



VOTE 1: OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

POLICY AND BUDGET SPEECH (2017-2018) PRESENTED BY THE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA, MR DD MABUZA, TO THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE AT RIVERSIDE, MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Tuesday, 30 May 2017

A. *Salutations*

Madam Speaker;

Leader of Government Business;

Honourable Members of the Executive Council;

Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Nginyanibengelela, Dumelang, Lotshani, Avuxeni, Ndimacheroni, Molweni, Goeie More, Good Morning!

B. *Context*

1. Once again, we meet to fulfil our constitutional obligation to this august House, by presenting for debate and voting, our plans and budget for the current financial year, as well as our statement to explain how we intend utilising resources allocated to us, for the purpose of delivering on our mandate.
2. Let us for a minute, not forget that five days ago, the people of Africa celebrated the 54th anniversary of the Organisation of African Unity, as well as the 15th Anniversary of the African Union. The birth of this continental body, brought cohesion in the fight against colonialism and apartheid, which led to the independence of the whole continent from colonial rule.
3. When the African Union was launched in 2002, a new direction in the quest for development of the continent and its people became the hallmark of the governance, security and economic architecture of this organization, to ensure that all the people of Africa live in peace, dignity and are afforded economic opportunities to survive and thrive.



4. For this, we are indebted to the visionary leadership of our post-independent Africa, who saw it fit to unite in order for all of us to be free and to live in peace with one another. The likes of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Modibo Keita of Mali, Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Ben Bella of Algeria, Emperor Haile Selasse of Ethiopia, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and many others, remain the iconic figures that shaped the evolution of our independent Africa.
5. As we end this **Africa Month**, let us remember that the formation of this body went beyond the protection of state sovereignty, but equally spoke to the core of issues on the full enjoyment of civil, political and economic freedoms by all the people of Africa.
6. Etched in our collective memory as Africans, is the knowledge that Africa cannot afford to regress to her colonial past of oppression, wars, injustice and the abuse of vulnerable sectors of our society, including our women, children and the disabled.
7. We have a collective responsibility to stop the abduction and murder of girls. We must stop the recruitment of child soldiers in areas of the continent still ravaged by conflict. We must provide opportunities for our children and youth to access opportunities, and realise their full potential as global citizens.
8. Over the past few days, and perhaps weeks, media news reports, including social media, have been full of reports on the disappearances, abductions and sometimes the killing of young women, in certain instances at the hands of their loved ones. We can only imagine the pain and agony that the affected families, who have lost their loved ones through these barbaric acts, are going through.
9. There is no self-respecting society that can allow its fabric, to be undermined in a manner that these acts of gender violence and women abuse, are impacting on the psyche of our young democratic nation.
10. This must be condemned by all of us, but also our condemnation must move beyond words, to practical steps of protecting our young women, and isolating those rotten elements within our communities. We must work together with law enforcement agencies in building safer and secure communities for all of our people.



11. Part of the responsibilities of my Office is to ensure that the provincial government as a whole, responds in a coordinated and targeted manner to the plight of vulnerable sectors of our society.
12. We are focusing on ensuring that government creates opportunities for the youth and women empowerment across all key sectors of the economy, including opportunities that come up as a result of procurement opportunities in government and the private sector.
13. We are working with partners in the government security cluster to implement concrete measures aimed at improving the safety and security of women, children and older persons in our communities. We need to raise awareness to stop gender violence.
14. Working with communities, our criminal justice system must respond decisively to deal with the perpetrators of violence, human trafficking and abuse of older persons.
15. We will continue to do this, not only to ensure that our communities are safe, but also inspired by the pursuit of a better and safer Africa where all her citizens, young and old, can walk freely in the streets without any fear of being abducted, raped, maimed or murdered.
16. This would be befitting to the memory of the founding fathers of the Organisation of African Unity and the African Union. Let us be reminded of the seminal words of the founding Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, Emperor Haile Selasie at the launch of this august organisation, when he said, and I quote:

“Our liberty is meaningless unless all Africans are free. We must align and identify ourselves with all aspects of their struggle. It would be betrayal were we to pay only lip service to the cause of their liberation and fail to back our words with action. To them we say, your pleas shall not go unheeded. The resources of Africa and of all freedom-loving nations are marshalled in your service. Be of good heart, for your deliverance is at hand.” – Unquote

17. As the people of Mpumalanga, we join the millions of our brothers and sisters across the continent, in all of their diverse languages, ethnic groups, cultural practices, religious persuasions, standing in society and across inherited artificial geographic boundaries, as they stand united in celebrating our



pioneering post-independent leaders, who saw the need for unity in order to bring to an end, colonialism and apartheid in our continent.

18. ***Africa must continue to rise in the global community of nations.***
19. As we tackle African development challenges, we must prioritise the development of the youth, so that it plays its rightful place in global geo-political and trade affairs.
20. The youth on the continent must be part of global entrepreneurship and innovation. For this to happen, we must invest in education and skills development for the youth in Africa.
21. As a Province, we are concerned that youth unemployment continues to be a major challenge. We will continue to engage with youth formations to craft and implement practical solutions that advance the development and economic empowerment of our youth.
22. Our private sector partners are on board, as we accelerate skills development programmes targeted at the youth. For instance, our recent engagement with the mining sector industry players has yielded a commitment from the mining companies to fund the establishment of the Skills Hub in eMalahleni.
23. We will continue to mobilise the private sector in supporting artisan development initiatives, funding bursaries and providing opportunities for youth-owned businesses.
24. As the Office, we have developed the **Provincial Youth Development Programme of Action (PoA)** which clearly outlines a number of high impact interventions, to advance youth development and empowerment across all key sectors of government work. We want to partner with the private sector in supporting the dream of every young person in the Province, through the provision of target mentorship and financial support.
25. This year, we will conclude all approval processes and commence with implementation, in partnership with our partners in government and the public sector.



C. *Mandate Focus*

26. Fifty-Four years later, since the birth of the Organisation of African Unity, as the Office of the Premier, in this year - that the African National Congress as the governing party has termed the **Year of Oliver Reginald Tambo**, our duty is to lead efforts that will bring about meaningful change, development and dignity to all our people.
27. In the State of the Province Address, I articulated in detail all government programmes for the year, that take our development and economic growth to the higher level, ensuring that the lives of our people are indeed improved and made better.
28. This year, my Office will continue to focus on improved policy coordination and enhancing implementation capabilities within our government departments, public entities and municipalities. Our inter-department and inter-governmental system of planning and implementation coordination is showing signs of progress and maturity.
29. Focused and coordinated implementation in critical areas of government delivery is evident through our achievements in water and sanitation provision. Our improved coordination in the delivery of priority infrastructure has seen our budget utilisation shifting from consumption to infrastructure investment to build better hospitals, clinics, schools and library facilities.
30. More importantly, we have set up implementation coordination mechanisms to implement the recommendations of the **Report on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Farm Dwellers**. We have appointed a dedicated Project Manager to work with a team that will engage with all key stakeholders, as we implement concrete interventions to improve the quality of life for people living on the farms.
31. Engagements with provincial and national departments for an integrated and well-coordinated response to plight of farm dwellers are already underway. We should, Madame Speaker, in the course of time, be able to come back to this House to report fully on progress that we are making in this area of our coordination work.
32. Within this context, the Office of the Premier remains focused in **creating a public administration environment that supports the Executive Council in driving integrated social development and economic growth**, through effective and efficient governance within applicable legal framework.



33. This year, we will **continue to provide thought leadership to ensure the promotion of good governance, exercise oversight and support to Departments and public entities**, as well as ensuring that management and administrative performance of government is effective and efficient.

D. Strengthening Integrated Planning and institutionalising long-term planning

34. Madame Speaker, at the centre of a well-functioning and effective government, is the unity of purpose, guided by a long-term view of the desired development trajectory.

35. In my State of the Province Address, I mentioned the work that needs to be done on institutionalised long-term planning. Just as a reminder, I said then:

“We have made significant progress in eradicating informal settlements and upgrading existing human settlements. However, we will not succeed in building sustainable human settlements that will stand for generations to come, if our processes are not anchored on long-term planning. Such plans would have to be cognisant of current and future economic development nodes, priority corridors and migration patterns, so that we are able to utilise our resources to create settlements proactively.”

36. In this financial year, we will practically take this process forward by facilitating the process of establishing the ***Mpumalanga Planning Commission***. This Commission will bring together practical, academic and technical expertise and experience from across the sectors of society, as means of ensuring that there is an upward socio-economic trajectory for the Province, based on sound evidence and specialist advice. The **Macro Policy and Planning Branch will provide secretariat services to the Commission** in the course of this critical work.

37. In this regard, the State Law Advisors have **drafted the Mpumalanga Planning Commission Bill** and is currently being processed through structures of the Executive Council. The Bill will be coming to this House for tabling and publication to solicit public comments. Our Legal Advisory Services will continue to provide other professional legal advice, guidance and assistance to the Provincial Government that is constitutionally sound.



E. Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation of Government Work

38. Madame Speaker and Honourable Members, our ability to respond swiftly to community needs and challenges requires the existence of effective and resilient monitoring and evaluation systems across key areas of government delivery.
39. We need to closely monitor the pace and effectiveness of our implementation processes to avoid undue delays in the execution of priority projects.
40. I have been concerned that a number of key strategic projects, mooted in various plans of the Province, have either moved at a slow pace or never got off the ground. Our coordination and monitoring of these strategic projects has been weak, resulting in unnecessary delays.
41. Some infrastructure commitments fall behind schedule, as a result of administrative sluggishness. To address these issues, I announced in the SOPA that we will establish a **Project Coordination Unit**, to be located in the Office of the Premier, to coordinate all flagship projects.
42. This is meant to ensure that effective coordination and speedy implementation of strategic economic projects, that would have greater impact on economic growth, job creation and poverty alleviation, are driven in a coordinated fashion, and where private sector investment is required, Public-Private Partnerships are explored and facilitated.
43. The Office will be finalising the benchmarking exercise with other Provinces that have done a similar exercise. Through this initiative, we will ensure that systematic selection, fast-tracking of infrastructure development, enhanced planning and monitoring of large infrastructure projects are implemented with success.
44. The Office will also utilise the recently established panel of experts from across disciplines in the built environment, to ensure value for money and quality deliverables.
45. Our capacity for infrastructure project tracking and monitoring will also be enhanced by our introduction of an **Integrated Infrastructure Delivery Management System**, which is intended to automate all key processes in the infrastructure delivery value chain, including capabilities to monitor budget expenditure efficiencies across the Administration.



46. Honourable members, our frontline service delivery institutions must be responsive to service delivery concerns by communities. My office will continue to partner with the national Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, on rolling out a programme that monitors the quality of service delivery in our frontline institutions, to ensure that our clinics, hospitals, police stations, and municipal offices provide quality services to the citizens.
47. Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring will continue to provide insight with respect to the **state of service delivery sites** in our communities. To this end, there will be continuous monitoring of improvement plans and continuous interaction with front line service delivery sites.
48. As part of service delivery improvement efforts, we are exploring innovative models to **conduct community-based surveys to gauge citizen feedback** to our programmes; deepen our understanding issues raised by communities; and tailor-make specific programmes from a better informed position. This is important to avoid the 'hit and miss' syndrome in our delivery of government programmes.
49. In this way, our **Executive Council Outreach Programme** is more targeted and focused to align our responses to community feedback and expectations.
50. Alongside all these initiatives, the Office will, this year, **continue with improving performance reporting, oversight, and strengthening accountability across the Province**, as we ensure that there is an integrated approach to implementation and reporting on government-wide programmes.
51. In partnership with the DPME, we will introduce and roll-out an **online performance management system** called **eQPR system**. This system will improve quarterly performance monitoring by ensuring that the annual targets and the quarterly targets, as contained in the approved Annual Performance Plans for each Department, are captured to track progress on a quarterly basis, so as to identify implementation delays and implement corrective remedial steps where required.

F. Increased Efficiency and Improved Service Delivery

52. The effectiveness of government also requires effective management of information and communication technology, as a service delivery enabler, and a strategic resource. The Provincial Government Information Technology Office has developed the **Mpumalanga Provincial ICT Strategy**



which has been approved for implementation. The Office will facilitate the implementation of this strategy across all the Provincial Departments.

53. The **Provincial broadband feasibility study** is currently in its final draft phase, and will be approved during the current financial year. The centralisation of the ICT and the creation of the ICT Hub are currently under development, and will be rolled-out during the current financial year subject, after receiving the necessary National Treasury approvals, in respect of appropriate funding model options.
54. The use of technology must thus not only be limited in enabling government to do its work, but also in improving public participation in government processes. We have over the last financial year, investigated opportunities and partnerships in the ICT sector that will move the Province closer to **e-government business processes**, thus making Mpumalanga a smart province.
55. Going forward, I announced in the State of the Province Address, that we will be implementing, in partnership with Vodacom, a **Smart Citizen Solutions to compliment the work of Operation Vuka Sisebente**. This initiative, aims to create a platform for the citizens of Mpumalanga, to participate in service delivery matters affecting their communities in a manner that empowers them to report any service delivery issue of concern within their communities.
56. Through this, as the Office, we will be able to monitor the turn-around time of our municipalities in responding to people's issues on service delivery. This will assist in pro-actively anticipating pressure points and avert possibilities of service delivery protests. The plan is for the Project to go live by 20 August 2017.

G. Improving Integrated Government Communication

57. Honourable Speaker, our country's progressive constitution mandates us to, and I quote, "**provide the public with timely, accessible and accurate information**", unquote.
58. In essence, it requires us to constantly consult our people, to update them on the strides we are making, in our quest to improve their lives. This is not a favour to them, but an obligation, given that they have put us in government to represent their interests.



59. You could equate them to shareholders in a company, who have appointed government as their board of directors, hence the obligation to always keep in touch with them. They must evaluate our performance, as their representatives hence we are required to dialogue with them on a constant basis.
60. As a democratic and the caring ANC-led government, we must entrench transparency and accountability without failure. In fulfilling this mandate, we have in the past financial year, implemented the strategy of utilising **interactive communication channels such as radio talk-shows**, which enabled our people to talk to us.
61. Moving forward, we will continue to utilise this interactive platform to enable this two-way communication between our government and our people.
62. In this regard, **all MECs and Executive Mayors will be expected to interact with our people through radio talk-shows and phone-in programmes, on a weekly basis**, to account on the work that government is doing in communities. My Office will work closely with various departments and municipalities, in centrally coordinating content preparation for targeted communication on the implementation of government priorities.
63. As the Premier, I will on a quarterly basis, also go on radio to assess the satisfaction of our people through what we have termed, **'the Premier's On-air Dialogue with the People'**.
64. We are first and foremost the servants of the people, and we will behave as such, without failure!
65. Our quest is to create a two way **'government-and-the-people communication system'**, that empowers citizens to air their views and influence the direction of their own government.

H. Strengthening the role of the Mpumalanga Provincial AIDS Council

66. Honourable Members, the spread of HIV, STIs and TB in the Province remain a serious health challenge. The high new HIV infection among Adolescent Girls and Young Women aged 15–24 years is cause for concern.



67. Through the **MPAC Secretarial Unit**, we will continue to provide secretariat and technical support to Provincial, District and Local AIDS Councils, in the implementation of our collective responses to the challenges of HIV and Aids.
68. The Province will continue to intensify and prioritise the prevention of new HIV, STIs and TB infections. The Mid-Term Review of our previous Provincial Strategic Plan for 2012-2016, has provided us with an opportunity to look at what was done correctly, as well as what to improve, where we have been found wanting in our response to HIV, STIs and TB. The lessons learnt will assist the Province in finalising the new Provincial Implementation Plan, in line with the new National Strategic Plan for 2017-2022.
69. We will ensure that the AIDS Councils, at all levels, are strengthened in order for them to discharge their responsibilities accordingly. We will focus on the social and structural drivers of the epidemic at all levels. The private sector will be engaged to support community-based organisations that are implementing programmes on HIV and AIDS. The fight against the scourge requires all of us to work together to defeat this disease.

I. Fostering Integrity in the Administration and Improving Audit Outcomes

70. Honourable members, we are continuing to provide leadership to ensure that the integrity of the provincial administration is not undermined by negative effects of maladministration and weak governance systems.
71. We will continue through our **anti-fraud and corruption awareness workshops**, to reinforce the culture of ethical behavior and to encourage officials to fearlessly report maladministration, fraud, and corruption.
72. We will also implement the **anti-corruption strategy** and continue to utilise the **computerised tracking** and management of cases, in an effort to curb corruption in the Public Sector. This will be complimented with intensified **investigations** to prevent exaggerated and false claims intended to drain limited fiscal resources.
73. More importantly, the overall audit outcomes of Departments need to improve, as we strengthen internal controls and risk management systems.



74. This year, the Office will perform **audit services** for five cluster departments, and monitor implementation to ensure the realisation of **improved audit** outcomes. In this regard, we will review and strengthen the effectiveness of internal controls, clearing of audit queries and the implementation of consequence management.
75. Alongside efforts to enhance internal controls, and improve performance accountability for results, we are putting in place, measures to utilise fiscal resources in a responsible manner, so that we able to shift resources more towards infrastructure investment to create a lasting legacy for future generations to benefit.
76. Within this tight fiscal environment, we will be consolidating our path towards **improved fiscal prudence** through the elimination of duplication and wastages that divert resources away from service delivery.
77. We will continue to push down the cost of the wage bill so that we achieve **fiscal sustainability**.
78. Part of our expenditure review, over the last few months, suggests that we need to drastically **re-configure the regional service delivery model**, so that we achieve better efficiencies in the delivery of regional services closer to the people.
79. Proposals on the new regional service delivery model are currently under consideration by the Executive Council. This year, my Office will facilitate processes towards the adoption and implementation of the new Regional Service Delivery Model.

J. Strengthening International Partnerships

80. Honourable Members, the pursuit and implementation of provincial priorities must be supported by our strategic focus on mobilising international partnerships that will enhance our ability to crowd in international investments, and enhance technical cooperation with provinces in targeted countries.
81. Over the last year, our Province continued to build on previous partnerships that we have entered into, with other provinces, by signing cooperation agreements with Cuando Cubango Province in Angola, Mogilev Region in Belarus and Cooperation Agreement with Belarussian Academy of Agriculture.



82. We also signed agreements with Minsk Tractor Works from Belarus to come and establish an assembly plant in our Province.
83. These agreements form part of our strategic agenda to further improve our Province's economic agenda and human capital development. The greater focus of these agreements is meant to support our industrialisation aspirations, as well as growing the agricultural sector and its value chain, through clearly defined markets that would be serviced through our International Fresh Produce Market.
84. These strategic partnerships, with compatible provinces in other parts of the world, are meant to facilitate the opening of new markets for our fresh produce, and to attract investment in manufacturing, as in the case of the Tractor Assembly Plant that we are jointly working on with our partners in Belarus.
85. On the skills development front, they are meant to identify skills for our economy that are specialised, and then send our students to go acquire such skills, and come back to contribute to the growth and development of our Province and our country. That is why our focus on technical cooperation has been opening access for students to study specialised fields in health, agronomy and engineering.
86. Over the current financial year, we will **finalise our cooperation agreements with partners in Russia on export of agricultural fresh produce and meat products, tourism and education with a focus on health and engineering.** Agriculture sector-focused engagements with the Sultanese of Oman will be up-scaled, as part of market development for the International Fresh Produce Market.
87. This will ensure that we are not only focused on building the physical structure, but also developing the supply lines to the market and export lines to international markets like Russia, Oman, Italy and China.
88. The implementation of past agreements, especially with Cuando Cubango, Hebei Province in China and Italy, will be fast-tracked through establishment of Joint Implementation Committees both at political and administrative level, to tighten coordination. Internally, Inter-Departmental Committees on these countries will sit bi-monthly to track progress and report to the Executive Council.



K. Conclusion

89. Madame Speaker, the programmes that we have outlined and presented to the Legislature through our Annual Performance Plan, will ensure that we continue to make relevant and required strides in our fight against poverty, unemployment and inequality in our society.

90. As the Centre of Governance, we will do our best to **build a well-coordinated and integrated machinery of government that is capable of confronting prevailing challenges within available resources towards a better Mpumalanga.**

91. We remain focused on ensuring that the lives of the people of Mpumalanga continue to improve for the better. Ours is to work harder with dedication and clear purpose, and to never betray the trust that our people have bestowed on us.

92. The budget for the Office of the Premier for the 2017-2018 financial year is **R289 769 000.00**. Allow me therefore to present to this house, Budget Vote 1.

93. I thank you.

END