

POLITICS TODAY



AN EXECUTIVE BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR PROGRESSIVE BUSINESS

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

His Excellency Jacob G Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa on the occasion of the Joint Sitting of Parliament, Cape Town

13 February 2014

I wish to thank the Presiding Officers for this opportunity to speak to the people of South Africa, on this occasion of the last State of the Nation Address, of the fourth democratic administration.

I would like to extend our deepest condolences on the passing of the late Honourable Mr Ben Skhosana, one of the longest serving and most senior members of this august house and our former Minister of Correctional Services.

We are truly saddened by his sudden passing.

Sidlulisa ukukhala kwethu emndenini wakhe, nakumholi we IFP uShenge, kanye namalunga onke e-IFP.

This is the first State of the Nation Address to take place in the absence of our founding President, His Excellency Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

His passing, on the eve of the 20th year of our freedom and democracy, caused untold pain to our people and beyond our borders.

We find solace in the knowledge that Madiba will live forever be in our hearts, and that we have a duty to take his legacy forward.

Our country has produced men and women of distinction, who have provided leadership during trying times.

One such leader was Mr Moses Kotane, former treasurer-general of the ANC and former SACP general secretary.

We are honoured to have his dear wife, Mama Rebecca Kotane, as our special guest this evening.

Mama Kotane turned 102 years old yesterday, and we wish her all the best.

We also pay tribute to the former ANC President Mr Oliver Tambo, who kept the torch of freedom alive both at home and abroad during the most difficult times of our struggle.

His son, Dali and his wife Rachel are sharing this occasion with us this evening.

We salute Solomon Mahlangu, a brave young man who went defiantly to the gallows in 1979 where he was executed at the age of 23. He said: "My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people that I love them. They must continue the fight".

We are honoured to host his mother, Mama Martha Mahlangu and her grand-daughter Bathabile.

The year 2014 also marks the 40th anniversary of the cowardly murder through a parcel bomb, of student leader, Abram Onkgopotse Tiro in 1974 in Botswana.

We welcome his brother, Mogomotsi Tiro to this occasion. We express the gratitude of the people, for his brother's selfless sacrifice.

We remember those who died in state-sponsored violence of the 1980s and 1990s in our townships and villages.

Ms Jabu Ndlovu, a former shop steward of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), was gunned down in 1988 in Pietermaritzburg together with her husband Jabulani and their son.

We welcome her daughter Luhle and son, Sanele, and pay tribute to all families who lost their loved ones, across the political spectrum.

We were able to overcome all that pain of the past and build a new society.

We have built strong institutions of democracy.



We buried the undemocratic, unrepresentative, oppressive and corrupt state that was serving a minority.

We formed a unitary, non-racial, non-sexist democratic state, answerable to and representative of all South Africans.

We created a thriving constitutional democracy, with well-functioning arms of the state - the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

We have Chapter 9 institutions which support democracy and protect the rights of citizens.

Liberation and democracy have also created space for an active civil society and a free media.

Liberation also brought for the first time, the promise of gender equality. The representation of women in public institutions has increased considerably since the dawn of freedom, and the extension of basic services also benefits women.

All these attributes have made South Africa a much better place to live in now than it has ever been.

However, our country still faces the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment, which we continue to grapple with. Dealing with these challenges has become a central focus of all democratic administrations.

We elected to focus on five priorities, education, health, the fight against crime and corruption, rural development and land reform as well as creating decent work.

We also reorganised the State to improve performance.

We created two key functions, long term planning as well as monitoring and evaluation.

We established the National Planning Commission which produced the landmark National Development Plan, the country's socio-economic blueprint and one of the major achievements of this fourth administration.

The Plan outlines what we should do to eradicate poverty, increase employment and reduce inequality by 2030.

Our monitoring and evaluation indicates that many services continue to improve. For example, social grants and identity documents now take a shorter time to be processed. But many others still require further work.

I will report back on the five priorities, starting with the economy.

On average, the economy has grown at 3,2 percent a year from 1994 to 2012 despite the global recession which claimed a million jobs.

Working together as government, business, labour and the community sector, we nursed the economy to a recovery.

The national wealth, measured in terms of GDP, has grown to more than 3.5 trillion rand.

Jobs are now being created again. There are now 15 million people with jobs in the country, the highest ever in our history, and over 650 thousand jobs were created last year, according to Stats SA.

This is still not good enough. The unemployment rate still remains high. Youth unemployment in South Africa continues to be of concern, as it is throughout the world.

We are taking a number of measures, including the Employment Tax Incentive Act which encourages employers to hire younger workers.

Regulations will be passed to ensure that this does not affect unsubsidized or older workers adversely.

Further measures are contained in the National Youth Accord that was signed in Soweto last April.

The Expanded Public Works Programme and the Community Work Programme continue to be an effective cushion for the poor and the youth.

We have created 3,7 million work opportunities over the past five years. Our people obtain an income and skills from the public works programme, which they use to seek formal employment.

Cabinet has set a target of 6 million work opportunities from this year to 2019, targeting the youth.

Our social assistance programme which now reaches about 16 million people, provides a safety for millions, especially vulnerable children.

Imizi eminingi ithola ukusizakala ngenxa yezibonelelo zikahulumeni, imaliyezingane, impesheni yabadala neyabakhubazekile.

Lezizibonelelo zizoqhubeka njalo ngoba imizi eminingi ithola ukusizakala ngoba amathuba emisebenzi ayivelakancane ngalesisikhathi somnotho ontengantengayo.

Lamathuba atholakala kuhulumeni, enza sisho ngeqholo ukuthi, iNingizimu Afrika esiphila kuyo namhlanje, ingcono kakhulu ukunaleyo esasiphila kuyo ngaphambikuka- 1994.

We are still going through a difficult period.

Developments in the United States economy have led to a rapid depreciation in the emerging market currencies, including the rand.

During the course of 2013, the rand depreciated by 17.6 per cent against the US dollar.

The weaker exchange rate poses a significant risk to inflation and will also make our infrastructure programme more expensive.

However, export companies, particularly in the manufacturing sector, should take advantage of the weaker rand and the stronger global recovery.

While we have these difficulties, we know that we can cope with this period of turbulence.

We have done so before in the past five years.

We will, in fact, emerge stronger if we do the right things.

We have to work together as government, business and labour to grow our economy at rates that are above 5 per cent to be able to create the jobs we need.

Fortunately this collaboration is already taking place.

It is taking place at NEDLAC which is one of the key institutions of cooperation in our democracy, between government, business, labour and the community sector.

It has taken place as well in engagements that we have been having with the business community.

Last year I started engaging business on specific steps that government can take to make it easier to do business in our country.

Arising out of that process, we have now streamlined regulatory and licensing approvals for environmental impact assessments, water licenses and mining licenses.

Parliament is finalizing amendments to the law to give effect to this very positive development, which

will cut to under 300 days, the time it takes to start a mine, from application to final approvals.

The Deputy President of the Republic continues to facilitate discussions between government, mining companies and labour.

The purpose is to stabilise industrial relations in this very important sector of our economy. The process is yielding results.

Strikes in the sector were fewer and shorter last year.

And more importantly, industrial relations processes are taking place in a manner consistent with the law.

We have intervened in mining because it is one of our key job drivers. We need a mining sector that works. Mining employs over half a million people.

It is the biggest earner of foreign exchange in our country. It also contributes about 20 billion rand directly to the tax revenue.

Mining also makes a far larger contribution as a buyer of goods and services, and a supplier of inputs to other sectors of our economy and other economies around the globe.

We are exploring partnerships with stake-holders to address the issue of housing in mining towns.

Let me also remind mining companies that 2014 is the deadline for them to improve housing and living conditions of mineworkers and to achieve a number of targets.

Government continues to monitor and enforce compliance on both the company's Social and Labour Plans and Mining Charter targets.

Other than mining, we had identified five other job drivers in 2009.

These are tourism, agriculture, the green economy, infrastructure development and manufacturing.

The tourism industry has grown dramatically. In 1993, South Africa received a mere 3 million foreign visitors. By 2012, the figure had grown to 13 million visitors.

We will continue to grow this industry, given its potential for job creation.

In 2012 we unveiled the National Infrastructure Plan, led by the President through the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission.

We have subsequently invested one trillion rand in public infrastructure over the past five years.

Many of the projects are completed or are nearing completion.

I will mention just a few.

The Rea Vaya system in Joburg is now used by more than 100 000 Gauteng residents. Similar systems are being built in Cape Town, Tshwane,

Nelson Mandela Bay, Buffalo City, eThekweni and Rustenburg.

The country's harbours and ports have been improved.

We have built a 700 kilometre fuel pipeline from Durban to Gauteng to transport 4 billion cubic litres of petrol, diesel and jet fuel a year.

Close to 1500 kilometres of new roads or lanes have been built.

This progress in respect of roads reminds us of those who have served in this government before who wanted the best for the country, such as our former Transport Minister Mr Dullar Omar.

His dear wife Farieda is one of our guests this evening.

The construction of new rail lines has started in Mpumalanga, to ease the pressure off the roads.

The Gautrain project is now fully functional and carries over 1,2 million passengers a month.

The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa will spend over 120 billion rand over the next 10 years to buy new trains.

Transnet is implementing its massive 300 billion rand market demand strategy, building much needed transport infrastructure.

To realise the economic potential of the Western Cape and the West Coast, we launched the Saldanha Industrial Development Zone and opened two new factories in Atlantis.

To improve the water supply, two large new dams were completed, De Hoop in Limpopo and Spring Grove in KwaZulu-Natal, while phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project is to be launched soon.

Construction is continuing at the new power stations, Medupi in Limpopo, Kusile in Mpumalanga and Ingula near Ladysmith, employing more than 30 000 workers.

We continue to explore other sources of energy, in line with the Integrated Resource Plan for Energy.

The development of petroleum, especially shale gas will be a game-changer for the Karoo region and the South African economy.

Having evaluated the risks and opportunities, the final regulations will be released soon and will be followed by the processing and granting of licenses.

We expect to conclude the procurement of nine thousand six hundred megawatts of nuclear energy.

Biofuels manufacturers have been selected and have started work.

Ours is indeed a country at work and is a much better place to live in. We must keep the momentum.

More of our wealth is created through the internet or telecommunication.

A 37 000 kilometres of fibre-optic cable has been laid by the private and public sectors in the past five years. This will be significantly expanded in the years ahead.

We are proud of our successes in science and technology. The construction of the first telescope of the 64-dish forerunner to the Square Kilometre Array, the MeerKAT, will be completed in the first quarter of 2014.

Our incentives to boost manufacturing have yielded returns.

The Automotive Investment Scheme that was launched in 2009 has approved a total 3.8 billion rand worth of incentives for about 160 investment projects. These sustain more than 50 thousand jobs.

The companies will be developing sedan cars, minibus taxis and buses.

We have stabilised the clothing, textile, leather and footwear sector, which had been shedding jobs.

Several industries have been designated for local content. These include buses, canned vegetables, clothing, textiles, leather and footwear and other goods.

We have concrete examples of the success of the localisation programme.

In the past two years alone, more than 20 000 minibus taxis and 330 buses were assembled locally, drawing investment and development to our cities.

In the next five years, the state will procure at least 75% of its goods and services from South African producers.

We have to work more intensively to develop emerging or black industrialists.

Many of the aspirant black industrialists complain about the difficulties they experience in obtaining industrial finance, supplier and retail markets, and technical production support.

The National Empowerment Fund, the Industrial Development Corporation and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency will continue to provide finance to viable black-owned businesses to promote industrialisation.

In addition, we encourage established businesses to support the development of black industrial businesses.

Agriculture is a key job driver and a provider of opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Our agricultural support programme, Fetsa Tlala, is producing brand new exporters.

The first 88 smallholder farmers in this programme supplied the United Nations World Food Programme with 268 tons of maize and beans to

send to Lesotho last month. We expect this number to increase.

We will continue to promote our fisheries sector as well, which contributes an estimated 6 billion rand to the economy and provides 27 000 jobs.

We have made good progress in the land reform programme.

Since 1994, nearly 5,000 farms, comprising 4.2 million hectares, have been transferred to black people, benefiting over 200,000 families.

Nearly 80,000 land claims, totalling 3.4 million hectares, have been settled and 1.8 million people have benefited.

The next administration will need to take forward a number of policy, legislative and practical interventions, to further redress the dispossession of our people of their land.

These include matters relating to the establishment of the Office of the Valuer-General and thereby opening of the lodgement of claims.

South Africa is indeed a much better place to live in.

Let me now report on our social transformation programme.

Education is a ladder out of poverty for millions of our people.

We are happy therefore that there is a huge increase in the enrolment of children in school, from pre-primary to tertiary level.

The number of children attending Grade R has more than doubled, moving from about 300 thousand to more than 700 thousand between 2003 and 2011.

A Draft Policy Framework towards Universal Access to Grade R has been gazetted for public comment, with a view to making Grade R compulsory.

Izingane ezingu 8 million azikhokhiesikoleni, kantiezingu 9 million ithola ukudla okunempilo ezikoleni okuphuma kuhulumeni, ukuze zifunde kahle zingabulawa indlala.

The matric pass rate has gone up from around 61 percent in 2009 to 78 percent last year and the bachelor passes improve each year.

Through the Annual National Assessments, we keep track of improvements and interventions needed, especially, in maths and science.

To promote inclusivity and diversity, the South African Sign Language curriculum will be offered in schools from next year, 2015.

We have increased our numbers of literate adults through the Kha Ri Gude programme from 2,2 million in 2008 to 3 million people.

We have also been investing in teacher training and are re-opening teacher training colleges to meet the demand.

To produce a decent learning environment, we have delivered 370 new schools replacing mud schools and other unsuitable structures around the country. The programme continues.

We have a good story to tell in higher education as well.

Student enrolments at universities increased by 12% while further Education and Training college enrolments have increased by 90%.

We have increased the budgets of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to 9 billion rand to meet the rising demand.

Another major achievement of this term has been the establishment of two brand new universities, Sol Plaatje in the Northern Cape and the University of Mpumalanga.

We will also build 12 new FET Colleges in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape.

The launch of the National Education Collaboration Framework last year was an important development for the country. We wish the team well in their national duty.

We have a good story to tell in the improvement of health care too.

Over the past five years, 300 new health facilities have been built, including 160 new clinics.

Ten new hospitals have been built or refurbished in Ladybrand, Germiston, Mamelodi, Natalspruit, eThekweni, Zola, Bojanala, Vryburg District, Swartruggens, Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain.

The HIV and AIDS turnaround is one of the biggest achievements of this administration and we are used as a model country by the United Nations Aids Programmes, (UNAIDS).

Mother to child transmission of HIV has declined sharply and we have doubled the number of people who are receiving anti-retroviral treatment, from one million to 2.4 million people in 2013.

More than 20 million South Africans have taken the HIV test since the launch of the campaign in 2011 which indicates confidence in the health system.

Life expectancy is now firmly on an upward trend. South Africans are now living longer.

The target for the next administration is to ensure that at least 4.6 million people are enrolled in the anti-retroviral programme.

We acknowledge the contribution of the South African National Aids Council for the hard work. While celebrating our success, we must not be complacent. The prevention work must still continue so that we can reach that goal of zero HIV infections sooner.

At a broader level, we will enter a new phase in the implementation of the National Health Insurance programme which will extend quality healthcare to the poor.

The overall crime rate has decreased by 21 percent since 2002 and work is ongoing to make communities safer.

One of the key focus areas is to eradicate violence against women and children. We have introduced a number of measures to respond to this challenge.

These include the reopening of the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Units as well as the Sexual Offences Courts.

We thank the many NGOs that promote the rights of women and children who contribute positively to this important work.

Our country continues to be the target of rhino poachers.

Our law enforcement agencies are working hard to arrest this scourge. We have also reached agreements with China, Vietnam, Kenya, Mozambique and other SADC countries to work together to stop this crime.

We thank the business community and all South Africans who participate in the campaign to save the rhino.

The independence of the judiciary has been further enhanced by the establishment of the Office of the Chief Justice as a separate institution from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. We have passed several pieces of legislation to support this new role of the Office of the Chief Justice.

Progress is being made in the transformation of the judiciary to reflect the race and gender demographics of the country.

The Chief Justice of the Republic continues to champion and lead this transformation.

Black judges (African, Indian and Coloured) now constitute 61% of all judges.

However, the acute under-representation of women on the bench remains of concern. Of the judicial establishment of 239 judges, only 76 are women.

The challenge is to transform the legal profession broadly in order to nourish the pool from which female judges can be appointed.

The finalisation of the Legal Practice Bill will assist to broaden the pool from which potential judicial officers could be selected.

South Africans are united in wanting a corruption free society. Fighting corruption within the public service is yielding results.

Since the launch of the National Anti-Corruption Hotline by the Public Service Commission, over 13 000 cases of corruption and maladministration have been referred to government departments for further handling and investigation.

Government has recovered more than 320-million rand from perpetrators through the National Anti-Corruption Hotline.

Some of the successes of the National Anti-Corruption Hotline include the following:

- 1 542 officials were dismissed from the Public Service.
- 140 officials were fined their three month salary.
- 20 officials were demoted
- 355 officials were given final written warnings.
- 204 officials were prosecuted.

To prevent corruption in the supply chain system, government has decided to establish a central tender board to adjudicate tenders in all spheres of government.

This body will work with the chief procurement officer whose main function will be to check on pricing and adherence to procedures as well as fairness.

The Special Investigating Unit is investigating maladministration or alleged corruption in a number of government departments and state entities, through 40 proclamations signed by the President during this administration. We will keep the public informed of the outcome of the investigations.

In the first six months of last year, the Asset Forfeiture Unit paid a total of 149 million rand into the Criminal Assets Recovery Account and to the victims of crime.

This is 170% above its target of 55 million rand and is higher than it has ever achieved in a full year.

Last year, the competition authorities investigated large-scale price fixing in the construction industry and fined guilty companies 1.4 billion rand.

Further steps against those involved are now underway.

I would now like to touch briefly on the provision of basic services to our people.

Over the past 20 years, remarkable achievements have been made in increasing access to services such as water, sanitation and electricity.

Government has begun an intensive programme to eliminate the bucket system as part of restoring the dignity of our people.

Phase One of the programme will eradicate buckets in formalized townships of the Free State, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape.

Phase Two will eradicate buckets in informal settlements in all provinces.

In housing, about 3 million housing units and more than 855 thousand serviced sites were delivered since 1994.

Nearly 500 informal settlements have been replaced with quality housing and basic services over the past five years.

The next administration will promote better located mixed income housing projects.

Some communities still do not have these services especially in informal settlements and rural areas. We are therefore working with all spheres of government to ensure the provision of these services, especially in the 23 municipalities with the greatest number of backlogs.

In last year's State of the Nation Address, I raised my concern with the manifestation of violence in some of the protests taking place in our country.

Violent protests have taken place again around the country in the past few weeks.

Also worrying is what appears to be premeditated violence, as is the case with the use of petrol bombs and other weapons during protests.

The democratic government supports the right of citizens to express themselves.

The right to protest, peacefully and unarmed, is enshrined in the Constitution.

However, when protests threaten lives and property and destroy valuable infrastructure intended to serve the community, they undermine the very democracy that upholds the right to protest.

The dominant narrative in the case of the protests in South Africa has been to attribute them to alleged failures of government.

However the protests are not simply the result of "failures" of government but also of the success in delivering basic services.

When 95% of households have access to water, the 5% who still need to be provided for, feel they cannot wait a moment longer.

Success is also the breeding ground of rising expectations.

Let me also add Honourable Members, that any loss of life at the hands of the police in the course of dealing with the protests cannot be overlooked or condoned.

Loss of life is not a small matter. We need to know what happened, why it happened. Any wrongdoing must be dealt with and corrective action must be taken. Police must act within the ambit of the law at all times.

Having said this, we should also as a society be concerned that between 2005 and 2013, close to 800 police officers were killed.

The police are protectors and are the buffer between a democratic society based on the rule of law, and anarchy. As we hold the police to account, we should be careful not to end up delegitimising them and glorify anarchy in our society.

The culture of violence originated from the apartheid past. We need to conduct an introspection in our efforts to get rid of this scourge.

As leaders from all walks of life, we must reflect on what we did or did not do, to systematically root

out the violence that surfaced in protests during the early days of our democracy.

We have a collective responsibility to build a society that respects the rule of law, respects one another and which respects life and property.

We should work together to rebuild Ubuntu and a culture of responsibility in our society.

A decision has been taken to improve functioning of local government.

The amendment of the Municipal Systems Act is intended to improve the capacity of municipalities to deliver services.

Qualified and experienced personnel must be deployed in municipalities.

We also need to strengthen existing forums of people's participation and enable our people to play a greater role in development.

The fight against corruption must be intensified as well, especially given reports that some services are interrupted or stopped, so that certain people could provide those services at cost to the state.

These matters are being prioritised for the next administration.

Democratic South Africa's foreign policy was shaped many decades ago during the fierce international campaign to isolate the apartheid state.

ANC President Oliver Tambo played a key role in that regard, assisted by among others, the late Johnny Makatini, former head of international affairs.

His wife, Mrs Valerie Makatini is one of our honoured guests this evening.

Africa has remained at the centre of our foreign policy.

We have worked hard to strengthen support for the African Union, SADC and all continental bodies whose purpose is to achieve peace and security.

We have also prioritised the promotion of regional economic integration, infrastructure development, intra-African trade and sustainable development in the continent.

This year we also submitted our third country report to the AU African Peer Review Mechanism which was well received.

We continue to support peace-making and conflict resolution.

Progress is being made in negotiations between Sudan and South Sudan on outstanding issues following the secession.

Following requests from Sri Lanka and South Sudan for assistance in bringing about peace and reconciliation, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, has been appointed as South Africa's Special Envoy to the two countries.

His expertise in conflict resolution and negotiations as well as our country's experience in this regard, will greatly assist the two countries to resolve their problems.

We will continue to strengthen relations with Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and countries in the South.

Participation in international multilateral forums such as the G20 have been beneficial for the country.

And joining the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) group in December 2010 counts as among the key achievements of the fourth administration.

It was also a great honour to host the Fifth BRICS Summit on 27 March 2013 in Durban, which saw the participation of African leaders to discuss developmental cooperation with BRICS.

We will continue to serve diligently in the United Nations in promotion of strong international governance.

We will also continue promoting the reform of the UN Security Council and global financial institutions.

As President of the COP17/CMP7 United Nations Climate Change conference which was hosted in Durban in 2011, South Africa successfully placed the world on an unassailable course, through the adoption of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action.

Over the past 20 years we have hosted a number of international sporting and cultural visits, which has helped to boost social cohesion and unity.

In the past five years, South Africa hosted the highly successful 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup and other key soccer, rugby and cricket tournament, which left a tangible feeling of pride and unity among all South Africans.

As we celebrate 20 years of freedom, we will do so having done well in building a new heritage landscape for our country.

A number of new museums and monuments were established, including the statue of Former President Mandela which has become a landmark in the Union Buildings.

More than 2000 geographical names have been changed in order to correct the ill-naming of places, as well as to give communities the right to determine the names of their areas.

Allow me to acknowledge some of our compatriots who are making their mark in the world.

We congratulate Ladysmith Black Mambazo on winning their fourth Grammy Award last month. We welcome the group leader, Mr Joseph Shabalala, one of our guests this evening. We also acknowledge Ms Yvonne Chaka Chaka who is one of our guests this evening.

She is doing a lot of good work as the United Nations Children's Fund Goodwill Ambassador for Malaria in Africa and also the United Nations

Millennium Development Goals Special Envoy for Africa.

Ms Chaka Chaka was also honoured with the Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum in Davos for her humanitarian work.

We also recognise, in her absence, our Oscar Award-winning Hollywood star, Ms Charlize Theron.

Ms Theron is also the UN Messenger for Peace. She also champions the fight against AIDS especially amongst the youth and young women.

She was also honoured by the World Economic Forum with a Crystal Award.

You would have noticed that in this SONA we have given a report of the past five years in particular and over the past 20 years in general.

This is not an occasion to present the programme of action for this financial year. That programme will be presented by the new government after the elections.

To prepare for that first State of the Nation Address by the incoming administration later in the year, we have over the past year, been working on a Medium Term Strategic Framework.

The Framework has been designed as the first five year building block of the National Development Plan, from 2014 to 2019.

It also incorporates key targets of the Industrial Policy Action Plan, the New Growth Path and Infrastructure Plan.

The intention is to table the draft Framework to the first Cabinet Lekgotla after the elections. It will be refined by the new administration in line with its electoral mandate, so that work can start

as soon as possible after the formation of a new government.

It has been an honour for my administration and I to build on the foundation laid by the first three democratic administrations, to serve the people of South Africa.

As a country we have scored many successes.

South Africa is a much better place to live in now than it was before 1994.

We continue to face challenges. But life will also continue to change for the better.

Nkosi Sikelel' i Africa

God Bless Afrika.

I thank you.

