetefatsi le maitshwaro a sa lokang. Re seke ra ba fella pelo. Hona hotla ba thusa hore ebe batho setjhabeng.

We are inspired by President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement to implement the Framework for Skills for a Changing World meant to prepare our children to respond to emerging technologies such as robotics and artificial intelligence.

We will extend our current programme of using technology to teach our learners to more schools to better prepare them for the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Last year, our package to improve the quality of education entailed rolling-out a reading and writing initiative to one hundred and eighty libraries. We opened a new state of the art Sechaba Mahobe Library in Botshabelo, which boasts a reading area, computer room, games room and a toys library for children.

Again, twenty-four Mzansi Libraries Online will be equipped with computers, tablets and Wi-Fi to assist unemployed youth to find job opportunities.

Honourable Speaker, bursaries provide opportunities to our young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, to have equal access to higher education. This is a lifetime opportunity that gives them the chance to change their life circumstances. We will continue to provide bursaries to deserving students.

As we begin to open the doors of learning for all, we will increase our higher education funding subsidy. Bursaries provide an opportunity, particularly to the youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, to have equal access to higher education. This is a lifetime opportunity that gives them the chance to change their life circumstances.

At national level, government has started with the provision of free higher education to deserving students. As stated in the last State of the Province Address, we will also provide bursaries to qualifying youth as part of our contribution to these national efforts.

Between 2009 and 2018, nine thousand, nine hundred and seventy-six young people benefited from our bursary scheme. Of these, seven hundred and eighty-two

completed their studies and are employed. Two thousand, seven hundred and twenty-three have completed their studies and are yet to find employment.

Rona re le mmuso re qetile wa rona mosebetsi ka ho fana ka ditjhelete tsa di basari ho etsa bonnete hore re hlahisa batho ba nang le tsebo le bokgoni ba mesebetsi e fapaneng.

Re ipiletsa ho lona bo rakgwebo (private sector) ho hlahisa mesebetsi bakeng sa batjha bana ba seng ba qetile dithuto tsa bona.

We also have nine hundred and twenty-one students currently studying in countries such as China, Germany, India, Cuba, Portugal, Belarus, Bulgaria, Russia and Turkey. Many of these young people are studying medicine, engineering, agriculture and other fields of study that are crucial for the development of the Free State.

Honourable Speaker, our education results are the outcome of our investment in our Early Childhood Development programme. What becomes of our youth is a reflection of our efforts at the early stages of their development. As President Ramaphosa said,

“We also need to massively expand Early Childhood Development because improving the prospects of young people at an early age means that we’re laying a firm foundation for our children to have a better chance in the future.”

We have one hundred and three thousand, five hundred thirty-three children in Early Childhood Development centres. In 2018, we upgraded hundred and thirteen centres by providing first aid kits, fire extinguishers and ablution facilities.

Plans to improve the conditions of thirty-two Early Childhood Development centres are currently underway, after which these centres will be fully registered.

In the last financial year, we provided support to fifteen thousand, two hundred and forty-one children at R15 per child per day for two hundred and sixty-four. We realise that this amount is not enough and therefore in the new financial year, we will increase this amount to R17.

As part of the Framework for Skills for a Changing World, we will explore means to introduce technology to children at an early stage. Nowadays, children understand and interact with technology at an early age. We will grow a generation of digital citizens.

Like elsewhere in the country, the Free State will begin with the process to transfer the administration of the Early Childhood Development centres to the Department of Education as per President Ramaphosa’s recent announcement.

Tshebediso e mpe ya dithetefatsi e re ekeletsa bothata ba mahloko bo imetseng profensi ena ya rona. Bana ba rona ba sebedisa dithetefatsi, bo nyaope, matekwane le bo-tike le tshebediso e mpe ya jwala. Boemo bona bo tjhwatla malapa ebile bo eketsa le diketso tse nyarosang tsa botlokotsebe jwalo ka dipolao le dipeto tsa maqheku le bana.

In an attempt to empower and address the many challenges facing them, two hundred and seventy-seven youth participated in various youth camps. We similarly supported three hundred and thirty-five youth structures.

This year, we will open a Substance Abuse Treatment Centre in Botshabelo. This will be a state-run facility to provide treatment and rehabilitation to those who abuse and are dependent on substances. We are committed to rid our streets of all kinds of drugs.

We are convinced that taverns that operate close to our schools and churches contribute to societal ills amongst young people. No taverns will be allowed to operate near our schools and churches. We will work closely with municipalities and law enforcement agencies to ensure that this happens.

There are four hundred and sixty-nine Social Workers, which in terms of the norms and standards, we still need additional sixty-five. This means that, one Social Worker is required for a community of ten thousand, according to the norms and standards. This financial year, we will make sure that we employ more Social Workers to meet the required norms and standards

There are one hundred and fifty-two older persons residing in our Thekolohelong, Boiketlong and Botshabelo Old Age homes. We are also funding one hundred and seventy-nine Community Based Care Centres with five thousand, eight hundred and fifty-six older persons.

To parents, adoption is a source of joy and parental fulfilment. To children, adoption provides a home, builds a sense of belonging, and offers much needed love and care.

By law, our Social Workers are now allowed to conduct adoption services. Twelve Social Workers have been trained and registered as Adoption Social Workers. We will still encourage communities to adopt rather than foster children to ensure that children belong to a family, and have identity and stability.

Honourable Speaker, we now have thirty-two hospitals and two hundred and twenty-three clinics. Eight hundred and eighty-four doctors and six thousand, six hundred fifty-seven nurses manage these health facilities.

Considering our high burden of disease, we need to recruit four hundred and fifty-seven more doctors and one thousand, seven hundred and ten more nurses. We will fill vacancies with doctors and nurses that are now in training in various institutions.

If we have unemployed nurses that are qualified, we also encourage them to apply.

To improve our facilities, major improvements will be done in the following hospitals:

- Parys Hospital
- Moroka Hospital

We will also officially open the following hospitals that have been upgraded:

- Fezi Ngubentombi Hospital in Sasolburg

- Mafube Hospital in Frankfort

Similar major improvements will be done in the following clinics in the province:

- Dinaane Clinic in Thaba Nchu
- Riebeeckstad Clinic in Welkom
- Rheederpark Clinic in Welkom
- Intabazwe Clinic in Harrismith
- Rouxville Clinic in Rouxville

Upgrades will also be done in the following clinics:

- Tshepong Clinic in Verkeedevlei
- OR Tambo Clinic in Virginia
- Kgotsong Clinic in Bothaville
- Pax Clinic in Viljoenskroon
- Seeisoville Clinic in Kroonstad
- Westdene Clinic in Bloemfontein
- Fauna Clinic in Bloemfontein
- Harry Gwala Clinic in Botshabelo
- Bakenpark Clinic in Bethlehem
- Lesedi Clinic in Harrismith
- Sekamotho Clinic in Qwaqwa
- Matlakeng Clinic in Zastron
- Phahameng Clinic in Frankfort
- Bophelong Clinic in Allendridge

Mmuso o hlokometse diphepetso tse tobanang le bakudi dipetlele tsa rona, jwalo ka mane Pelonomi, Bongani, Manapo le tse ding. Ke tokelo ya mokudi ho fumantshwa ditshebeletso tse nepahetseng hotswa basebeletsing ba setjhaba.

Re le mmuso re tla etsa bonnete ba hore re behella tjhelete ka thoko ho reka disebediswa dipetlele jwalo ka dikobo, dilakane, meriana le dihlokwa tse sebediswang ke dingaka le manese. Dipetlele di tlamehile ho hlweka, mme re kgutlisetse seriti sa bakudi.

We have adopted the triple 90 Strategy to be attained by 2020. With this Strategy, we want to ensure that 90 percent of people living with HIV know their status. Ninety percent of those who know their status are initiated on Ante-retroviral medication. Another 90 percent of those on Ante-retrovirals should be virologically suppressed.



Three hundred and fifty-one thousand, one hundred and twenty-nine adults in the province are living with HIV and AIDS. Two hundred and twenty-seven thousand, nine hundred and thirty-four know their status. Two hundred and forty-five thousand are on Ante-retrovirals. The HIV status of one hundred and forty-one thousand, two hundred and sixty-seven is virally suppressed.

We are proud of the declining elimination of Mother to Child Transmission rate, which dropped from 1.3 percent in 2014/15 to 1.1 percent in the second quarter of 2018/19.

The frequency of antenatal visits by pregnant women before twenty weeks has improved from 58.6 percent in 2014/15 to 65 percent in 2018/19. The antenatal care visits rose from four to five, thereby improving the quality of health care provided to pregnant mothers.

Deaths rate in children under 1 year has decreased from 14.4 to 10.9 per 1 000 live births in the 2014/15 financial year and in the 2018/19 financial year, respectively. In the same period, mortality due to acute malnutrition has fallen from 12.2 percent to 7.4 percent.

Cases of diarrheal fatality in children under five years have decreased from 4 percent to 1.6 percent. We also recorded maternal mortality decline from 192.2 to 178.2 per 100 000.

Honourable Speaker, we are going to build a Trauma Centre in Villiers to take care of N3 road accident casualties this financial year.

We will also improve the provision of our Emergency Medical Services. This will include the appointment of more staff and distribution of ambulances to towns where they are not available. We only had eighty-six ambulances and last year we procured an additional sixty. These sixty new ambulances will be distributed as follows:

- Fourteen Mangaung
- Seven Xhariep
- Thirteen Fezile Dabi
- Ten Lejweleputswa
- Sixteen Thabo Mofutsanyana

Selemong sena re tla reka di ambulance tse ding hape tse mashome a mahlano. Moo ho senang ditlilini re tla romella di mobile clinics. Ha jwale re na le mobile clinics tse mashome a mararo a metso e robong diterekeng tsa rona. Re rekile tse ding tse ntjha tse mashome a mabedi mafelong a lemo se fetileng. Selemong sena re tla reka tse ding hape tse mashome a mabedi.

Motsamaisi wa Dipuisano, re tshwenyehile haholo ka dipolao tsa bo mme le bana. Foreisetata feela selemong sena se fetileng, 187 ya bomme ba bolauwe ke baratuwa ba bona.

Re re ho lekane ka tlhekefetso le dipolao tsa bomme le bana. Ena ke koduwa. Re utlwile ho lekane. Re kekebe ra dumella ketso tsena tse swabisang re le mmuso.

Re tla sebetsa ka thata ho etsa bonnete ba hore baetsi ba diketso tsena tse mpe ba fumana dikahlolo tse hodimo. Re tla eketsa le manane a ho fedisa diketso tsena.

As the President announced, we will work together with the other spheres of government to implement the decisions of the Gender-Based Summit, including the National Strategic Plan on the fight against Gender- Based Violence. We will also continue to support the Thuthuzela Care Centres and Victim Empowerment Centres.

Honourable Speaker, social cohesion is a catalyst to nation-building. A nation driven by a common sense of purpose to build South Africa together. To celebrate things that unite us and discard those that divide us. Without this, no unified sense of purpose that connects us to each other as South Africans will ever be realised.

Our social cohesion intents therefore embed inclusion, equality, human rights, fairness and a shared sense of purpose. After all, we are one nation united in our diversity.

One of the most significant ways of building a nation is through sport. It is for that reason Honourable Speaker that this year we will start with the phased-in renovation of Charles Mopeli Stadium in Maluti-a-Phofung to serve as a world-class sporting venue and the home of Free State Stars.

Re ikemiseditse re le mmuso wa Foreisetata ho kgutlisetsa setumo sa dipapadi Maluti-a-Phofung le ho matlafatsa moruo wa sebaka.

Last year in September, the Free State hosted the twenty-first edition of the Mangaung African Cultural Festival (MACUFE) under the theme, "Kaofela Re Moo." This is one of the biggest festivals on the African continent, if not globally. It connects us with each other, help us embrace our diversity and provide memories that last a lifetime.

The Economic Impact Study undertaken by the University of the Free State shows that MACUFE generates almost ninety-one million rands for the local economy and attracts about eighteen thousand visitors into the province.

In the short space of time that MACUFE was held last year in Bloemfontein, six hundred and eighty-two employment opportunities were created.

Honourable Speaker, since 2009, we have built fifty-seven thousand, nine hundred and fifty-four RDP houses in the province. We also built one thousand and thirty-seven community residential units, and one thousand, and three social housing units.

Two informal settlements in Fezile Dabi, another two in Thabo Mofutsanyana and one in Lejweleputswa have been upgraded with top structures. Another fourteen informal settlements have been upgraded with internal services.

We will this financial year deliver six hundred Community Residential Units and one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine Social Housing units.

Of the planned twelve thousand, eight hundred and thirty-four service sites, one thousand, eight hundred and ninety sites have been completed. We further plan to deliver four thousand, six hundred and five housing units.

Bohlokwa ba hoba le ntlo eo e leng ya hao ka molao ke hore e fana ka seriti le boleng. Ke ka hoo re itlammeng ho potlakisa phano ya mangolo a ditsha le matlo bathong.

We set to register eighteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty-eight Title Deeds. Four thousand, seven hundred and seventy-five Title Deeds have been registered and issued to our people in our ongoing programme.

The processes of township establishment in Sasolburg and Estoire in Mangaung are ongoing. These initiatives have the potential of creating over seven thousand and three thousand and eight hundred housing units, respectively.

Four thousand, two hundred and nineteen sites with infrastructure will in the next coming three years be made available in Xhariep. Another six hundred and thirty-four sites in Thabo Mofutsanyana, two thousand two hundred and sixty in Fezile Dabi and one thousand three hundred and twenty-three in Lejweleputswa will also be made available. One thousand four hundred sites have been earmarked for Mangaung.

Included in our business plan for the coming financial years is our ongoing efforts to complete the construction of one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-two incomplete houses located primarily in Mangaung, Matjhabeng and Lejweleputswa.

Re batla ho etsa bonnete ba hore bohle bao e leng hore matlo a bona ha a so qetwe ho ahwa, ho kenyeletsa le masole a rona a tokoloho, ba fumana thuso.

Re kopa hore le letsetse dinomorong tse na tsa mohala ho fumana ditlhakisetso: 051-403 3379 or 051- 403 3392.

We are pleased about the soon to be established Human Settlement Development Bank as stated by President Ramaphosa during his recent State of the Nation Address.

Using primarily the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme, we will utilise the Human Settlement Development Bank to increase our housing provision for particularly first-time homebuyers who fall within the affordable gap market category.

### **On Economic Transformation**

Honourable Speaker, we can never overstate the need for accelerated inclusive economic growth and job creation as critical to our economic transformation priorities.

Re ya tseba hore tlhokeho ya mesebetsi e tliisa bofuma ebile e fedisa botsitso naheng. Batho ba ya nyahama, ba lahle tshepo mmusong.

Ke ka hoo re tla kenya tshebetsong meralo e mengata ho lwantsha le ho fedisa leqeme la mesebetsi. Re ya tshepa hore diporojeke le manane a rona a ho thusa setjhaba ho ipulela dikgwebo a tla hlahisa dikgeo tse ngata tsa mesebetsi.

Through our Expanded Public Works Programme, for the 2018/19 financial year, we created eighteen thousand, eight hundred and ninety-seven jobs.

Employment creation prospects for the youth appears similarly encouraging. Through our Community Development Programme, we created six hundred and eighty-two job opportunities for young people and three hundred and ninety-six for women.

Honourable Speaker, in the financial year 2019/20 we will create fifty-two thousand job opportunities. Of these, twenty-eight thousand, six hundred will benefit women. Another twenty-eight thousand, six hundred will benefit the youth and one-thousand and forty will benefit people living with disability.

Our grass cutting job creation programme benefitted six-hundred and eighty-two young people and two hundred and forty-four women.

Honourable Speaker, we pledged in the last year to construct and maintain critical roads. What is pleasing is that we completed the construction and maintenance of the following roads and centre during 2018/19:

- R700 road between Hoopstad and Bultfontein
- R707 road between Senekal and Marquard
- R26 road between Bethlehem and Reitz
- R727 road between Bothaville and Kroonstad
- R702 road between Dewetsdorp and Wepener
- Trompsburg Transport Centre

In addition to these, in the 2019/20 financial year, the following ten projects will be implemented in various towns as part of our revitalisation of our townships:

- Cornelia Access Road
- Thaba Nchu Public Transport Route
- Zastron Access Road
- Jacobsdal Transport Route
- Memel Access Road
- QwaQwa Route 4
- Upgrading of Harrismith Internal Route
- Grass Cutting
- Road Signs

Not only will these projects contribute to skills development, but also improve road infrastructure and access to basic services. It is expected that more than five thousand, six hundred jobs will be created through these projects.

The following roads will be build in this financial year:

- Villiers – Cornelia Road
- Reitz – Tweeling – Frankfort Road
- Kroonstad – Viljoeskroon Road
- Winburg- Marquard Road
- Ventersburg – Senekal Road
- Jacobsdal Trans Route

It is expected that five thousand jobs will be created as part of this process.

We will continue to provide affordable and accessible public transport to the poor. Government will subsidise public transport for more than twenty-two thousand commuters daily through Contracted Bus Services. Again, we will transfer the scholar transport function to the Department of Education this year.

Knowing how important is education for our youth, a scholar transport will similarly be provided to eight thousand, six hundred learners in the province.

Honourable Speaker, The Free State Development Corporation concluded eighteen new commercial and industrial lease contracts that are below ten million rands with various tenants, creating nine hundred jobs.

Forty-eight percent of Blacks and 52 percent of Whites are benefiting from our commercial property portfolio. On average, this means that over nine million rands is paid to Black landlords in rentals on a monthly basis.

In 2018, one thousand, four hundred and seven unemployed youth benefitted from our skills development initiatives. In addition, one thousand, eight hundred and twenty-seven unemployed graduates were beneficiaries of this programme. Of these, seven hundred and eighty-two are enrolled in learnership programmes.

We pledge to place three thousand, one hundred and thirty-seven young people in different programmes to prepare them for life in the work place.

Another two thousand, two hundred and fifty youth will be placed in graduate internship programmes. All these programmes would have not been possible without the support of the Sector Education and Training Authorities.

Skills programme in welding, building, construction and mixed farming for one thousand, five hundred youth have started. Ten enterprises have been trained in Sao Paulo in Brazil in automotive vehicle maintenance and metal mechanics.

Honourable Speaker, the Department of Trade and Industry has upgraded both the Botshabelo and QwaQwa Industrial Parks, which were launched in 2017/18 and 2018/19, respectively.

The second phase of revitalisation has been approved and will start in March 2019 in Botshabelo. The application for Phuthaditjhaba second phase and Thaba Nchu first phase have been submitted to The Department of Trade and Industry.

The biggest employer at Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Park is SA Clothing. It employs one thousand, three hundred people, and 90 percent of these are women. Sasko Pioneer Foods employs two hundred and twenty people comprised of women and youth. Bibi Cash and Carry employs eight hundred people and 90 percent are women.

Overall, eight thousand, seven hundred and forty-four jobs have been created in Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Park as part of the revitalisation process.

On the other hand, with one hundred and forty-four factories, the Botshabelo Industrial Park employs eight thousand, seven hundred and twenty-five full-time and eight-hundred part-time workers.

The biggest employer is Supreme Poultry with one thousand, one hundred employees followed by Cherry Moss Trade with four hundred and two employees. Caldeira Asset Trust Group has three hundred and fifty-four employees.

When operational, these Industrial Parks will serve as economic hubs producing different products such as textile, plastic, electrical goods, and food products

The revitalisation program has created a sense of security and this has led to about 5 percent increase in the number of tenants. Employment has also increased with extra three hundred and fifty and five hundred and sixty jobs created in Botshabelo and Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Parks, respectively.

Mekutu ena e bontsha maikemisetso a rona re le mmuso ho fedisa leqeme la mesebetsi, bofuma le ho selekalekaneng ha maemo a bophelo. Re leboha dikhampani ka matsete a tsona. Hona ho a re kgothatsa.

Re tla etsa ka hohle hore re rutluetse dikhampani tse ding hore le tsona ditle ho tlo tsetela mona profensing ya rona.

Re kopile dimasepala ho re etsetsa dipalopalo tsa beng ba dispaza shopo makeisheng a rona, hore na ke tsa bomang le hore na dimolaong.

In order to boost the investment drive, we will develop an Investment Book. The Book will provide an analysis of the Free State economy and detail investment opportunities. This will include information on doing business in the province.

To augment this, we will establish the Premier's Economic Advisory Council to help boost economic growth and development. Working closely with the President's

investment team, the Council will be made up of experts and qualified individuals whose names will be announced soon.

Honourable Speaker, we profoundly believe in President Cyril Ramaphosa's message in his address to the recent Investing in African Mining Indaba when he said that,

“Mining in South Africa is a sunrise industry”

We share this vision, as we are endowed with the largest gold reserves in the Free State. As a result, programmes to support small-scale miners to take part in this sector will be initiated this year. This will entail the development of an Integrated Plan for the Revitalisation of the Depressed Mining Towns.

Tourism remains an important sector of our economy. In the period between April and June last year, we recorded three hundred and thirty thousand, six hundred and nine arrivals in the province with four hundred and ninety-two million amount spent.

We will increase our market share of the province as the preferred tourism destination.

We will continue to upgrade our resorts and reserves. Alternative investment strategies will be explored to upgrade some of our resorts such as Jim Fouche and Fika Patso.

Honourable Speaker, growing South Africa together will require growing our agricultural sector. For us, agriculture remains one of our key economic drivers.

Not only is the agricultural sector important for food security, rural development, but also has a significant potential for high labour absorption rate. There is therefore an urgent need to expand and diversify the agricultural sector in the province.

To maximise its benefits, the Provincial Government will implement an Agricultural Master Plan, which identify many commodities meant to stimulate desired growth.

Re batla ho kgothaletsa bomme le batjha ho kena temong ka sekgahla se seholo. Hona hotla etsa hore ha lenane la ntlafatso le phano ya mobu le phethahatswa, ba be ba le malala a laotswe. Ho bohlokwa haholo hore ba ikakgele ka setotswana ho tsa temo.

Since the future belongs to the youth, we want to see them contribute to the agricultural future growth of the province. Skills development is our first step towards this goal.

Up to now, one hundred and forty-two young people obtained their diplomas at Glen Agricultural College. Agricultural skills development was provided to six thousand, four hundred and sixteen recipients from developing farming communities.

We offered one hundred and seventy-five unemployed graduates with the opportunity to study abroad. Nineteen obtained their Masters qualifications. While six have been

placed for permanent employment in the Provincial Government, another thirteen are part of the 2-year Unemployed Graduates Placement Programme.

Honourable Speaker, the national Department of Agriculture has allocated over ten million rands to the Free State to appoint hundred and twenty unemployed graduates for work experience in agricultural enterprises for two years. Fifty-one farms will take part in this programme.

This year we will establish a goat farming project that will provide training for young entrepreneurs in this field. An export market has already been identified.

Last year, we committed to commercialise black farmers with a target of nearly two hundred and fifty black commercial farmers by the end of 2021/22.

The seriousness with which we consider the creation of black commercial farmers is evident in the establishment of the AgriBEE Charter Council to support commercial agribusiness and transform this sector in the province.

We welcome the trial by our Bothaville farmers to plant sweet sorghum. The success of this project will assist with job creation in the province.

Honourable Speaker, the operations of the Vrede Integrated Dairy Project have now been vested with the Provincial Government. We will work closely with all role players to ensure that farming operations on this farm become sustainable and that the community of Vrede fully take part in this project.

For too long, women were marginalised and excluded from the mainstream economy. Things are different now. We have increased efforts to redress these imbalances, particularly in the agricultural sector. The results are promising.

The Female Entrepreneur Awards programme was introduced to support women in the sector. Ms Beauty Mokoena, a young female farmer, was a nominee for Female Entrepreneur Awards in 2018 and was offered an opportunity to visit China and attend a seminar on Modern Agric-Economy Management for Developing Countries in 2018.

Over the years, our province has been affected by drought. This has had adverse impact on this sector and reduced our ability to produce food. The effect is also social and environmental, just as much as it is economical. There is increasing water shortage, fierce floods and raging fires.

In mitigating the current drought, we have requested the national government to declare the Free State as a drought disaster area. We look forward to a favourable response.

Agbare Speaker, ek het verlede week 'n nood vergadering met die boere in Bultfontein in die Lejweleputswa distrik gehad om hierdie ramp te bespreek. Ek was aangenaam verras om die samewerking tussen swart en wit boere te beleef.

Ek wil 'n beroep doen op al die boere in die Vrystaat om hande te vat gedurende hierdie moeilike tyd. Ons het besluit om 'n taakspan saam te stel om verdere



beplanning te doen sodat ons boere die nodige hulp kan kry.

Ek het ook die LUR van Landbou opdrag gegee om dringend tydelike oplossings te beplan en te implementeer.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has been granted approval by its national sister department to use thirteen million, five thousand rands on drought relief projects. The funds will be used for drilling and development of forty-five boreholes and restoration of thirty-five earth dams throughout the province.

### **On Peace and Security**

Honourable Speaker, we have an obligation to ensure that all people in South Africa are and feel safe. This responsibility includes the fight against corruption and state capture in the province. This declaration is no coincidence. Security is a public good.

Development can only thrive in a secure and safe environment. Insecurity in all its varied forms threaten human security of citizens. It creates instability and reverse the gains of democracy. In fact, the National Development Plan urges us to ensure that,

“By 2030, people living in South Africa should feel safe and have no fear of crime.”

The province has about eleven thousand police officials. In an effort to enhance policing, three hundred and twenty-nine new members were received in December 2018. This month, one hundred and eighty-one new recruits will be admitted to the Police College.

Motsamisi wa Dipuisano, re maswabi ka ho ba le mapolesa a hlokahetseng mosebetsing selemong sena. Re inamisa dihloho tsa rona ho fana ka hlomphe ka boitelo ba mapolesa a latelang:

- Constable March
- Captain Tshabalala
- Constable Nkala
- Warrant Officer Kutamane
- Constable Mekgoe
- Warrant Officer Mlambo

Re isa matshidiso ho malapa le basebetsi-mmoho a mapolesa ana a seng a re sile.

In strengthening service delivery, one hundred and sixty-seven new vehicles were received between January 2019 and February 2019. Another one hundred and sixty-seven will be delivered before the end of the financial year. These vehicles will be distributed to various police stations in the province.

Despite these achievements, there are still challenges. Illicit mining in Welkom by the Zama Zamas remains a challenge. With the closure of unused shafts, the Zama

Zamas have now shifted their operations to house robberies and other illegal activities. They are harbouring guns and killing innocent people.

This has become a huge problem and we will engage the President to consider deploying the South African National Defence Force to reinforce security in this area.

Our communities are beset by the scourge of gangsterism. In some instances, gang activities have caused instability and resulted in acts of vigilantism.

What is worrying is that the youth constitutes a large proportion of members of the gangs. This shows the dangers that they face in different stages of their development. Risks include peer pressure, substance abuse and lack of parental guidance.

Interventions by the South African Police Service has however led to remarkable improvements. Gang violence and activities have notably declined. This is attributable to the South African Police Service Turnaround Strategy to fight gangsterism.

Honourable Speaker, the taxi industry is playing an important role in the growth and development of our province. We want to appreciate the cooperation and peace that is prevailing in the taxi industry in our province.

Hona le tletlebo e kgolo ho tswa ho bahlolohadi le dikgutsana tsa bo Raditekesi ka dilaesense tsa ditekesi tseo ba dinketsweng. Ke laetse Lefapha la Dipalangwang ho shebana le taba ena.

I also want to take the opportunity to congratulate our traffic officers for their hard work during the festive season.

### **On Governance Transformation**

Honourable Speaker, our governance objectives are about building a capable and developmental state in accordance with the goals of the National Development Plan. This means building a public service that is capable, stable, effective, integrated, accountable and responsive to the needs of our people.

We are pleased that the President has announced that government will do away with the requirement of work experience for entry positions in government. This will ease the burden on youth who join the public service.

We will never pretend that some of our municipalities are not experiencing challenges that hamper the provision of services to the multitudes of our people.

The high number of complaints and protests in 2018/19 bear testimony to these challenges. Some of these protests were violent as witnessed in QwaQwa, Ladybrand, Koffiefontein, Welkom, Heilbron and other towns. In our analysis, these were mainly due to the failure to communicate with our communities.

We respect the right of our community to protest but we want to condemn criminal elements who hijack genuine community grievances of our people, and instigate and commit serious acts of violence.

We will allocate specific officials to coordinate responses to community concerns. All municipalities will establish complaints management committees. These, together with the use of the web-based complaints and compliments management system, will strengthen our capacity to effectively respond and resolve community concerns.

As per the outcomes of the Local Government Lekgotla held in November 2018, we will this year develop an Implementation Plan of all our resolutions. Envisioned interventions will include improving planning, coordination and support within and between the three spheres of government, and professionalising local government.

We are assisting municipalities to comply with the municipal performance management system. Minimum competency requirements on filling of senior management positions in compliance with the necessary legislations will strictly be effected. We can only do better if we have able and qualified people.

Despite earlier improvements in 2016/17, audit outcomes of municipalities have regressed in 2017/18. To deal with these, Provincial Treasury will assist municipalities that received poor audit outcomes. We will provide support on budgets, supply chain management, internal audit and risk management.

Honourable Speaker, measures have been put in place to limit the impact of service delivery challenges emanating from declining budgets and the prevailing economic pressures, which have resulted in most municipal budgets being unfunded. We are now assisting twelve of the twenty-two municipalities that have cash flow and reporting challenges.

We were hoping that our intervention in Mafube and Masilonyana would have led to the desired outcomes and the Constitutional intervention uplifted. However, there are still persistent challenges, which need our technical support.

We are concerned about the instability in Maluti-a-Phofung. We are hopeful that the current political impasse will be resolved. We are also concerned about sustainable provision of water and electricity in this area. We are working with the team that Minister Mkhize has put together to resolve these challenges.

Batho ba rona ba lla ka diswiritjhi tse mathang diterateng, ditshila dimasepaleng tsa rona, mabakete a sa thotweng, ditsela tse sa tsamaeheng, metsi a siyo dipompong, metlakase e wang feela le thlokeho ya ditsha.

Re ikemiseditse ho thusana le dimasepala tsa rona ho lwantsha mathata ana a ba tobileng. Ke se ke hlomme sehlopha sa dihloho tsa mafapha se etelletsweeng pele ke molaodi kakaretso, ho sebetsa le batsamaisi ba dimasepala ho lokisa lenane le tlamang le tla lokisa mathata ana.

Motsamaisi wa Dipuisano, Marena a rona a bohlokwa kgodisong ya temokrasi ya rona. Ka hona, re batla ho bona ba bapala karolo ya bohlokwa e ntshetsang setjhaba sa rona pele.

Mmuso wa setjhaba o ananela karolo ya bohlokwa eo marena a rona a e bapalang haholoholo metseng ya selehlae. Re tshepisa Marena a rona hoba fa tshehetso ya disebediswa ho pheta mosebetsi ona wa bohlokwa.

Re motlotlo ha e le mona re ile ra hlomamisa Morena e Moholo, Moremoholo Motebang Mopeli wa Bakoena ba Mopeli, selemong se fitileng ka selemo sa Mphalane. Morena setjhaba ke seo, se buse ka toka le ka hlomphe!

Traditional leaders will in terms of Section 81 of the Municipal Structures Act take part in the processes of Municipal Councils of Mangaung, Maluti-a-Phofung and Phumelela. All the necessary support will be provided as they execute this role.

We will establish local Houses of Traditional Leaders in Thabo Mofutsanyana and Mangaung. This year, the conferment of powers to the Barolong boo Seleka Council to perform functions of a Local House will take place.

Honourable Speaker, nothing is more important to us than fiscal stability.

We have now decided to review our procurement plans and commitments with an intent to scale-down. We also introduced cost containment measures, which included the review of our performance targets.

Bobodu ba ditjhelete bo nyehlisa phano ya ditshebeletso setjhabeng. Maikemisetso a rona ke ho lwantsha le ho fedisa bobodu ka hohle hohle. Re ipiletsa setjhabeng ho tlaleha bobodu moo ba bonang teng.

We have established Risk Management and Internal Audit committees in government departments and entities to identify weaknesses and minimise risks.

Some of our initiatives include the implementation of Fraud Prevention and Detection Plans. Starting in 2014/15, twenty-two officials were trained as Certified Fraud Examiners. Another twelve officials will this year be trained.

We want to insist that all spheres of government must ensure that all legitimate and verified invoices are paid within thirty days. This is the only way that we can sustain Small and Medium Enterprises.

Honourable Speaker, as Amilcar Cabral warned, we should

“Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.”

By no means are these successes easy victories. They are borne of the hard work of the ANC government. These are no lies. They are the truth demonstrated by our deeds arising out of our difficulties, failures and successes. For one hundred and seven 107 years, the ANC has carried the hopes of the people. As we head towards the elections on the 8th of May this year, we will continue to carry our people’s mandate. For we know our job has only just begun. Inde lendlela. We still have a long way to go.

I want to urge all the political parties to work together with us. We all believe in service to our people. We all cherish our democracy. We believe in a better future for our people. Without belief in these values, there will be no purpose for this House to exist.

What we need is unity of purpose and belief in a better future that lies ahead of us. My doors are open to all political parties for us to work together to build our democracy.

Honourable Speaker, as I conclude, none of these achievements would have been possible without the determination, courage, dedication and hard work of many individuals, organisations and importantly, the people of the Free State.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to sincerely thank you. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your wisdom. Thank you for your patience. Thank you for your kindness. Thank you for your time. Thank you for always believing in the ANC government.

I Thank You.

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