

DEBATE BY LIMPOPO MEC FOR COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, MAKOMA MAKHURUPETJE DURING THE NCOP DEBATE ON POLICY VOTE NO 38 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, NCOP, CAPE TOWN.

06th June 2017

Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP)
Honourable Minister of Human Settlements Mme Lindiwe Sisulu
Honourable Deputy Minister Mme Zou Kota Fredericks
Human Settlements MEC's from other Provinces
Honourable Members of the NCOP.
Good Afternoon, Hi nhlekani, Ndi Masiari.

It gives me great pleasure to partake in this Policy debate on an important month such as this - a month dedicated to the development of young people in our country. The celebration of this year's youth month coincide with the all-important 100 year anniversary of that great stalwart of our liberation struggle, comrade Oliver Reginald Tambo. Tambo was not only a youth leader during his time, but was as well a great organiser and an internationalist who rallied the support of the entire globe against the corrosive system of apartheid.

In honouring the lives of those young people who paid the ultimate price for freedom, it will never be enough for us to merely celebrate their achievements without joining the crescendo of voices against the renewed episodes of violence committed against our women and children. What we see happening today against children and women is certainly not what Oliver Tambo, Govern Mbeki, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela, Winnie Madikizela Mandela and others hoped for. As a country we did not toil for so long in the trenches only for our lives to be butchered by shameless perverts who hunger for blood and more blood. In the name of freedom, let us stand firm together and say "No" to the massacre of women and children in our country.

In the name of Karabo Mokoena, and others who died in the hands of these criminals, we will continue to build human settlements of the future where our children can play safely in the streets and women can walk freely during the night. This is the ultimate vision of the ANC government on human settlements. We want to build today a future where our people can shop, school, play, worship and work in healthy and safe environments free from crime, squalor and grim.

In pursuit of this vision, In Limpopo Legislature we tabled early this year a R1.2 billion human settlements budget that seeks to build on the successes achieved over the last two years as a result of the implementation of our turnaround strategy.

As the Minister as well as members of the NCOP are aware, Limpopo had some serious challenges relating to human settlements delivery in the two financial years of 2013/14 and 2014/15. The challenge in the main, related to the irregular procurement of the R900 Million Low Cost Houses followed by the withholding of the human settlements grant and subsequent intervention by National Treasury. During that period CoGHSTA's Human Settlements delivery in the province had taken a downward spiral dive to an extent that housing delivery in the province yielded to 0 houses, in 2013/14 and only 2065 housing units which equal 20% in 2014/15 financial year.

Even though our department was not under section 100, the low housing delivery capacity at the time was compounded by the declaration of section 100 on our province.

Chairperson We are happy that, the province has since turned the corner as a result of the implementation of a multi-pronged turnaround strategy that was facilitated by a Task team led by Provincial Department Coghsta and supported by Provincial Treasury, LEDA and the National Department of Human Settlements.

In the main our turnaround strategy was anchored around forward planning with four pillars which includes: Beneficiary Management, Geo-technical Reports and foundation designs, Partnership with Contractor's Preferred Material Supplier, and Contract Management.

Beneficiary management; involves processing beneficiaries in the Housing Subsidy System (HSS) such that all approved beneficiaries are allocated to an individual contractor in a particular municipality, classified per village.

Geo-technical Reports and foundation designs - This strategy compels the NHBRC to deploy its Geological Engineers alongside contractors to conduct Test Pits on site. They then recommend and give the contractor, the most appropriate foundation designs to work with immediately.

Partnership with Contractor's Preferred Material Supplier seeks to enable contractors with limited financial resources to conclude cession agreement with their preferred material supplier such as big hardware stores, brickyards, steel merchants, etc

Our Contract Management strategy ensures stringent contract management with enforceable punitive clauses in the event of poor performance while rewarding those performing contractors. As a matter of principle we are now assessing contractor performance on a weekly basis to ensure that those contractors who chronically fail to perform as per their promised delivery schedules lose out on their units which we then subsequently reallocate to performing contractors. In worse case scenarios, we even terminate non-performing contractors and reallocate their entire units to other contractors in the database.

The appointment by the Minister of the Human Settlements Ombudsman is a welcome move that will no doubt help those of our contractors and housing beneficiaries who are aggrieved by the system. As part of forward planning and measures to deal with challenges of procurement, we have now enlisted contractors on a three-year contractor database which is updated on an annual basis against which we are able to allocate annual units to contractors without having to go through a lengthy Supply Chain Management (SCM) process every year.

Honourable Chairperson, let me say that, judging only by the extent of our performance over the last two years, we can say with no fear of contradiction that CoHGSTA is on an upward mobility and there is no looking back. Evidence abound to prove that solid work is being done to restore the dignity of the poor and those who are homeless in our province. From that humble beginning of delivering 0% houses in 2013/14, Limpopo now occupies the top spot in housing delivery in the country at 105% or 13 901 units against the target of 13 290 by the end of 2016/17 FY. This achievement is followed only by the Western Cape at 102%.

In the same breath, it was our privilege as Limpopo to win the National Govan Mbeki award by Aunt Zorha of Zorha Khan Developers for winning the Best Rural Housing project in South Africa through the Maelula Rural housing project in 2016.

We therefore can now firmly say that the challenges we experienced in human settlements are now a thing of the past. We remain resolute to deliver even more quality housing to our communities during this financial year and beyond. In our endeavor to integrate human settlements closer to where our people live, we have in this financial year, planned to build more than 9 956 homes for the people of our province.

These homes are set to benefit almost 40 000 beneficiaries. Out of these housing units, 8406 are Low Cost Houses (RDP houses), 250 are Community Residential Units at Marapong, Lephalale Municipality, 400 are Emergency Housing Assistance across the province, 100 are Enhanced People Housing Project, 500 are Blocked Projects and 300 are Financed Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) in Northam and Bendor.

Provision of housing for our Military Veterans is long overdue. In Limpopo province, there is a total of 411 people in the National database of Military Veterans who are in need of housing. The target for this programme in 2017/18 financial year is 200 units with a budget of R22 million. A total of 150 are under construction while 18 units are already at roof level. To increase the pace of delivery, department has appointed 8 contractors to deliver the 200 units prioritised for 2017/18 financial year.

Chairperson A bold move we have made is the targeted allocation of units for women contractors and the youth owned enterprises as directed by Min-MEC. In our allocation we will ensure that for women contractors not less than 30% is allocated and for young entrepreneurs not less than 20% is allocated respectively. This will ensure that we open up the sector to previously disadvantaged persons.

Based on the Breaking New Ground Policy Framework, our department is implementing integrated Mega Projects on land parcels procured over the past years. These are big projects that are properly planned to be self-sufficient in providing sustainable housing and socio-economic opportunities to communities.

In her budget Vote, the Minister did make mention of catalytic projects that are seen as a new approach to ensure that South Africa becomes a construction site. As a province we have identified 09 projects as catalytic projects located in the provincial growth points and SEZs. We have to date appointed Contractors for implementation of internal engineering services at Rhinoridge (which has 900 units) in Musina Municipality and Bela-Bela Extension 25 (with 500 units) in Bela-Bela Municipality. The projects are expected to be completed and handed over to the respective municipalities by December 2017.

In addition, Township establishment is in progress at Ha-Mawasha and Burgersfort Ext 54,58,71 and 72. The process of appointing developers is underway for Altoostyd Phase 1, Nirvana & Ivydale Ext 35, Mokopane Ext 20 and Polokwane Ext 121.

We are impressed by the bold moves by the Minister to establish the Human Settlements Development Bank that will help ensure access by the majority of previously disadvantaged people to the housing sector market

Furthermore, we welcome the pronouncement by the Minister to create a credible centralised database of those legitimately waiting for a house. This will help potential beneficiaries to apply in designated areas for housing assistance and check their own details and place on the waiting list. In support of this move, as a province we are happy to announce that 07 municipalities have already submitted their housing needs register. We are currently verifying and consolidating the lists to ensure consistency with national housing need demand database template. The remainder of the municipalities will submit their lists by end of July 2017.

Chairperson, every citizen has a right to own a land. Let me be explicit to indicate that our target title deeds for 2017/18 are to transfer 7535 housing units. A total of 253 title deeds were registered in April 2017. In addition 3076 units are ready to be lodged at the deeds office.

We are happy as a department to indicate that on issues of Social Housing development we are at an advanced stage. We envisage to establish a Provincial Social Housing institution which will hopefully be launched by the end of this year upon approval by Provincial Treasury.

We have pronounced previously that a Contractor has been appointed for the Marapong CRU in Lephalale. Currently, the construction is under way and is planned to deliver 250 units in this during this financial year

Honourable Chairperson, as I pronounced during the occasion of the tabling of my Budget vote, our province is positioning itself to host later this year, a Human Settlements Indaba to deliberate on provincial human settlements matters whilst sharing innovation and best practices in the sector.

Chairperson Limpopo is a province hard at work. The ANC government has done a lot over the last 23 years to restore housing freedom to those who have been robbed of their constitutional right to shelter. As a province, we continue to be proud of the support we continuously receive from the Minister and her Deputy in the execution of this mandate. Our seamless turn around would not have happened without the support of you Minister, your Deputy, and your administration team led by the DG. Hence we want to thank you sincerely. Your sterling leadership and commitment to this portfolio is being felt by all in Limpopo.

The continuous oversight work by the NCOP who always visit our projects is also appreciated. We thank you very much for your consistent honest assessment on our work. Re a leboga, rere swarang bjalo le ka moso. Let us continue working together side by side to build the future of our children today. I thank you.