

**REMARKS BY THE PREMIER OF THE PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL HIS EXCELLENCY SENZO MCHUNU DURING THE SITTING OF THE PROVINCIAL LEGSLATURE**

**NGISANA GROUND, ENDUMENI MUNICIPALITY**

**22 OCTOBER 2013**

Madam Speaker

I rise to express my appreciation to the members of this house who have attended this important Session of the Provincial Legislature.

Since we attained democracy, this democratic government has used all organs of the state to ensure that citizens feel part of the process of the creation of a better life for all.

The **KwaZulu-Natal Legislature's** role of legislation, oversight and representation are intended to provide the basis for the accountability to the constituencies.

The **KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet** has an important task of formulating a programme of action of the government in relation to service delivery.

By virtue of being located at the coal face, the **Municipal Councils** are strategically placed to speed up service delivery and add meaning to the word democracy.

Therefore, Honourable Members, we are gathered here today to inculcate and promote the habit of firm consideration to the plight of the electorates.

As a democratic government, we are here to account to our people who exercised their democratic role of electing their own representatives. Failure to account to the electorates will manifest itself into service delivery protests that we have seen mushrooming across the country over the past few years.

We, as elected members of who represent the will of the people must always look at ourselves and assess the impact of government programs.

Taking Parliament to the People is a democratic programme that will ensure that we are not remote from society and from the ordinary man and woman in the street.

I have always stated that during the fight for liberation there was an ongoing interaction with ordinary people. There was a sense that those who were elected into leadership positions understood the plight of the ordinary people and something drastic was being done to deal with their plight.

As public representatives, we must ensure that our people are not disconnected from the processes that will ensure that they participate in the process that will ensure that there is speed in the delivery of basic services to them.

The needs of our society have changed immensely since we achieved democracy and therefore, we must continuously improve our roles as elected representatives to keep up with change. Cabinet's Operation Sukuma Sakhe seeks to address the needs of society holistically. OSS is aimed at ensuring that the government of the day becomes more relevant to people and that all institutions of states are able to address the need of various communities.

The Honourable Members of this House are expected, at all times, to play a vigorous oversight role over government departments to ensure accountability in the use of taxpayers' money and to institute necessary interventions for the acceleration of service delivery. An effective oversight will be achieved when we are in regular contact with the electorates and when we are able to respond with speed to the issues that are raised.

Madam Speaker, in 2009 the people of this province asked of us to usher in new beginnings. Today we can truly claim we have given our province that fresh start.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> August we had an opportunity to evaluate government's programme of action in line with our objectives of eradicating poverty and also plan for the remaining few months during this term of office. The Legkotla was attended by mayors from across the province. We invited the mayors because we wanted to ensure alignment in our planning.

It is important to reflect on our achievements as we move forward.

### **Human Settlement**

This morning we handed over 500 houses to 500 households in Ward 17, in Nquthu as part of Ngolokodo Rural Housing Project. This project cost government more than R36 million.

There are other projects with a total value of about R80 million which are due for completion. These include:-

1. Vulamehlo Project at Khiphinkunzi with 500 houses
2. Ngolokodo/Nkade at Molefe with 500 houses
3. Luvisi Housing Project with 500 houses
4. Masotsheni/Jabavu project with 500 houses

Since 2009 we have produced more than 85 733 housing units with urban and rural spread, as well as upgraded more than 6 386 units in the slum clearance programme.

To address the gap market, we have made a further 19422 units available through the Enhanced Extended Discount Benefit Scheme Refurbishment. Our project-linked subsidies have made it possible for another 16 142 units to be provided. This year we aim to provide more than 2500 subsidies for middle income earners. Numerous jobs have been created during the construction of these houses.

### **Electricity**

We are moving with speed to ensure the electrification of houses in Umzinyathi District Municipality. More than 7000 houses have been electrified in Umzinyathi since 2009 in areas such as Mfongomfongo, Mashesheleni, Sandlwana Ndatshana, Ngedla, Mbewunye and others.

We are finalizing the electrification of the following homestead:

- 897 homestead in Ward 14
- 300 homestead in Ogazini and Ngwebini
- 1000 homestead in Ward 1
- 900 homestead in Ward 15
- 245 homestead in Ward 5

In 2009 (March) 74.16% of households in the province had access to electricity (household connection). In 2012, this had risen to 76.69%.

Projects are in the process of construction to provide a further 8 725 consumers with an electricity connection across the province. These will

be completed by 2014 at a cost of approximately R240 million. With a total of almost 22 000 connections, the "island" eradication programme will be completed in 2015/16.

## **Water and Sanitation**

We are fully aware as government that the majority of our people do not have access to water.

This morning we unveiled a water provision project that will benefit 5000 people in Statford Farm and surrounding areas. The total cost for the project is R17 million.

Regional Bulk Infrastructure Projects, including construction of dams, are under way with a total value of R2.183 billion. This will provide our people with an assured supply of potable water, resulting in more than 3631 direct jobs during construction.

Included in these are the following schemes which have progressed very well: Mooi-Mngeni Transfer and Raising of Hazelmere Dam to be completed in this financial year; the Lower Thukela augmentation and Mkomaz-Mngeni and Mvoti River.

I wish to announce that the President of the Republic His Excellency J.G Zuma will visit this province over the next few weeks to officially launch this multibillion rand project that will ensure that the people of this province have access to water.

In 2009 (March) 78.3% of households in the province had access to piped water within 200 meters of their dwelling (or higher level of service). By 2012, this had risen to 83.47%. The backlog remaining is approximately 400 000 households. The Census 2011 dataset indicates 86% access. This includes households with access to piped water in excess of 200 metres from the dwelling.

Honorable Members I am calling upon all of us to collectively strengthen service delivery. These achievements I have highlighted are a clear indication that Together We can Do More.

As government we are investing money towards the prioritizing the rehabilitation of small rural towns to ensure that we attract investments and provide services for communities and stem migration to bigger cities in search of job opportunities and a better life.

Through the Department of Co-Operative Governance, government has produced the Small Town Rehabilitation Programme, which contains plans for each of the towns, clearly indicating areas for industrial development,

commercial and business activities and areas for human settlement in each town. It also indicates what level of services communities must expect from each town or municipal council.

As guided by the Small Town Rehabilitation Programme, government made **an MTEF allocation of R244m** towards developing towns such as Umsinga, Umvoti, Weenen, Nquthu, Dundee and others

We want to bring development to these areas and ensure that well-paying job opportunities attract people such as engineers, pharmacists, accountants, education and health professionals from major cities to live in rural areas.

### **National Health Insurance**

Honourable Members, the provincial government is making good progress towards the introduction of the National Health Insurance system.

Our determination to ensure our readiness was demonstrated through the establishment of pilot sites in Amajuba, Umgungundlovu and Umzinyathi District Municipality. Government decided to introduce NHI to improve access to quality healthcare for the people who were previously marginalized especially those in rural areas.

Since Umzinyathi was identified as a pilot site, I wish to report madam speaker that the Chief Executive Officers of various hospitals including top management have received advanced management training. We are training hospital boards, clinic committees and various stakeholders that are involved in the provision of quality healthcare.

The assessment of all facilities in terms of compliance with the national core standards have been conducted and the average scores for the District hospital is 68% and average score for primary health clinics was 58.7%.

We are also renovating hospitals and clinics as part of our programme aimed at investing on social infrastructure. The Paediatric and TB Wards are under construction at Church of Scotland Hospital.

The construction of a new Out-Patient Department Clinic and Pharmacy area has been completed at Greytown Specialised Hospital. In addition, the Charles Johnson Memorial Nursing College has been completed.

The Pomeroy, Mkhuphula, Ngabayena, Muden and Msizini clinics are under construction and this is expected to be completed soon.

The construction of Elandskraal, Thathezakhe, Zamimpilo clinics and Manxili TB and Voluntary Counselling and Testing Unit has been completed.

When we fought for our democracy we had a vision to create a caring and compassionate government that ensures to quality healthcare. The introduction of the NHI has enabled us to provide a decent infrastructure that will ensure that our people have access to quality healthcare.

As government we are also focusing the mobilization of community leadership in order to deal with child morbidity and mortality within communities. There are five sites that have been identified as Phila Mntwana Centres in Umzinyathi – Endumeni Ward 4 & 6, Msinga Ward 4, Nquthu Ward 11, Mvoti ward 2. Already more than 60 under five children have been seen.

Cabinet is supporting the efforts of the Department of Health aimed at creating a district team of specialists (obstetrician, paediatrician and advanced midwife) to provide leadership and restore the use of time-tested clinical protocols and rapidly improve the outcome after birth by close supervision in hospitals and clinics.

This is a step that will go down as having been instrumental in turning around the mortality rates of mothers and babies. Targets have been set for the reduction of mortality, guided by the Millennium Development Goals targets set for each district. With this team and other steps indicated there is now a basis to expect the mortality rate to change.

### **Meeting with Vulnerable Groups**

**Honourable Members**, later in the afternoon, I will meet with communities coming from various parts of the district.

It is unfortunate that we assemble together here under the dark cloud of an unprecedented increase in reports of the abuse – both physical and sexual – and increase in violence perpetrated against the most vulnerable members of our society – children and women.

We wish to take this opportunity to sound the clarion call for all elected representatives of government to pull out all stops and do all in their power to engage their constituencies in an effort to seriously address the issue of restoration of the moral fibre of our society in these extremely challenging times.

It is time that each and every one of us gathered here today began personalizing this very important challenge. We need to all of us ask ourselves as parents, uncles, aunts, grandparents, brothers, sisters etc.,

this one vital question: What if this abuse happened to a person that I am close to, a person that I love? What would be my reaction then?

We believe that asking these basic questions in an honest manner drives the issue home as it hits the spot closest to the heart, our beloved next of kin. For just about every abused person out there is some people who love and cherish them. So if they are violated as heartlessly as we are witnessing in an increasingly violent atmosphere, how do their loved ones feel? By extension, what do we as a self-proclaimed caring society, intend to do about this. Indeed, this is a call to arms; let everyone one of us responsible and influential people use all our might to engage our communities to awaken them to this scourge which threatens to tear the very fibre of our society to threads right under our watch.

The people have placed their trust and faith in us, so let us not let them down. We have to live up to the reputation that our beloved Tata Madiba has carefully built over many years.

The ANC-led government at all tiers: National, Provincial and Local, has the crucial duty to ensure of bringing about a better life for all South Africans. This is no mere cliché as has often been made of it. When this very important undertaking was adopted by the movement, it was a heartfelt declaration of the determination to lift the downtrodden class of society from the dungeons of poverty, deprivation and ignominy to a state where each and every member of society can lead a decent life free of poverty, deprivation, disease and be imbued with a sense of self-worth with a positive outlook to life and the endless possibilities open to each and every citizen of the Republic of South Africa.

We as elected representatives therefore, bear the responsibility to do our best to see the fruition of this mammoth undertaking.

In KZN province we as an ANC-led government have heeded the wise words of the first President of the democratic government of the Republic, Cde Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, when he said: "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." Thus we extend this pearl of wisdom and say that as a society, how we treat and care for our children, women, the disabled and elderly mirrors the value we attach to the very basic of human rights.

Our government has invested funds in the provision of social infrastructure to increase accessibility by all communities through pension pay points, Thusong, One Stop Development and Household-based Community Development Centres.

Government has consciously increased funding to the non-governmental sector by R300 million for this financial year as we want to build a better

future for our society. The areas for partnership with NGOs include caring for the disabled, senior citizens, orphans and vulnerable children as well as the fight to reduce all social ills.

I thank you