

Address by Deputy Minister Buti Manamela on the occasion of the Presidency Budget Speech, National Assembly, Parliament

26 May 2015

Thank you Speaker
President,
Deputy President,
Honourable Members,
Let's Tango.

There is a confluence of messaging orchestrated from certain quarters within the opposition parties and the media in all its forms for the last six years. This messaging has consistently hammered the idea that South Africa is on a precipice, and that we are about to collapse.

This set of propaganda messaging is intended to plant a seed in the minds of South Africans that our country is worse off than conflict ridden Burundi or in much deeper problems than that of the economic crises ridden Greece.

We have heard some of these stale and dying arguments repeated in this house this afternoon intimating that there is an apocalypse coming.

Yes, South Africans are navigating their way on a daily basis through the energy crisis, but contrary to the loud voice echoed by the few in this house, our people in their majority know that government is acting on this crisis and are comforted that sooner, the lights will be on a permanent basis.

Yes, there were criminals who unleashed violence on African nationals recently, but in their numbers, our people joined government in collective condemnation of the violence. Government has swiftly quelled this violence and brought peace to our townships.

Yes, there are critical challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality owing to the legacy of apartheid. But unlike the prophets of doom, our people know that the government they elected unequivocally is implementing a National Development Plan that is aimed at addressing these challenges.

Despite the array of ideological warfare and information distortion that this government has not done anything for the last 21 years, our people know that since Nelson Mandela, never has a government touched their lives so swiftly, and so qualitatively, than any other government could have done anywhere in the world.

The task is mammoth, the challenges are many, but government's hands are on deck working together with the people to ensure that the national democratic project becomes a success.

Election after election, they have refused to be swayed by enemies of progress who bombarded them with lies and deception, and continued to vote for the ANC, as they would in the coming elections.

South Africans have already succumbed to the idea that all they hear from the opposition benches is nothing but waffle from paper tigers whose words and rhetoric can never translate hope into action. They know that the 103 years old ANC continues to Live, and will continue to lead irrespective of the odds against it.

Our goal as a country and as stated in the National Youth Policy 2020 is to enhance the participation

of young people in the economy, through targeted programmes initiated by government, business and civil society.

Last year, the IDC committed R144 million to enterprises that are youth empowered and producing textiles, steel window frames, food, footwear, and also in tourism and film production resulting in thousands of jobs.

SEFA also disbursed R310 million to around 16 400 small and micro entrepreneurs.

This, and many others, honorable members, is hope in action and not just cheap talk.

As part of the skills programme last year, more than 6,000 youth have been trained by the National and Provincial Departments of Public Works through the EPWP programme using the National Youth Service model, with a targeted 8000 for the current financial year.

Indeed, this is hope in action.

I am currently finalising the National Youth Service Framework for public comment, and through this, we intend to simplify the NYS, improve its coordination and increase the participant's intake to give hope in action for the 3.5 million young people Not in Education, Employment or Training.

The National Youth Employment Accord was signed in April 2013. Since then, employment for youth aged 15 to 34 has increased by some 245 000, or 4%. That means it has grown twice as fast as the number of people not in this age group. At the same time, the number of youth unemployed has fallen by 70 000

From April 2013 when the Youth Accord was signed to December 2014 when the last figures were verified, 955 833 youth employment opportunities were created.

Employment has been advanced through state procurement, with Gauteng Province's public procurement spend for youth since the signing of the accord at R1.8 billion in the last two financial years.

Furthermore, 28 000 young people were registered as artisans through the SETAs in the 2014/5 financial year, and over 14 300 completed their training. Moreover, the share of young people benefiting from our public employment schemes has increased to over half.

The President has appointed the Presidential Youth Working Group Task Team made up of Deputy Ministers who will be responsible for coordinating and championing interventions to promote youth development and empowerment across government, and bringing the private sector, civil society, trade unions and other role players into the fold.

The Task Team will advise the President on an urgent programme to address youth employment and entrepreneurship, which he will announce on June 16.

There is no one who has placed the hopes, needs, interests and aspirations of young people than this Presidency, and this government. Our youth are smart. They challenge the status quo while imagining the prospects and promises of what could be. They understand that youth development is an essential consideration for our country's development trajectory. They understand that youth development is complex and uneven. That youth development has fits, starts and crossroads.

That youth development requires good policy, planning, implementation and monitoring. That the

work of youth development is hard work because not all young people are the same. They understand that young people do not grow up in projects and programmes. They grow up in communities that must nurture and support them. They want substantial hope, not smart sounding, but hollow one-liners. They want a hand up and not a hand out.

The Presidency will lead our government in bringing hope in action to our youth. This hope in action will be substantial and not hollow. This hope will be a hand up and not a hand out.

Honorable President, Members

Last week, former President FW de Klerk unleashed yet another of his many diatribes whose intention is to inject life into a dying political career and battle for relevance. This time, he accused Zulus, working together with communists, to have orchestrated a coup in Polokwane and got President Jacob Zuma elected as President of the ANC in 2007 and subsequently of the Republic in 2009.

Well, we have news for Mr. de Klerk. President Zuma is one of the only four Presidents who were elected by all South Africans, and next to him you are a minion as the last President who was elected by a minority.

You call 1994 a successful political transition, Mr. de Klerk. But many lives, including that of Chris Hani, were lost in that period and some of which, with or without your knowledge, were supervised by your state security machinery whose aim was to plunge us into a civil war.

You did not do us a favour by agreeing to unban the ANC, the SACP and other political parties and also agreeing to release Nelson Mandela and initiate negotiations. In fact, you could not press over the hot lid of a boiling pot that was yearning for democracy. Your hand was forced to act and your conscience could not sustain the atrocities meted by your system.

We actually did you a favour by agreeing to negotiate, to suspend the armed struggle, to quell the anger of the people when they wanted to avenge the death of Chris Hani, to let you share the limelight with Nelson Mandela by jointly receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, and gave you power in the Government of National Unity.

You accuse us of wanting to give more land to black people, and Yes we will. You accuse us of wanting to empower more black people economically, Yes we will. Because it is about time we finally clean up your mess, and that of your predecessors.

You have to let it go Sir. You have to let your political soul rest in peace and give space to your lackeys who are still hopeful that what you could not save for the minority in the negotiations could be won back from the benches of the opposition here in Parliament.

I would like to take this opportunity to Congratulate Honorable Mmusi Maimane for his election as leader of the DA. Congratulations Sir! But all you have showed today is that you hate the ANC so much, that even if we had issued a statement that Honourable Wilmot James would have been a bad choice for the DA, you would have declared that as ANC propaganda and corruption, resigned and handed him your position.

We do not control the nicknames bequeathed on us by our enemies, neither can we stop them from using those nicknames in reference to us. But for you, Sir, to receive with exuberance and endearment the reference to you by Christiane Amanpour of CNN as the Obama of Soweto was the last insult to our generation. That reference may be apt to him. It may be worthy of your hastags and retweets. You may be indulging in such a reference to you as the Obama of Soweto like a little kid

handed a lollipop, but our generation will not take that bait.

We know that the world has written Africa off, and many of its leaders may not be a worthy example, and good leaders in our continent have probably been in short supply. But could you not emulate the intellectual prowess of statesmen like Kwame Nkuruma, or the boisterous oratory of Patrice Lumumba, or the principled leadership of Thomas Sankara, or the revolutionary commitment of Nelson Mandela and Moses Kotane, or the selflessness of Oliver Tambo to mention but a few.

These may obviously have evaded you since your own election took place at a conference where Allister Sparks - friend of your mentor revoked apartheid white leaders such as Hendrik Verwoerd as being smart, without mentioning any of these and many more black leaders.

I was abroad on party work and never had the opportunity to play with you on the Twitter game you invented after your election, the #AskMmusi game. But I cannot be left behind and I want to gooi in some of the #AskMmusi that should have invaded your cyberspace.

If Hillary Clinton is elected as President of the US, would you bleach your hair and skin since American leaders seems to be your favourite flavour? #AskMmusi

Do you sometimes find yourself mixing church and parliament, and therefore giving a sermon, as you just did, here in parliament and hoping for an Amen, and interchangeably giving a long empty rhetoric in your church hoping for a Viva? #AskMmusi

Do you think Chester Missing is jealous of your successes or does he hate Helen Zille for being better at being a ventriloquist than Conrad Koch. #AskMmusi

Oscar Wilde once said:

"Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation."

He also said on another occasion

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

The only thing good of you, Honorable Maimane, is that you are not the Horrible - Honourable Julius Malema.

Thank you Honourable Speaker!

Speech by Hon Vincent Smith, Budget Vote 1: Presidency

26 May 2015, National Assembly, Cape Town

Madam Speaker,
Comrade President,
Deputy President,
Comrades,
Honourable members.

The opening lines to the preamble of our constitution states that

"We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who have suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity."

Informed by these words of wisdom, we must all agree that the implications of growing inequality is dire for social cohesion and nation building, and is inflammable material for social instability.

Madam Speaker, South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world. In recognition of this reality, the National Planning Commission in its work targets the reduction of SA's income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient from the current 0.68 to about 0.60 by 2030, and sets out to create approximately 11 million jobs by that date.

Honourable members,

In a debate on the 3rd September 1948, one Hendrik Verwoerd had the following to say when outlining some of his parties' policy positions.

"(1)That the Native should not be allowed to own land among white people, but that so far the ownership of land is concerned they should be confined to the various Native reserves;
(2)That Natives and coloured people in our towns and villages should not live in European residential areas, but that there should be separate residential areas for them, that is to say separate Native and coloured villages; and
(3)That in our factories, etc. Europeans and non-Europeans should not be allowed to work among one another, but separately, and that certain sorts of work should be reserved for the Europeans."

These and other past injustices subjected the Black majority in our country to extreme poverty which we are still grappling with even today.

Madam Speaker when confronting the current situation, it is important that we all understand and accept that poverty in South Africa is structural in nature, in that it has inherent racial, geographic and gender characteristics, which have evolved since pre-1994.

According to STATS SA, the life expectancy for the white community in South Africa is 75 years, and for the black community the life expectancy is only 50. Overall though, the picture is improving because the life expectancy of all South Africans grew from 52 to 62 over the last ten years. This is as a direct result of the African National Congress's policies on poverty alleviation.

Comrade President and Honourable members if the white community in South Africa were a separate country, it would rank 24th out of 180 countries, while the black community in South Africa would rank a lowly 123rd. We raise this because in our view, it is our moral obligation to redress the injustices of the past without any feeling of guilt.

The ANC government has made remarkable progress since the transition to democracy in 1994.

Last year, the World Bank gave South Africa a good story to tell. It released a report that said due to South Africa's "slightly progressive" tax system and "highly progressive" government spending, around 3.6 million people have been lifted out of poverty, halving the number of South Africans living on less than \$1.25 a day. Because of grants, free basic services and taxes favouring the poor, the poverty rate dropped from 46.2% to 39%.

Today our country has a solid foundation for democratic governance and improved access to education, health services, water, electricity, housing and social protection for all South African, Black and White.

This ANC government has made education its top priority because we understand that the provision of quality education as 'the great liberator' which, along with skills development, has the greatest potential to break the cycle of generational reproduction of poverty.

In line with our 2014 Election Manifesto provisions, some of the Department of Education's policies have seen the net enrolment ratio in primary schools reach above 90% as we speak. The introduction of no fee-paying schools has lightened the burden of the cost for education for the poorer communities in our country and the school feeding scheme ensures that no learner should attend school hungry.

This is a concrete example of the implementation of improving and expanding education and training from Grade R to Tertiary levels.

Speaker the share of women in national and provincial legislatures increased from 27.8% in 1994 to roughly 44% today, while the share of women among top managers rose from 12.4% in 2000 to the current 28%. The challenge must be for the private sector to further intensify efforts in this regard.

In December 2012 at the Mangaung National Conference the ANC resolved to increase the capacity of the State to ensure the acceleration of the implementation of the comprehensive social security strategy.

Today more than 16 million South Africans, including nearly 10 million children, currently receive some form of social assistance to help alleviate the burden of poverty.

These and other poverty alleviation programs have made broad progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

As we stated earlier extreme poverty, measured by the proportion of South Africans living on less than US\$1.25 PPP/day, is on the decline.

Speaker and Honourable members, unemployment remains a very serious concern for all of us.

The global meltdown of 2008/2009 greatly contributed to losses in jobs as is reflected in the statistic from the first quarter of 2009 to the third quarter of 2010.

Even as we speak, statistics show that unemployment levels remain unacceptably high especially amongst South Africans between the ages of 18 to 35, the majority of whom are Black.

The African National Congress government remains steadfast in the task of fast tracking the reduction of unemployment and the de-racialisation of our economy.

To turn this situation around, reforms that will ensure that the economy grows and creates employment at the same time must be the pre-occupation of both government and the private sector.

It is for this reason that we in the African National Congress support the establishment of the Ministry of Small Business, we welcome the focus on infrastructure investment led by the Ministry of Economic Development and we are encouraged by the focus on creating black industrialists as led by the department of Trade and Industry.

We believe that the current initiatives by government, aimed at expanding the ocean economy, the realisation that beneficiation of our mineral wealth is the way to go, and the move towards industrialisation will go a long way in addressing the challenges of unemployment and poverty.

This Government has also developed the War on Poverty Campaign that is targeted to cover 1,128 of the most deprived municipal wards of the country.

Furthermore, Government's Anti-Poverty Strategy focuses on the following nine pillars that seek to capacitate and empower households and communities to take themselves out of poverty with the help of government and its social partners: these pillars include:

The creation of economic opportunities;

Investment in human resources;

Provision of income security to the most vulnerable members of society;

Provision of social and individual asset accumulation like housing, land, working capital and infrastructure;

Environmental sustainability;

Provision of a social wage like subsidised electricity, water and sanitation services;

Provision of preventative and curative health care;

Social inclusion; and

Good governance

The ANC government at local level has embarked upon projects such as Jozi@work in Johannesburg, and in Tswane the National Youth Development Agency in partnership with the city of Tswane has focussed on empowering young people, by making available funding for equipment and for operational costs for youth owned cooperatives.

At a provincial level, The ANC led governments in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have embarked upon the upgrading of ports and the exploration of oil and gas, and

In Gauteng the focus is on stimulating the township economies, thereby making it possible for South Africans to work close to where they live and in so doing, address the spatial settlement patterns inherited from apartheid in relation to proximity to locations of economic activity.

These and many other similar initiatives provide further platforms for growing the economy and with it, job creation.

Madam Speaker with regard to International Trade,

South Africa's traditional trading partners, the United States, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom are still recovering from the global financial crisis. For South Africa this means that there will be a continued decline in the demand for goods by these countries.

To counter this, South Africa's resolve to explore new export markets, while retaining markets that have maintained demand for South African exports and traditional markets must be supported.

The ANC led government must be unapologetic about strengthening its relationships with SADC, the BRICS countries, and other African countries as is being led by DIRCO and the President.

China, India, Brazil and Russia remained significant trading partners to South Africa. Our exports to the BRIC countries have significantly increased over the past five years according to the DTI.

There is little doubt that with the proposed BRICS Development Bank, economic and trade ties between these countries are set to strengthen even further.

This we are confident will contribute to achieving the targets as set by the NDP, in addressing the challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty.

Speaker, the building blocks for addressing the challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty are firmly in place.

As the ANC we accept the criticism that we have very good policies, however we fall short when it comes to the implementation of these policies.

The NDP correctly identifies that we need a competent and appropriately skilled administration, that reduces the over reliance on consultants appointed to perform tasks that ordinarily must be performed by those on the State's payroll.

Provision of quality public services must be the order of the day without any exception. Far too often the Auditor General reports incidents of financial mismanagement and corruption. In too many reports, government departments are found wanting on the implementation and adherence to basic internal control measures and the unavailability of acceptable support documentation to verify the expenditures incurred.

We must ensure that there are consequences where officials are found guilty of negligence, mismanagement and sometimes blatant corrupt practises.

Speaker, notwithstanding factors outside of our control and factors within our control, that we encounter on this journey towards a better country and a better Africa, we stand here in the knowledge that South Africa in 2015 is better than the South Africa of 1993 and that tomorrow will be better than today.

The road ahead is long and sometimes very bumpy, but as Pixley Ka Seme observed way back in 1906, "A brighter day is rising upon Africa".

As South Africans, we will overcome.

Aluta Continua

Speech by Dep Chief Whip, Hon Dorris Dlakude - Budget Vote 1 : Presidency

26 May 2015

Honourable Speaker
His Excellency, President Jacob Zuma
Honourable Members
Ladies and Gentlemen

Niyanibingela
Mhlonishwa Somlomo

Sibamba lenkulumo mpikiswano lamhlahla emva kwemalanga lamabili sive saseNingizimu Afrika kanye netishosovu letalwela inkululeko yesive, lapho bebahlangene endzaweni yaseVryburg, eNorth West, emalangeneni lamabili lengcile kuyo fihla litsambo lesishosove senkululeko Make Ruth Mompoti,

lobe ka ngulomunye walabo lebalwela inkululeko yabomake tinhlangotsi tonkhe. Kungako sisepalamende futsi sibamba luchaza kutinkulumo mpikiswano kanye nase kwakheni imitsetfo letawu shintja timphilo tebantfu tibe ncono. Konke loku kungumsebenti wabomake Ruth Mompati kanye nebalingani bakhe. Indzima yakhe uyicedzile, ukulwile kulwa lokuhle, inselela ikimi nawe kutsi sitsatse lapho ashiye khona sichubekele embil
Madam Speaker,

His Excellency, President, Jacob Zuma declared in his January 08 statement, here in Cape Town, that 2015 is "the year of the Freedom Charter", which was adopted by the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1955. The preamble of the Freedom Charter states and I quote, "We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know, that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people"

The Freedom Charter is as relevant today as it was when it was adopted in 1955. Our country's constitution is also founded on the values of the Freedom Charter, It is enshrined preamble of our country's constitution, and quote ' we, the people of South Africa , recognise the injustices of our past , honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land, respect those who have worked to build and develop our country and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.'

Hon. Speaker

Despite the complex challenges that we are faced with as a country, in the face of adversity, the men and women of this great country remain hopeful because we, the ANC remain committed to the deeply entrenched values underpinned by the freedom charter. I am particularly speaking to the section that declares that "the people shall govern." It further states that "every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws."

Indeed Madam Speaker, the 27th of April in the year 1994, redefined the Political landscape of our country as we collectively, decisively, rolled back the shadows of white minority rule at the polls. For the very first time in the history of our land, the international community witnessed men and women of different races, different class lines and creeds in our country, relish the privilege of casting their vote to elect our very first democratic government into power. Undeniably one of our country's most celebrated moments in History.

Since then, elections in the Republic of South Africa are conducted once in every 5 years therefore, over the last 21 years of Democracy, our people have been assertively exercising their Democratic right to vote for the government of their choice, without fear of being ostracised for their political preferences.

Hon. Speaker

Tapping into 2009 general elections, the electorates voted the African National Congress with overwhelming majority, and elected President Zuma to continue with the revolutionary agenda of changing the lives of our people for the better

Hon. Speaker

In 2014 general elections, the people of this country, demonstrated once again their confidence in the ANC , led by President Zuma, as their preferred choice of government to move this country forward.

The fact that President Zuma is the president of this country is the outcome of the elections. The DA

is using media platforms as a tool to manipulate the public with misleading information insinuating that President Zuma does not want to be held accountable by Parliament. The President has been accountable to Parliament since 2009, and not once has the President attempted to violate the constitution of this country and the rules of Parliament.

Hon. Speaker

According to the rules of the National Assembly, rule no: 111, sub section 1(a&b), and I quote "questions to the President must be scheduled for a question day at least once per term in accordance with the annual parliamentary programme and limited to matters of National and International importance.

Statistically, the proof is as follows: in 2009, President Zuma, came twice to account to parliament by responding to oral questions , on the 26 Aug, and 12 Nov. (12 questions n 48 supplementary)

In 2010, the President, came 4 times on the 24 March. 27 May, 08 Sept, 18 Nov (24 questions, 96 supp)

In 2011, 3 times , 17 March , 13 Sept, 10 Nov,(18 questions n 72 supplementary)

In 2012, 4 times , 13 March, 22 May, 13 Sept n 15) Nov.(24 que, 96 sup)

In 2013, 3 times, 20 March, 19 June, 06 Nov,(18 que, 72 supp)

In 2014, 21 August, responded to 3 questions before the House was disrupted.

In 2015, the President came on 11th March , responded to 6 questions and 24 supplementary questions, again the President came on the 16th of April to respond to the 3 questions that stood over on the 21 August 2014.

Hon. Speaker

The Presidency gave us schedules of dates for the whole year as to when the President will be appearing in Parliament, the 18th of June, 6th August and the 19th of November. Hon. Speaker, we have seen both the President and Deputy President coming to Parliament to account. The fabrication of endless untruths , seem to be order of day for some Political parties, especially the DA, One of their latest accusation is that President Zuma is destroying Chapter 9 institutions, when in fact, the President supports them , and their budgets has been increased, consistently on an annual basis in an effort to contribute towards the improvement of their overall performance.

Mhlonishwa Somlomo

Ngete waba imali ngaphandle kwekutsi wati kutsi leyomali iyosetjentiselwa kona lefane kwenteke nobe cha, kungako kubanemsindvo lomkhulu umaemalunga eANC, aphenyulula ebantfu, nobe ematiko ngemibuto emakomitini.

Address by the Honourable Nkosi Zwelivelile Mandela on the occasion of the Presidency Budget Vote

26 May 2015

Honourable Speaker uMamu Mbete
His Excellency President Tatu Zuma
The Deputy President Ntate Ramaphosa
Honourable members
Honoured guests;
Elders, comrades and friends;
Ladies and gentlemen;

Honourable Speaker; South Africa is defined by its Constitution and Bill of Rights, national coat-of-arms, flag, anthem and diversity of languages, cultures and people. These are the clothes that dress our young nation.

Twenty-one years ago we emerged - together - battered and bruised from centuries of division and discrimination, to forge a united nation. The African National Congress swept to power with its vision of a better life for all: Black, brown, white, green and red, rich and poor, urban and rural, gay and straight, lovers of classical music and jazz, rugby, netball and football. All.

This year, in particular, we pay homage to the authors of the Freedom Charter, on its 60th anniversary, men and women from diverse backgrounds who came together to paint a picture of the united and compassionate South Africa of our parents' and grandparents' dreams.

And we pay homage to Africa.

Yesterday, when we marked Africa Day, we re-committed ourselves to the principles of inclusivity, sisterhood and brotherhood, and African Unity.

We remembered the words of one of Africa's founding fathers of freedom and unity, His Excellency President Kwame Nkrumah, who said: "Africa is one continent, one people, and one nation. The notion that in order to have a nation it is necessary for there to be a common language, a common territory and common culture has failed to stand the test of time or the scrutiny of scientific definition of objective reality."

"Africa will write its own history," Patrice Lumumba said... "and it will be to the north and to the south of the Sahara, a history of glory and dignity."

On this note, I'd like to say a special word of welcome to two of my friends from Somalia who are with us in the Gallery today. Osman Yahya Osman and Ahmed Abdul Qadir Muhammed are entrepreneurs who ply their trade on the fringes of Parliament, in Plein Street. Like many of their countrymen and women, for whom South Africa has become a second home, they bring the wisdom and experience of ancient trade routes and practices on the East Coast of Africa and the Gulf. Though establishing businesses where others would tread nimbly, they have brought back life and trade to CBDs and townships alike.

Honourable Speaker; The Presidency Budget we debate today is an important instrument to support our continuing responsibilities to nation building; to the vision of a Rainbow Nation articulated by our Nobel Peace Laureates, iNkosi Luthuli and the Archbishop Tutu, His Excellency President De Klerk, and ufaolude lika Mandela His Excellency President Mandela.

In the words of the His Excellency President Zuma, in his State of the Nation Address a few months ago: "This is the year of going the extra mile in building a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa."

Honourable Speaker; the strands that are woven together, constitute the fabric of our nation, are

expressed through our diversity of artistic, cultural, traditional and religious practices, our languages and sporting activities.

Honourable members, let me take you down memory lane. I grew up in 1373B Ntsebele street, Mofolo village with my grandmother Anna Mosehle. My grandmother ran a shebeen in Soweto, profoundly influenced by the likes of Miriam Makeba's Beware Verwoerd! Indodemnyama; Chicco Twala's We Miss You Manelo (since he couldn't say, Mandela, because the song would have been banned); and Abdullah Ibrahim's Manenberg (an ode to victims of forced removals in Cape Town). We marveled at the rhythm and lyrics of the White Zulu, Johnny Clegg, in his classic, Asimbonanga; and at Hugh Masekela's raspy trumpet in Mandela (Bring Him Back Home).

One of my all-time favourites is Brenda Fassie's My Black President.

Please remain seated, Hon. Maimane, this was not a song referring to you nor commissioned by Madame Helen Zille. Then came Skeem, who was later to ask: Waar was jy? And the same question applies to your colleague, Hon. Malema.

As newcomers to the political scene, you won't remember the days of apartheid censorship. When the creativity of the people was stifled under the jackboots of police and soldiers - and white bureaucrats in black suits and hats.

Artists today, under President Zuma's administration enjoy freedom of creativity and freedom of speech. As this August house, we must insure that we build on the foundations laid by artistic geniuses of our past such that our diversity and freedom of expression contribute to the consolidation of our national and continental identity - and to tolerance, mutual understanding, common purpose and peace.

Honourable Speaker; the African National Congress did not discover the notions of unity, inclusivity or black presidents yesterday.

We are the great and great-great-grandchildren of visionary leaders - Walter Benson Runusana, John Langalibalele Dube, Sol Plaatje, Sam Makgatho, Alfred Mangena, Meshack Pelem, Charlotte Maxeke, Thomas Mapikela, Edward Tsewu, among them - who gathered more than 100 years ago in Mangaung to nationalize the forerunner of a visionary organization.

We are the off-spring of great warriors against colonialism: Solomon ka Dinizulu of the Zulu, Montsioa of the Barolong, Lewanika of the Lozi, Letsie of the Sotho, Labotsibeni of the Swazi, Dalindyabo of the AbaThembu, Sekhukhune of the Pedi, and Khama of the Tswana.

Later on in our struggle for liberation, with many of our principals imprisoned, exiled and banned, a new generation of religious and traditional leaders - including the likes of Imam Haroun, Allan Boesak, Beyers Naude and Desmond Tutu - carried the torch of freedom. They instilled hope and courage in our people in the hardest times; their demonization of the apartheid regime added critical moral weight to our struggle for a better life for all. We need our religious and traditional leaders to continue to lead us in building unity out of our diversity.

Honourable Speaker; We are Children of Africa and take joy in its myriad of languages, dialects and tongues. Besides our 11 official languages, scores of others - African, European and Asian - are spoken on our soil. Section Six of our Constitution specifically promotes the use of sign language, Arabic, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu.

Our cultural and linguistic roots are so deep and diverse that one of the first works of written Afrikaans

from the 1860s was Bayaan-ud-din, an Islamic tract written in Arabic script by Abu Bakr Effendi, who was, himself, from Istanbul, Turkey.

This language legacy is something for us all to cherish. As Tata Madiba reminded us: "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart."

We should beware of allowing English to overpower our other languages. While it is widely understood across the country, being the language of business, politics and the media, we note that English only ranks joint fifth (with Setswana) as a home language.

The use of vernacular languages should be encouraged. The new Xhosa-language publication of *Isolezwe*, in the Eastern Cape, is an important step in the right direction. We should also be publishing newspapers in Sesotho, in the Free State, and in SeTswana in the North West.

Honourable Speaker; the seeds of unity are nurtured on our nation's playing fields every day.

While we have always been a sports crazy people, in the past we were not allowed to play together. We could not identify our strongest players because our teams were racially exclusive. And we could not support our national teams because they did not represent us all. How things have changed!

uTata Madiba deeply understood sport's intrinsic healing and nation-building properties. Our Rugby World Cup and African Cup of Nations trophies bore testimony to the almost spiritual power conjured when a nation comes together in common purpose. We saw this spirit again in 2010 when we hosted the FIFA World Cup. It is a spirit that comes alive each weekend, from the dusty fields of rural Limpopo and the Eastern Cape to the plush turf of the magnificent stadia in our cities... a spirit that carries our athletes to incredible heights on the cricket fields and tennis courts, and in the swimming pools of the world.

These sportsmen and women are among the nation's most visible and important ambassadors. They wear our national colours, sing our anthem and represent us all.

Honourable Speaker; it is incumbent on all South Africans to embody President Mandela's vision of a unified nation at peace with itself, its continent and the world.

Through actively acknowledging and promoting our diversity we add muscle to our heritage of tolerance and mutual respect. And we add flesh to our mission of creating a better life for all.

For as long as there is a single child crying with the pangs of hunger, mothers walking long distances to get buckets of water and young people idling away their precious lives anywhere in Africa - for as long as there is poverty, inequality and unemployment - our struggle for freedom is not over.

President Nkrumah's words are as apposite today as when written 54 years ago: "Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world."

To which Mwalimu Julius Nyerere was later to add: "No builder, after putting the foundation down, complains that the building is not yet finished. You have to go on building and building until you finish."