



OFFICE OF THE MEC

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**SPEECH BY MEC HONOURABLE NTOMBOVUYO NKOPANE FOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE ON CONSTRUCTION**

SUMMIT 26 MARCH 2024

HON Sihle Zikalala

Honourable Premier Oscar Mabuyane

Executive Chairman Imbizo Events Mr Motse Mfuleni

Chief Executive officer Motheo Construction group: Ms Lettie Mashau Provincial Chairperson Black Management Forum : Ms Minty Makapela Vice president: Professional Black Business Council : Linda Maqoma Chairperson NAFCOC Eastern Cape

Our Social Partners and Stakeholders;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentleman

Molweni; Sanibonani; Dumelang; Goie More;

Good Morning.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity given to me to address this Construction Summit. Since I was appointed by The Premier of the Eastern Cape Provincial Government , Hon. Oscar Mabuyane , uDiya wethu to serve in his cabinet as the MEC of Public Works and Infrastructure in August 2022 , which is approximately 18 months, I had developed a strong affiliation with the construction sector.

Prior to taking up on my current role at DPWI I had served as both the Deputy chairperson of committees and later as Chairperson of Committees in the Eastern Cape Legislature from 2014 -22 , this gave me an opportunity to work across Government departments , which included the Construction Industry, this gave me an indepth knowledge on the industry.

Program Director

I must say I am taken by the theme of this annual event “ 30 years of democracy and building the future in Construction “ in many ways it echoes the objective of this government of the African National Congress of quickly building on our hard won gains in terms of employment, recovery of competitive and making South

Africa, especially Eastern Cape Province an increasingly attractive place to live and work in it as promulgated by the Freedom Charter.

South Africa will be celebrating 30 years in democracy in April this year after enduring undemocratic rule and disposition of Black Africans for period of about 350 years.

Progress towards democracy is owed to Liberation Movement in and outside South Africa, Civic organizations and international communities.

We see almost on daily basis the distraction of public infrastructure and wiping of Palestine people by the US-funded Israel forces.

The bold decision taken by government to public support Palestine and taking up the matter to challenging international bodies to intervene has its fruits as UN Security Council has now passed a call for immediate cease- fire, that Victory belongs to the ANC government.

Program Director

My task here is to speak about the success of the 6th Administration in the construction sector.

Construction is an enabler of economic development and stimulation. It connects people across and make it easy for people to actively participate in the economy and create jobs. It also helps build investor confidence.

Construction is a very broad concept, it involves road works, buildings and rail- works.

Since the democratic breakthrough the South African government has been working so hard to improve peoples lives through housing, connecting the people through roads and economic participation.

Today marks 62 days before the end of the 6th government Administration term. We are proud to speak about the achievements gained in the past 5 years and looking forward to the future.

Program director

These achievements were gained during a stressful and turbulent economic situation due to Covid-19, global economic crisis, climate change, corruption and a stagnant economic growth.

We salute President Cyril Ramaphosa for steering the ship during the difficult period and ensured that our people remain at the centre of development agenda.

The Eastern Cape under the stewardship of Premier Oscar Mabuyane has achieved the a lot during the period under review.

The Eastern Cape is now a construction site, from roads and buildings. The Premier during the State of the Province Address has already communicated our achievements of the Province in the past 5 years, I will highlight the few:

1. Building of the monumental Msikaba and Mtentu bridges in our coastline. All connecting roads from Alfred Nzo to OR Tambo will be upgraded from gravel to tarred roads.
2. Expanding the road infrastructure from Mthatha to KZN.
3. Expanding the Road from Braidbach to Bisho, which is nearing completion.
4. Construction and expanding of roads between Ngqushwa and Makana municipality.
5. Building of Emaxesibeni office Precinct.
6. Mqanduli Office Precinct nearing completion.
7. Building of about 40 new Schools every financial year.
8. Refurbishment of St Henry Hospital completed.
9. Refurbishment of Taylor Bequest Hospital.
10. Construction of the Bisho office precinct is now at procurement phase.
11. Major Refurbishments to Emadwelini Hospital estimated at R 550 million;
12. Construction of Staff Accommodation, and Water & Sanitation System at Taylor Bequest Hospital – Mt Fletcher estimated at R 230 million,
13. Major Upgrades on existing Wards at Nessie Knight Hospital estimated at R100 million;
14. Major Upgrades to Staff Accommodation at Frontier Hospital estimated at R 90 million;
15. Refurbishments to staff accommodation, and construction of Waster & Sanitation System at All Saints Hospital estimated at R 100 million;
16. Construction of New Balfour Clinic estimated at R 55 million;
17. Major Upgrades to Water & Sanitation System in Tafalofefe Hospital estimated at R 45 million

These are just highlights of major completed and projects under construction. This depicts a picture of a committed government of the Eastern Cape towards attracting Investors and changing the lives of the people of this Province.

During the state of the Province address, the Premier Oscar Mabuyane announced that the EC government have upgraded 115 informal settlements benefiting 57,000 households in the past five years. A good example of our work on upgrading informal settlements is the Dacower Informal Settlement in Mdantsane, which we completely transformed into a formal housing settlement. We also built 24,000 houses in the past five years

Program Director

Construction has for many year been a white male dominated space owing to the legacy of apartheid colonialism.

The ANC government has waged a relentless war to open up the space, fight against gendered discrimination and racial exclusion.

The scourge of Gender Based violence haunts in the country. Our government has build strong institutions to deal with this pandemic, we proud to say since 2019 16 000 people were arrested for sexual offences. More than 12,400 of those people were convicted. This is a good story to tell in our province.

The Department of Publics is working with DSD to dispose of closed schools for the purposes of increasing Thuthuzela centres.

When the sixth administration commenced in 2019 the DPWI had committed to change property ownership patterns in line with the transformative agenda. In this regard, we had sat a target of 60% black ownership in our lease portfolio, however here today we can confidently report that 72% of leases have been concluded with Black Landlords.

The departments through its incubation program has about 19 women owned companies and 50 youth owned companies at a value of R342 million.

The department of Public Works has trained about 1200 artisans, 702 of them are women.

Program Director

We need to invest more on the youth of this province through job creation, economic opportunities and skilling our youth to meet the demands of market.

Through our bursary scheme we have allocated 40 bursaries per year since 2019 to students who pursue their studies in Civil Engineering and Built Environment space.

In terms of Job creation, the Department had targeted 478 268-work opportunities in the sixth term of administration. As at end of January 2024, the Province has already met and surpassed the target for phase 4 by creating 580 330 work opportunities.

Program Director

South Africa has strong core network of National economic infrastructure, but investments in infrastructure has lagged over the push infrastructure, to revive the construction sector a significant decade.

In addition infrastructure push will support municipalities and other related sector across the value chain.

Some Municipalities have began to spend their infrastructure grant thus for the first in history of our province 28 Municipalities have spent more than the set threshold of 60 %, they will now be eligible for additional funding. We appreciate the close watch by COGTA.

Program Director

The much awaited construction of Mzimvubu dam has commenced, this water scheme will cover Alfred Nzo, Joe Gqabi and OR Tambo.

Equally, the construction of Tsomo bulk water project has also commenced this water project will cover areas of Amathole and Chris Hani.

The Eastern government is working closely with Traditional leaders to improve service delivery and deployment in our communities. Our government remain committed to improve the face of our tribal institutions and recognise traditional leadership in our province.

We have taken a keen interest in Agriculture as one of the key drivers of the economy in our Province. Our government has been assisting small and medium scale farmers with land distribution, crop and stock to start their business. In the past 4 years the Agricultural sector increased job creation to 38 000.

Program Director

The Department of Public Works Infrastructure is responsible for All government properties in the Province. The department is involved in extensive maintaince of old buildings and working towards repurposing the use of these buildings.

We also launched Operation Bring Back to fight against those ill-legal occupy government buildings, this is a serious problem in areas like Mthatha.

Our Operation Khusela is on course to protect government buildings against vandalism, theft and burglary.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Program Director

The construction sector is the bedrock of our economy, let's all put hands on deck to expand the space, protect and investor in construction.

The resolutions of this summit, will usher-in the 7th government Administration. It is my firm belief that our ANC government, as a listening and carrying government when come back to office after 29 May elections, will implement the resolutions of this summit.

It my singular to express my words of gratitude to the even organisers for inviting me to this august event.

I wish this summit a resounding success.

I Thank You