



**DEBATE ON THE STATE SECURITY AGENCY (SSA) BUDGET
VOTE BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY,
HONOURABLE G.N. KODWA, 18 JULY 2019, PARLIAMENT,
CAPE TOWN.**

Honourable Chairperson of the Session
Minister of State Security
Ministers and Deputy Ministers here present
Chairperson and members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Intelligence (JSCI)
Inspector-General of Intelligence
Acting Director-General of SSA
Coordinator of Intelligence
Management of Intelligence Services
Intelligence veterans
Distinguished guests

On 20 June 2019 during the State of the Nation Address (SONA), the President of the Republic, His Eminence President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, outlined seven priorities that the new administration will pursue.

These are:

- Economic transformation and job creation.
- Education, skills and health.
- Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services.
- Spatial integration, human settlements and local government.
- Social cohesion and safe communities.
- A capable, ethical and developmental State
- A better Africa and world.

Honourable Chair, it is important to take cognisance of the fact that this budget vote takes place in a time where the country is facing many challenges, both domestically and internationally. Among others, these include, slow economic growth that contributes to high unemployment, poverty, inequality, crime, competition for scarce resources, societal intolerance such as racism that hinders social cohesion and national identity and pride.

It is therefore important to understand what Andrew McCabe says: “there is no world of absolute, complete privacy or a world of complete national security”. In essence, this means that domestic policy objectives are at the mercy of global forces beyond the control of any single government or a state.

Honourable Chairperson, according to Gijs de Vries: “You can’t get closer to the heart of national sovereignty than national security and intelligence”. In this regard, honourable chairperson, I would like to assure the House that we as the State Security Agency take our mandate very seriously.

Honourable Chair, part of restoring the public’s confidence in the Intelligence services will include deliberate acts of professionalizing the service. Therefore, there can be no place for rogue elements within our intelligence services.

As part of building a capable, ethical and developmental State, the President stated during the first State of the Nation Address of the 6th administration that the decisive steps will be taken to end state capture and fight corruption,

as well as take measures to strengthen the State Security Agency, which are progressing well.

For us to achieve this, it is important that we continue to be consistent in implementing the recommendations of the High-Level Review Panel. We will also ensure effective participation in the National Security Council (NSC) once the President has constituted it, to safeguard the country's national interest.

All governance and operational challenges confronting the State Security Agency are being addressed. In our commitment towards ensuring good governance, as the political leadership of this organisation, our resolve is that we will not allow the culture of impunity to prevail. Similarly, we commit to holding accountable all those who exercise power and responsibility within the State Security Agency.

Honourable Chairperson, we are the 'guardians of peace, democracy and the defenders of our Constitution'. As the organisation, we will not deviate from what the Constitution enjoins us to do as stipulated in Section 199(5) that 'the security services must act in accordance with the Constitution and

the law, including customary international law and international agreements binding on the Republic’.

Where we have deviated from these constitutional prescripts, corrective measures will be implemented in order to have an organisation that protects the constitutional order of this country.

In line with our former President, Mr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, in his opening statement during the opening of the Intelligence Head Quarters, now known as Musanda, on 5 December 1997 in Rietvlei, he reminded us that: “The challenges facing democratic South Africa are without doubt different from the challenges of yesterday. In the past, the single biggest threat to the security of our people came not from outside, but from our law-enforcement agencies including the intelligence services. All of these structures formed an integral part of the oppression of the majority in our country. Our new constitution does much to ensure that this never happens again”.

Honourable Chairperson, one of the worrying trends we have observed is the increasing resistance to vetting by government officials, including the officials who work in SOEs, while a widespread failure exists in respect of Heads of Departments who refuse to act against those that resist the vetting process.

In addition to this, deficiencies in the supply chain management environments of many government departments and other state-owned entities remain of concern and, if not addressed, will result in the continuation of corrupt practices.

The trend of appointing service providers without subjecting them to security screening is alarming and needs to be urgently addressed in order to prevent irregularities on the scale revealed through investigations, commissions and review processes.

Ineffective integrity management as a result of unvetted government employees also remains one of the most vivid threats to state information,

systems and processes. Corruption, theft and other forms of crime involving state employees continue in government departments despite the commendable efforts that have been made by government since 2018 to uncover serious corruption.

Chairperson, while we flag these threats and request for compliance from all stakeholders on the one hand, we will address the challenges of vetting capacity in the Agency through adopting modern technologies and simplifying vetting processes by introducing amongst others e-vetting, on the other hand. We will also consider utilizing our veterans in order to speed up vetting throughout the country.

In this regard, the finalisation of the Vetting Regulations and Information Security Regulations will be expedited and upon approval, be immediately implemented.

In addition, we recommend that the Protection of State Information Bill (POSIB) be reconsidered, or referred to the Constitutional Court to provide

an opinion on the constitutionality thereof, in order for review processes and the requisite amendments to be applied within the timespan of the 6th Administration.

Chairperson, our responsibility in terms of our mandate is to ensure conditions of peace and stability in our country. This includes our efforts to combat terrorism and extremism in all its manifestations. Terrorism knows no borders and South Africa is not immune to international and regional developments. We cannot afford to be complacent and reactive. This includes our efforts to understand, prevent, mitigate and combat terrorism and extremism in all its manifestations and dealing with its consequences.

South Africa will update its existing National Counter-Terrorism Strategy in accordance with international developments and obligations. We have initiated the draft amendments to the Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorism and Related Activities Act (POCDATARA) to strengthen the robustness of our counter-terrorism legislation.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) will assess our counter-terrorism financing provisions this year (in 2019). Combating international terrorism is

a task we cannot accomplish alone but by working together in partnership with other security services both at home and abroad.

Gangsterism in our communities remains a source of concern. These gang activities are motivated, amongst others, by revenge killings, changing of gang alliances based on need, expansion of drug territory or area of operation, diversification of the criminal enterprise such as extortion, money laundering and other related criminal activities.

In addressing this challenge, we will review and update the Anti-Gangsterism strategy and maximise the utilisation of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, leading to the increased prosecution of individuals and groups involved in gangsterism.

Chairperson, the lack of intelligence coordination has had tragic consequences in certain parts of the world. Thus, intelligence coordination is essential to deal with the threats we face as a country.

Coordination should cut across, from the provincial to the national sphere of government so that the threat picture is clear and complete. In this regard,

we will ensure that the culture of working in silos is stopped with immediate effect by capacitating our collection and coordinating structures.

Chairperson, I am happy to inform this house, that despite all the challenges the SSA has faced over the years due to its prolonged changes and high turnover of leadership, the members remain resilient and continue to serve this country to the best of their ability.

The transformation agenda will be heightened to make sure that members perform to the best of their abilities and that a culture of cohesiveness and performance is built. For this, the tireless efforts and never-say-die attitude of these unsung heroes and heroines is greatly appreciated.

As the High Level Review Panel Recommendations are implemented, drastic steps will be undertaken to ensure that the well-being of members are attended to.

Amongst many recommendations, the process of reviewing the Promotion Policy will also be started and this will go a long way towards motivating and

addressing issues of low staff morale, most importantly, rewarding the gallant work of the members.

Change management processes will be facilitated to enable membership to adapt to these impending changes in line with the recommendations of the review panel.

May I also Chairperson, mention that intelligence officers are a strategic assets of this organisation and in this instance, and we will soon be doing roadshows to engage with the intelligence community across the length and breadth of this country on their wellbeing and challenges that confronted them. This is part of us demonstrating our commitment and to show how much these assets are valued by the nation.

To ensure the future survival of the State Security Agency and the intelligence community far beyond our term of office, we will empower the youth and women in this organisation.

In this regard, we will continue to recruit across the country young people in order to refresh the agency and close the gap that is created by attrition as

quickly as possible. In this instance, the Intelligence Academy will put in place the necessary training and skills programmes with a view to maintain continuation.

Chairperson, as part of the strategy to deal with the ageing organisation, which is a concern that was raised by the JSCI, I am glad to announce that today in our midst we have graduates who completed BA degrees in Human Social Science and Political Sciences from the Universities of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Free State respectively.

It is important to note that these young women are permanently employed by the State Security Agency. In the same breath, allow me Honourable Chairperson to acknowledge the presence of our second year LLB student from the University of Western Cape who is a bursary beneficiary from the State Security Agency. These young stars benefited from the SSA bursary programme aimed at empowering formerly disadvantaged citizens particularly focusing on the youth.

In Conclusion

Honourable Chairperson and honourable members let me conclude by quoting our President of the Republic of South Africa, honourable Cyril Ramaphosa. In assessing the road ahead and work to be done to get our country working again, the President said “to achieve the South Africa we want will demand an extraordinary feat of human endeavour. The road ahead will be difficult. We will have to use our courage, wisdom and perseverance to achieve the South Africa we want. It will require an ambition that is rare”. Indeed this is what we are gearing the SSA for.

Lastly, let me express my unqualified gratitude to the Minister and the Ministry staff for their unwavering support and by assuring our members and the country at large that the time for talking is over. I also wish to thank my family for their patience, understanding and support. It is now time to act! Siyakhawuleza!!

I thank you.