

State of the Province Address (SOPA) by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Ms Sylvia Lucas, on the occasion of the Sixth session of the Fifth Legislature

21 February 2019

Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley

The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature;

Members of the Executive Council;

Members of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces;

Members of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Judge President of the Northern Cape, Judge Tlaletsi

Heads of State Security Services;

Chairperson of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA);

Mayors and Leaders in our system of Local Government;

Our Honoured Traditional Leaders and Veterans of our Liberation Struggle;

Heads of State Institutions supporting our Constitutional Democracy;

The Director General, Heads of Department and Leaders of the Public Service;

The Vice Chancellor of Sol Plaatje University, Professor Ballim

Goodwill Ambassadors of the Northern Cape Province;

Chairperson of the ANC

Secretary of the ANC

Leaders of the Alliance

Government Officials

Captains of Industry

Distinguished Guests

Fellow citizens of the Northern Cape

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ladies and Gentlemen, It is indeed an honour and a privilege to address this august house today as I deliver the final State of the Province Address of this current administration. As we gather here, we find ourselves in the midst of a new dawn in our country, which is set to put us on a new political and socio-economic trajectory. As I reflect on the progress made during this administration I am proud to acknowledge the strides that have been made in our journey towards the economic and social emancipation of the people of this beautiful Province. It is critical to note that a single term of government is too short a time to complete our project of building a prosperous, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa, where all our citizens can share in the fruits of opportunity. Our efforts to massively reduce poverty and roll back the extreme inequalities of the apartheid era have only begun to take effect. As this collective, that was granted the opportunity by the ruling ANC, we were driven by a common purpose to improve the lives of our people. This will allow for a seamless transition into the sixth administration.

Honourable Speaker, before I elaborate on the progress made during the term of the current administration I need to take a brief historical retreat to place our journey into context. Firstly, I need to acknowledge our struggle heroes and heroines, who have their roots grounded within the **confines** of the Northern Cape and their legacy impacting locally, nationally and abroad in the attainment of freedom. This acknowledgement is important because our freedom can never be taken for granted. We must continue to honour those men and women whose love for their country and its people motivated them to sacrifice even their lives for our freedom.

On the 27th April 2018 the Northern Cape Government unveiled a monument to honour Kgosi Galeshewe, Luka Jantjie and Kgosi Toto for their efforts in fighting back against colonial oppression, for economic emancipation and land reform. I would also like to acknowledge Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje, a founder member of the ruling party and first Secretary General of the African National Congress. The Sol Plaatje Municipality and the Sol Plaatje University are named after this liberation icon, intellectual, politician and astute writer.

As we celebrate 25 years since the advent of our new democratic dispensation, we also need to pay homage to Frances Baard who fiercely fought for justice and freedom. She was born in Green Point, Kimberley, on 1 October 1909 and we acknowledge her lifelong contributions in the struggle for freedom. We in particular remember her contributions in terms of her active involvement in 1955 with the drafting of the Freedom Charter and her role in the Women's march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 9 August 1956 in protest against the pass laws.

As we deliberate on the 25th year dispensation of our post-apartheid democracy we need to reflect on the contributions of Prof. Z.K. Mathews in our journey to attaining the political, social and

economic emancipation of our people. Prof Z. K. Mathews, who was born in Kimberley, assisted with the crafting and the subsequent production of the Freedom Charter in 1955, in which his broad intellectual outlook resonates. The Freedom Charter is a unique document in that for the first time ever, ***the people were actively involved in formulating their own vision of an alternative society.***

As we head for the polling stations to exercise our democratic right, a right that many others lost their lives for, to cast our vote on the 8th of May 2019, we will also be celebrating the 23rd anniversary of the adoption of the South African Constitution on 8 May 1996. It's important to note that the preamble to the South African Constitution echoed the Freedom Charter, namely:

“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.”

The Freedom Charter therefore has created a solid foundation for our internationally acclaimed South African Constitution and the National Development Plan (NDP). We are, therefore, privileged and strengthened that, even in his physical absence, a century after his birth, we have at our side and in our vanguard, Z.K. Mathews, as we continue the struggle for the economic and social emancipation of our people. In order for us to realise the objectives of this struggle we have crafted a 20 Year Vision for the Province – the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP - Vision 2040) which is spatially referenced within the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) and grounded within the National Development Plan and the Freedom Charter. As we enter a new era in our political landscape it is important that our people are actively involved in formulating their own vision of an alternative united society; that we join hands from all spectrums of our social matrix, namely, the private sector, civil society, the youth, academia and every one of our citizens of the Northern Cape. ***Let us take up the challenge for renewal and rebuilding our country and our amazing Province. Let us grow the Northern Cape Province together!***

Even though tremendous strides have been made over the last 25 years there is a need to identify innovative ways of addressing the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality, which are still entrenched in our the Province and to jointly identify strategic interventions to fast-track radical economic transformation, social transformation, environmental sustainability and good governance.

Honourable Speaker, let us take this opportunity to reflect on each of these drivers of change and a new dawn by innovatively addressing the challenges of unemployment, poverty, inequality, rural marginalisation and spatial injustices.

Good Governance

The construction of the Developmental State, as the ruling party's preference, will play a central and strategic role in the economy, hence focusing on the much needed radical economic transformation to meet the needs of our people. In South Africa the developmental state is essential to the National Democratic Revolution and for the consolidation of democracy. It should be realised that precisely because of its **interventionist approaches**, the developmental state brings into close proximity the administrative and political interface. The achievements of the democratic developmental state must always be measured by its capacity to **promote pro-poor, people-centred**, shared, sustainable (employment generating) development and growth in an environment which respects and nurtures democracy and institutions of democracy and respects the constitution and the rule of law.

The Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) was released as Government's strategic plan for the 2014-2019 electoral term. It reflects the commitments made in the election manifesto of the ANC ruling party, including our commitment towards implementing the National Development Plan. The MTSF was released in 2014 and in ensuring the delivery of government's priorities, the Province finalised the provincial Programme of Action (POA) in 2014 translating the priorities of the NDP and the MTSF into tangible deliverables.

Ladies and Gentleman, I quote the words of the late Minister, Collins Chabane, Minister of Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and the Administration

"If we are to improve our performance we have to reflect on what we are doing, what we are achieving against what we set out to achieve, and why unexpected results are occurring. We cannot advance without making mistakes on the way, but we must evaluate and learn from our successes and our mistakes. Without this we cannot improve."

The Province has indeed put these words into action through the performance monitoring of the Provincial Programme of Action. This has been established as an institutionalised regime in the provincial administration over the last 5 years – ensuring delivery of Vision 2030.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) has certainly been established as one of the key management functions in the Province further supporting the NDP objectives Building a Capable State.

Good governance and accountability stand at the forefront of building a capable state and to this end the province has finalised its first Provincial Evaluation Plan in 2018 with the aim of ensuring that a culture of continuous improvement in service delivery is maintained in the Province,

reflecting on performance and making the change thereby reducing the gaps between vision and reality.

The lack of a coherent long-term plan in the past has weakened our ability to provide clear and consistent policies. It has limited our capacity to mobilise all of society in pursuit of our developmental objectives. It has hampered our efforts to prioritise resource allocations and to drive the implementation of government's objectives and priorities. In addition, weaknesses in the coordination of government have led to policy inconsistencies and, in several cases, poor service delivery outcomes.

In 2014 we committed to Institutionalise long-term planning

Therefore, in response to the need for a long-term perspective, focus and determination to realise growth and Development in the Northern Cape we have developed the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP- Vision 2040) and reviewed the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF). There are specific priorities identified within the PGDP and the PSDF where we can commit ourselves to improving outcomes and then develop focused plans, which includes the identification of Province specific strategic indicators and interventions for how this can be achieved.

The Provincial Planning Forum (PPF) was established in 2016 with the purpose of coordinating the development and implementation of the PGDP Vision 2040 and review of the PSDF. The Planning Technical Committee was also established in November 2018 with the purpose of fast-tracking the spatial planning capacity at municipal level, the securing of funding for the development of municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and Land Use Management (LUMs) Spatial Planning capacity building. Addressing spatial imbalances in the Province is a key component of Radical Economic Transformation.

Strengthening trade relations and economic diplomacy

Honourable Speaker, for us to fast-track the socio-economic transformation in the Province we have increased the strategic engagements and accelerated our economic diplomacy efforts, creating new trade opportunities aimed at opening market access, increasing investment and deepening existing economic ties. We are committed to building a resilient provincial economy, while contributing to meeting our international obligations, thereby contributing to the development of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and to the implementation of the regional integrational programme in attaining the Africa 2063 Vision.

The association of friendship and cooperation that is established between the Northern Cape Province and the //Kharas Region of Namibia underscores our commitment to open a window of friendly relations with nations on the African continent. To this end, we have jointly promoted cultural, people to people interaction and boosted the flow of knowledge/skills through the educational exchange programmes in our schools. The preservation and introduction of the Nama language in two of our schools was made possible through the participation of our Namibian counterparts through the teaching of the language. This programme focuses on building capacity with regard to the language and Nama literature in the Province.

On the economic front, we will jointly be launching a tourism booklet at this year's Durban Tourism Indaba in May, which contains information on all the historical, heritage, tourist routes and attractive tourist sites of both countries. The commercialisation of the goat project has been expanded into Namibia between the department of agriculture, and its public entity Kalahari Kid and emerging farmers in Namibia. A training exchange programme will benefit students on cutting and polishing of jewellery at the Kimberley International Diamond and Jewellery Academy (KIDJA)– the first intake is planned for June 2019.

We need to pass on our friendship from generation to generation and always be good neighbours living in harmony.

The Northern Cape Province also enjoys favourable relations with the People's Republic of China, Hunan Province. The areas of cooperation centred on tourism cultural and heritage exchange programmes, agriculture, finance, mining, energy, technology and human resources. The parties have developed an action implementation plan to promote substantial exchanges and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. We should build on the momentum generated by these relations toward greater socio- economic benefits to both nations.

We also support the initiative to develop an infrastructure roadmap in collaboration with the new BRICS Development Bank in funding sustainable infrastructure. We are also committed to supporting South Africa in setting the pace in the implementation of the BRICS agenda and the SADC Industrialization Strategy as pertaining to the Northern Cape Province. We need to ensure that the programmes, initiatives and interventions are responsive, accountable and beneficial to the needs of our people.

Skills development and capacity building

Honourable Speaker, skills development and capacity building are key elements of a developmental state and in 2014 we committed to the improvement thereof. A commitment was also made to strengthen the partnership with the private sector, academia, trade unions and community structures in the delivery thereof.

As the Province we will continue to prioritise targeted skills development and capacity building programmes such as Learnerships, Internships, Work Integrated Learning, Artisans programmes and the awarding of bursaries and study loans. These mechanisms will enable us to create opportunities for the youth, especially for those who are not actively participating in some form of education, training or employment. During 2018 we were able to enrol about 3405 learners into such programmes, of which, 973 learners were registered within Artisan Development programmes. This would not have been possible without the SETAs who are our key partners in this regard.

In terms of unemployed beneficiaries, 870 internships were granted and 916 learnerships were granted. However, the availability of workplace placements remains a challenge for the Province to expose these learners to workplace learning. To ensure the success of these programmes we call on all companies, both big and small, to participate in these initiatives and thereby contribute not only to building their businesses but also to building the much needed skills for the economy and fostering social cohesion.

The National Development Plan (NDP) recommended the introduction of a Formal Graduate Recruitment Scheme in order to achieve a professional public service, which is a career of choice amongst graduates with scarce skills that are essential to achieving the mandate of the State. This scheme should co-exist with, rather than replace, other recruitment mechanisms in the public service. The scheme has been endorsed by the national Cabinet for implementation and as the Province we will ensure that departments participate and implement this scheme led by the Office of the Premier. On the 6th of September 2018 Cabinet further approved a suite of mandatory and compulsory programmes for public servants to be delivered by the National School of Government (NSG) with effect from April 2019. The Office of the Premier in partnership with the NSG is already working on a plan to ensure that the public servants in our Province participate in such programmes to improve the capacity to deliver services.

Bursaries and Study Loans

The Office of the Premier has launched a PGDP Logo Design Competition aimed at encouraging the youth to actively participate in the development of a long-term vision in the Province. The winner will receive a full bursary to study at the Sol Plaatje University. The winner of the competition will be announced before the end of this financial year.

As part of our commitment to the development of young people in the Province who want to access higher education opportunities on a full-time basis for those that possess academic

potential but do not have the means to realize it, we will make financial resources available to students in need through the provision of bursaries. During this term of government, bursaries were awarded in the Province by Government and the Premier's Trust Fund, where we spent in excess of Four Hundred and Seventy-Six Million (R476 000 000.00) Rand over the current MTSF (2014-2019) period. Our partnership with the Mine Managers Forum over the past three years has seen funding to the tune of four million Rand for learners at institutions of higher learning. In addition to this there are also students who receive financial aid from some of the Independent Power Producers. We continue to engage the Independent Power Producers and other private sector partners to formalise agreements so that learners from the Province can benefit on a larger scale. **We are in the process of developing a system of centralising all bursaries and study loans of all departments within the Office of the Premier where these will be tracked and traced.**

Honourable Speaker, I recall in 2007 the former Northern Cape Premier, Dipuo Peters highlighting in her speech, at the launch of the Provincial Human Resource Development Strategy, that being able to fight socio-economic challenges like poverty and underdevelopment, especially for those in the marginalised areas of our vast Province, requires human resource development programmes. These programmes ensure that people fully participate in all areas and levels of the economy. Ms Peters also emphasised that the structure of the economy in the past pushed the majority of poor unemployed and unskilled people into the second economy. It is important to note that skills development may not be an immediate solution to poverty and underdevelopment but can be a key catalyst for growth and development, by addressing the causes of redress, capacity building, equity and empowerment. The skills development matrix developed for the Province, in collaboration with our key knowledge partners has to be responsive to industry needs and demands within the economy by producing graduates with the relevant qualifications needed by the labour market.

Honourable speaker, I would like to encourage and support initiatives such as the investment of R4,5 Million from ABSA Bank to Sol Plaatje University designated to support the University and the Northern Cape Province's efforts to develop the field of Data Science. This is particularly relevant for Strategic Integrated Projects (SIP) such as the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) - SIP16. We would also like to acknowledge and commend SPU for the establishment of the Siyanqoba SPU Olympiad Training Programme which is an outreach programme for High School Students who have an ability and interest in Mathematics.

Last year we reflected on the Sol Plaatje University's positive contribution in improving the education level of the youth in the Province. In this academic year, 2019, the University registered 1860 undergraduate students compared to a total of 1560 for all programmes in 2018; whilst the

registration of post graduate degrees is still on-going. In addition to this the university is offering Honours-level programmes in Data Science, Sociology, Teacher Education and Public Management. The Education and Public Management programmes will be offered in a manner that suits working adults.

We are once more proud to report that SPU's average pass rate for 2018 was 83% and that, of the 214 students who graduated in 2018, 182 students completed their qualifications in the minimum time.

In line with government's commitment to the right of access to higher education for the poor, about 80% of the undergraduate students will be supported by external bursary or grant funding. Most of these will be from National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) grants (approximately 60%) while the rest (20%) is from Funza Lushaka, SETAS's and commercial funders. Included in the funded group is around 200 students who have yet to be assessed by NSFAS but it is expected that they will be funded.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is important to note that 2019 is SPU's sixth 6th academic year and it sees the first postgraduate programmes being offered by the University.

We are pleased to note that in contributing towards Research and Innovation in the country the University is working towards establishing the SPU Knowledge Hub for Rural Development based in Carnarvon. This will enhance the rural community development aspect to the establishment of the SKA. The proposal for this has been well-received by the Department of Science & Technology, the Department of Tourism, the Carnarvon community and the Northern Cape Provincial Government.

Another proposal has been submitted to the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development for SPU to be allocated a portion of land on their research farm outside Carnarvon in order to establish accommodation facilities for people who will be coming to the area to conduct research, such as offices, seminar and laboratory facilities that SPU will require. The request has been approved by the MEC for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. The University will now start the process of formally acquiring the land and then raising funds for the infrastructure development.

Honourable speaker, I am pleased to acknowledge that on our journey to total emancipation we have been successful in increasing opportunities for the previously disadvantaged to access post school education. However, in the past few years, it has become apparent that the skills produced by the Post School Education and Training (PSET) sector does not meet the needs of industry. As

a result, the country has a high unemployment rate amongst graduates. South Africa still imports skills that are required in the engineering fields, medical fields as well as other technical fields. It is for this reason that the Post School Education and Training (PSET) sector should re-evaluate their programme offerings, reflect on the way that they are doing their business and start to address the immediate skills shortages that the country and especially the Province is facing. On the other hand, the government should look at its funding model and regulatory framework to ensure that the country's skills shortages are addressed. In order to achieve this we would like to encourage the establishment of a partnership between government, academia and the private sector to fund and conduct a comprehensive skills audit in the Province.

To try and find solutions to these challenges the Office of the Premier in collaboration with UNISA, SPU and the TVET Colleges will be hosting a Skills Seminar in the Province in the new financial year. A provincial PSET committee chaired by Unisa has already been set up to drive the sector's agenda in the Province and will report to the provincial HRD Council in this regard.

Corruption

Ladies and gentlemen, the fight against corruption remains on the agenda of the Provincial Government so much so that we have ensured that all provincial departments have anti-corruption policies and strategies including anti-corruption implementation plans. When we say that we are serious on fighting corruption, we stand firm alongside the President of the Republic when he called for stronger action against corruption and crime; be it in the public or private sector.

The footprint of corruption in government should not detract from an equally obvious fact that misuse of public funds for private gain usually involves two parties, the corruptor and the corrupted. Under the guidance of the Anti-Corruption Unit, we hosted a successful stakeholder engagement session with participants from both the private and public sectors. In re-enforcing the need to inculcate anti-corruption measures I made a call at the session that collectively we should consolidate the ethos of public service and develop a conducive working environment that will prevent corruption, thereby ensuring that the relevant services are delivered to the public in an effective and efficient manner. We acknowledge that this is an ongoing battle and we wish to encourage all whistle blowers, even members of the public to come and assist in this fight.

The Northern Cape Provincial Government in collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Public Service Commission, the Public Protector, the Hawks and the SPU have formed a Corruption Commission in the Province.

Local Governance

Honourable speaker, at a local government level, there is a need to bring about more effective and efficient public service delivery by government and its executive public sector institutions. Local government has come a long way since the period of entrenched of racially segregated municipalities characterized by spatial inequality and injustice..

I am pleased to announce that the number of municipalities with Disclaimer of opinions have been reduced. However, the challenge still remains to increase the number municipalities with unqualified with no matters of clean audit outcomes.

This term started with the province registering 31% clean audit reports, 46% unqualified with matters and 38% of the auditor's financial statements were qualified by the office of the Auditor General. No disclaimer of opinion was registered. In 2015/16, the Province performed well, with 92% of the auditees receiving unqualified audit opinion, of which 31 % was clean.

Honourable speaker, I am pleased to note this improvement since I had, impressed upon all accounting officers and Chief financial officers to improve on financial management and ensure improved accountability to the Northern Cape community. Only one department was qualified in the said year. By the end of the term, we saw a slight regression whereby two departments were qualified whilst the 11 out of 13 were unqualified.

The province has 7 listed public entities and their performance over the period under review is commendable. The performance of entities has remained unchanged over this MTSF cycle. The number of unqualified audit remained the same with the fluctuation in the number of clean audits. The NCTA is one entity that has been consistent in its audit outcomes. The entity has managed to sustain its clean audit over the the MTSF. In 2017/18 , the province recorded very good audit results from the listed entities as two(2) received clean audit opinions, three (3) were unqualified with findings and two(2) were qualified. It is also worth mentioning that in the last five(5) years, no entity received a disclaimer of opinion. The challenge with most of these entities is their sustainability and the National Treasury (NT) has recommended that the province relook at the number of entities within the province. The process to rationalise these entities must be concluded as soon as possible.

Municipalities

The province had 32 municipalities that were reduced to 31 when Mier Municipality was merged with the then Khara Hais municipality to form a new amalgamated municipality called Dawid Kruiper. The Municipalities performance over the year indicates minimal improvement since more than 60% of the municipalities are still receiving unfavourable audit outcomes.

The audit outcomes at the beginning of the review period were disastrous with 65% of the provincial municipalities receiving disclaimer opinions and nine (9), which is 29% municipalities received qualified opinions from the Auditor General South Africa (AGSA). This was due to failure of providing supporting evidence to substantiate the figures reported in the annual financial statements. The province registered only two (2) unqualified audit opinions which represented 6%. The situation improved over the past number of years and the province registered more unqualified audit opinions and there was a reduction in the number of disclaimers. By the year 2013/14, only 11 out of 32 municipalities were disclaimed. We noticed more and more municipalities moving away from disclaimers, to qualifications. The number of unqualified audit reports also increased from 7 in 2012/13 to 11 in 2017/18. This can be attributed to support provided by provincial government. The number of disclaimers have decreased from 65% in 2007/08 to 13% in 2017/18. As at 2017/18, the province recorded eleven unqualified audit opinions of which one (1) was without any findings (clean), nine (9) qualifications, four (4) disclaimers whilst six (6) municipalities failed to submit their financial statements on time.

In terms of MIG funding an estimated R317 million was spent on bulk and reticulation sanitation projects, R260 million on water projects, R322 million was spent on roads and storm-water and R107 million was spent on public amenities like sports, solid waste and parks from 2010 to date.

COGHSTA has developed an Indigent Register Verification Process Guideline. This guideline has been developed to assist municipalities with the implementation of their indigent register verification process. This will ensure that free basic services lead to an increase in a quality of life and access to economic opportunities, which is an essential part of the design of the implementation.

The service delivery environment is influenced by external factors such as cooperation between SALGA, traditional leaders and local municipalities in fully implementing legislation affecting traditional communities. National and provincial governments should also through legislation or other means allocate roles and functions to traditional councils and their leadership.

According to the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003* (Act 41 of 2003), the place and role of the institution of traditional leadership should be taken into account and the preservation of traditions, customs, cultures and values of people promoted as it also represents the early forms of governance and societal organization. A process is currently underway to formally recognize and remunerate the Northern Cape's Khoisan communities. This process will come to fruition once the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill is signed by President Ramaphosa. The Bill was passed by the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) in January 2019.

As a Province we view the signing of this Bill as a tribute to the memory of Dawid Kruiper, a traditional healer and leader of the #Komani San in the Kalahari who had a clear resolve and determination that the land belonging to the rightful owners be returned to them. His submission to the United Nations in 1994 to lobby for the rights of indigenous people, paved the way for successful land claims for the San people culminating in the restoration of forty thousand (40 000) hectares of land in 1999.

Honourable Speaker, I would like to thank the following stakeholders are actively involved in empowerment programmes in the traditional communities and are actively contributing to service delivery:

- Motsepe Foundation: Donating wheelchairs to disabled community members, renovation of schools, donating bicycles for schools, funding a vegetable project and chicken run
- JTG Development Trust: Building and maintenance of traditional council offices in Gamorona and Manyeding; providing office equipment to the TC offices
- Kgalagadi Mine: Providing mobile clinics. Donated mobile offices to traditional councils, awaiting delivery. Donated JoJo Tanks and equipment.
- National Lotto: Old Age Facility
- W&RSeta: Training of 119 women, youth and disabled in business entrepreneurship

In order to facilitate and maintain improved public service delivery at the grassroots level in SA, more effective intra-, inter- as well as extra-governmental relations are essential.

A Local Government Summit will be held within this financial year to deal with a myriad of pressing issues within the local sphere.

The Premier's Intergovernmental Forum (PIGF) serves as strategic platform in the Province as a mechanism for the three spheres to interact and collaborate with one another. The Forum meets on a quarterly basis to assess and find practical solutions to the basic delivery demands of our communities on matters such as water, sanitation, electricity and good governance.

The approach is anchored on the five pillars of the back to basics programme, which is to provide basic services, putting our people first, good governance, sound financial management and building institutional and administrative capability.

To date, the PIGF has laid a solid foundation for municipalities and entities of government such as Eskom, Sedibeng Water, SARS and others to enter into proper arrangements to settle the issue of debt amongst them. Through the joint coordination and management practices, dysfunctional municipalities have also been identified through the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, which will now receive technical support to eliminate inefficiencies in our municipalities to ensure improved service delivery in our province. Progress on

resolutions taken at the PIGF are continuously tracked and monitored to ensure effective cooperation between its strategic partners.

The PIGF successfully intervened over the impasse between the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison and the affected municipalities over the vehicle licencing fees. Guidance and support was also provided during the migration of the SASSA card issuance from CPS to SAPO and a range of other intergovernmental disputes.

Executive Council Outreach

In giving expression to the concept of participatory democracy, the Executive Council Meets the People Programme has been a cornerstone of our democracy in the Northern Cape. Our commitment to the people is further echoed by the fact that this Northern Cape Executive makes every effort possible to listen to the people of the Northern Cape, no matter in which remote part of the Province they find themselves in. During this process we have interacted with a multitude of communities, no problem being too big or too small to listen to and seek a lasting and valuable solution for it. The general need expressed during these programmes was housing, student financial aid, dignity pack programmes for boys and girls, food security and generally unblocking service delivery challenges. This Executive Council Outreach programme of Provincial government has been a great source of relief for our communities and we should continue on that path in future.

Economic Transformation

Ladies and Gentlemen, as I reflect on industrialisation and the global phenomenon of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which is said to radically and fundamentally change the way we work and live it leads me to think about the Northern Cape Province during the Second Industrial Revolution. Mineral discoveries marked the beginning of the industrialization of South Africa's agrarian economy. With the discovery of diamonds in the late nineteenth century Kimberley became an industrial hub with a flourishing market not only in terms of employment opportunities, but also in meeting the needs of the growing population. It was during this time that **the trend of Kimberley as 'a city of firsts'** became entrenched. It was at this time that we housed South Africa's first stock exchange, the Kimberley Royal Stock Exchange, the first town in the Southern Hemisphere to install electric street lighting, the first direct dialing telephone, the first school of mines which later relocated to Johannesburg, becoming the core of the University of the Witwatersrand, the first school of aviation, the first professional nursing academy, Robert Sobukwe started the first black-owned law practice firm in Galeshewe, and more recently it is the first Province to develop Spatial Legislation. The apartheid era stunted this progressive trend and left a legacy of a "Big Hole".

Honourable Speaker, the Northern Cape is correctly placed to once again lead another industrial revolution. Innovation in term of industries, sectors and entrepreneurial opportunities must be approached by embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This will be crucial not only to advance opportunities and new sectors, and diversify the economy but also to overcome the numerous challenges we face.

In this regard we are also guided by recently unveiled stimulus package released in 2018 as well as the Job Summit Framework Agreement. This recovery package has several broad elements to it, namely the implementation of growth-enhancing economic reforms, reprioritisation of public spending to support job creation, the establishment of an infrastructure fund, addressing urgent matters in education and health and investing in municipal social infrastructure.

Honourable speaker, we have introduced a variety of interventions, regarding both of short term and long term benefits, to address the commitments made in terms of job creation and economic growth.

Employment has picked up since 1994 but we need to innovatively do more to address the challenge of meeting the target of 24 million employed by 2030. In terms of job creation, the results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the fourth quarter of 2018 released by Statistics South Africa, reveal that the Northern Cape unemployment rate declined from 27% to 25% in Quarter 4 of 2018. This is the lowest unemployment rate in five years. Year-on-year, the unemployment rate declined by 2.1 percentage points and a quarterly decline of 2 percentage points.

In order to address the aspect of unemployment, poverty and inequality there is an "urgent" need for government, labour and industry to radically transform the economy by promoting the manufacturing sector and diversifying the economy. The labour-intensive nature of manufacturing is captured within a number of government documents to provide us with the necessary policy directives in this regard and includes the New Growth Path (NGP), the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP). The NDP has called for the diversification of the economy away from its centuries-old reliance on mining to ensure the country's reindustrialisation, thereby creating new job opportunities. We need to focus our efforts within the manufacturing sector which can create job whilst also promoting economic growth.

The manufacturing sector, however, has shed 25 000 jobs and is now employing almost 400 000 fewer people than at the start of 2008 (the most recent peak). Moreover, the sector's employment intensity (number of jobs per R1 million of real GDP) has been declining steadily for a prolonged period, reflecting its diminishing labour absorption ability in a highly competitive global manufacturing arena. It is however, interesting to note that year-on-year changes show that gains

in employment were mainly driven by the mining and manufacturing sectors. The mining sector employs 27 000 people compared to 23 000 in the previous quarter and an increase of 2 000 year-on-year thus indicating that the mining sector is gaining momentum due to recovery in commodity prices. The manufacturing sector currently employs 17 000 people which is the highest number recorded for this sector. **This indicates that the manufacturing initiatives implemented in the Province are slowly reaping benefits.**

In the past 10 years more than 193 000 work opportunities were reported on the EPWP Reporting System. Provincial Departments reported 140 519 work opportunities while municipalities reported 53 390 work opportunities.

To ensure economic growth that will lead to increased development and prosperity for the people of the Northern Cape Province, a conscious effort is required to change the economic trajectory of the Province.

To achieve this, the following growth and economic growth paths have been identified:

Innovation and the Knowledge Economy (ICT)

The Provincial Economic Colloquium that took place in July 2018 under the theme “Advancing socio-economic development through innovation and investment in the Northern Cape” was a great success with round table discussions held to gather knowledge and inputs from experts, academia, businesses, potential investors and government stakeholders. These inputs will contribute to the development of the Economic Blue Print for Trade and Investment and to an investment booklet to encourage investments in the Northern Cape Province.

Key resolutions emanating from the Economic Colloquium include the establishment of a Provincial Innovation Forum. The Forum will engage all stakeholders in particular the youth in improving integration of research and development as well as innovation into everyday economic and social life of Northern Cape communities. The Sol Plaatje University has agreed to be convener of the forum and a proposal has been submitted to CSIR for funding. Eight letters of commitment have been received in this regard.

Honourable Speaker, The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is a key game changer in the knowledge economy. The SKA core near Carnarvon will be supported by satellite stations in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Together, the combined collecting area of these antennas will be roughly one square kilometre. The SKA will be one of the largest scientific research facilities in the world and it is envisaged that it would consolidate the Southern African region as a major international hub for astronomy and

cutting-edge technology. The best thing about these sorts of developments is that they push the boundaries of what people think is possible. It is central to the business of the country –**space is a natural innovation driver**. It can also be used as a tool for training and skills in different areas. At the moment we do not have the technological capabilities to realize the kinds of things that we want the SKA to do. The need for the production of new electronics and software has the potential to revolutionise manufacturing in the Province.

The MeerKat can be seen as an innovation and technology platform for our future generations, at the same time advancing research and development in the Province. As an international collaboration, the SKA is also sponsoring mathematics and science teachers in the Northern Cape and creating great excitement and interest in field of science.

We were greatly pleased to be part of the Launch of the 64 Dish MeerKAT Telescope, which was held on the 13th July 2018 officiated by the Honourable Deputy President Mr. DD Mabuza. The role that the Province played throughout the development of this mega-science project, hailed as the most sensitive radio telescope in the Southern hemisphere has not gone unnoticed. Through this project we currently have 10 learners from Carnarvon High school participating in the SARAQ Undergraduate Bursary Programme. Of the 1054 students which have been trained under the SARAQ HCD Programme between 2016 and 2018, respectively. In terms of this six (6) students are enrolled at the Sol Plaatje University. The electrical artisan training programme at Klerefontein is ongoing. In total 73 people are enrolled for artisanal training. Training at this facility is open to learners from the anywhere in Northern Cape and is fully sponsored.

Plans are at an advanced stage for the establishment of the Carnarvon Science Exploratorium, the cost estimates of which stand at R62 million. The initiative aims to leverage off the SKA project to create a visitor centre that equals other world class facilities of its kind, showcasing the SKA science in a user-friendly environment. It is estimated that 102 permanent jobs will be created through this initiative.

Agriculture and Agro-Processing

A key component of the Agricultural sector is food security. It is critical not only for food security, but as a sector with growth potential, especially with regards to agro-processing that is now growing faster than that of the manufacturing sector as a whole, and making a significant contribution to employment. Two specific areas of opportunity have been identified, hemp/marijuana and the liquor industry. South Africa is already a major player in the international liquor economy, yet there are substantial imports of spirits. Given that the country has the skills and grows the ingredients to produce e.g. brandy, whisky, tequila (made from Agave that grows in

the Karoo) and similar liquors, there is an opportunity to capture local expenditure on spirits. Legalising the growing of marijuana and hemp for medicinal and textile (and possibly recreational use) purposes could support small-scale farmers – many of whom may be familiar with these crops.

One of the key obstacles is the equity in terms of in the access to and ownership of land. In terms of redistributions the following allocations were made:

- 435 014.2 hectares of land were acquired and allocated
- 84 589.41 hectares of land were allocated to smallholder farmers.
- 3 018.624 hectares of land were allocated to farm dwellers and labourtenants.
- 179 286.3 hectares of land were acquired for labourtenants, farm dwellers, small farmers, AVMP and restored in terms of restitution Act.

In terms of restitution forty-three(43) land claims were settled and one hundred and sixty-four (164) land claims were finalized.

Agro-processing initiatives include the following:

- On farm infrastructure
 - Graafwater, Kap-Kap, Valpan, Dankbaar, Farm 107 and Bellsbank were linked to the redistributed land in ZF Mgcawu, Namaqua, PixleykaSeme, JTG and Francis Baard respectively
- Other key projects include:
 - Namaqua irrigation development
 - Rooibos development
 - Vanderkloof fisheries
 - Vaalharts Revitalisation
 - Vineyard development Scheme

The severity of the current drought has re-emphasized the importance of a vibrant and sustainable agricultural sector, yet contrary to the past decade, where performance was supported by factors such as the commodity super cycle, progress in the coming decade will have to be achieved in an environment of weaker economic growth and lower commodity prices, mainly through increased productivity. Through a partnership with the private sector, the government is implementing an Agricultural Policy Action Plan. APAP proposes a number of transversal interventions that complement but also go beyond the specific sectoral interventions identified. One of the major interventions has been the promotion of Agri-parks (or cooperatives) and clusters in each of the 27 poorest district municipalities.

Mining and Mineral Beneficiation

South Africa is well known for its production of coal, gold, platinum, zinc, fluorspar and diamonds. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) shows that the global diamond production reached 150.86 million carats valued at about \$15.87 billion in 2017. The mineral industry has been a critical component of the Province's economy since the start of diamond mining in Kimberly in 1888 and remains so today. De Beers, which is imbedded in the history of the Province, has indicated in the 2018 'Diamond Insight Report' that a new record has been set with a high of \$82 billion in 2017. The driving forces behind this demand were the Millennial and Generation Z consumers who accounted for 66% of the global diamond sales.

As much as the mining houses seem to have captured the attention of the youth, it is critical for the Northern Cape Government to also reflect on the impact of the mining industry on the lives of our people in the Province, especially the youth.

We note that mining-affected communities continue to bear the greatest burdens of mining - losing farmland to mining operations, facing environmental harm and degradation suffering from illnesses caused by pollution. More recently we have seen the retrenchment of miners, with the concomitant miseries that unemployment, poverty and deepening inequality brings. Our government interventions in this regard require partnerships with our mining houses and other key stakeholders in order to realize our objective of the revitalization of mining towns in the Province. In a spirit of cooperation, we can jointly transform the mining industry in the Northern Cape. It is critical to ensure now that, going forward, that the people of this Province reap the long-term benefits of its mineral wealth.

In the era of the most "Radical Small-Scale Mining Transformation Agenda", in our lifetime I am saddened to say our people still battle with bread and butter issues. Our people are impoverished and their dignity has considerably diminished, not because of their ineptness but rather of a legacy we must unshackle from. The consequence of this legacy is that we do not benefit from our mineral resources; the benefits are rather left in the hands of a few. We are working tirelessly to turn this around to ensure that our people benefit from the multitude of mineral resources at their doorstep.

Through the intervention of the Office of the Premier, in consultation with the Batho Pele and Goedemoed Mines, the national Department of Mineral Resources has agreed to issue Small-scale mining permits. This has set the Northern Cape on a path to embark on a new era of development, shaking the foundation of the colonial economic establishment. The Northern Cape Small-Scale Mining community is often confronted by a wide range of challenges.

An Inter-Ministerial Committee was also established to oversee the implementation of integrated and sustainable human settlements, improve living and working conditions of mine workers and determine the developmental path of mining towns and the historic labour sending areas.

The main objective of the Mining Town Revitalisation Programme is the eradication of informal settlements in the main mining towns throughout South Africa. In the Northern Cape, the following key six (6) municipalities were identified for the implementation thereof:

1. Sol Plaatje Municipality
2. Phokwane Municipality
3. Tsantsabane Municipality
4. Dawid Kruiper
5. Gamagara Municipality
6. Ga-Segonyana Municipality

The funding of R 20 000 000.00 (Twenty million) for each municipality has been ring-fenced in terms of the Division of Revenue Act (DoRA), the lack of bulk water, sanitation and electricity precludes the successful implementation of the programme.

The Northern Cape Province is rich in minerals, particularly diamonds, zinc, copper, iron and other base metals, limestone and manganese. The iron ore industry is globally competitive, with South Africa being seen as a major role player. We acknowledge the positive initiatives of some mining houses such as Orion Minerals who is conducting a feasibility study on the Prieska zinc/copper project – a volcanogenic massive sulphide-style deposit –with the aim of establishing new operations at the site which has been inactive for the last 26 years. The Province houses Gamsberg mine, which is a world leader in zinc mining. President Cyril Ramaphosa through his global investment drive enticed Vedanta, owner of the Gamsberg mine, to increase and expand their investment in the Northern Cape to include a smelter and fertilizer manufacturing factory.

This coincide with the commitment towards developing the Boegoebaai Deep Port Harbour. The Gamsberg mine and related industrial investment warrant the development of a bulk corridor that will strategically link Boegoebaai, the Aggenys Vedanta investment in (Khai-Ma), Upington agriculture hub and airport and Grobblershoop for iron ore and manganese ore. Along this bulk corridor industrial parks and SEZ's can be considered to enable the bulk cargo collection nodes for instance the Gamsberg zinc and fertilizer nodes can be promoted with Boegoebaai and Upington for SEZ status. Vedanta has already invested \$400 million in the development of the first phase of the Gamsberg mine which produced its first finished zinc concentrate late in 2018.

The company is also undertaking a feasibility study to construct a greenfield smelter and refinery at the mine. **We are greatly encouraged by Vedanta's progressive initiatives to lead mining in the Province into the 4th industrial revolution by building a digitalised mine from scratch at Gamsberg operation.** Vedanta's digitalisation vision will be the flagship of Vedanta's South Africa and Namibian operations. This vision will be realised in partnership with the digital industrial company GE South Africa. This initiative will ensure that all available information about, amongst others, the state of the mine, the quality of the ore, the conditions of production and value of the output is readily available for immediate decision-making. The skills transfer to the youth employed out of the surrounding communities will empower them for a new era in the mining industry.

Quartz is also a key contributor for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, since it is used in the manufacturing of semiconductors, fibre-optic cables and ceramics. Fused quartz is a material of primary importance, since it advances the efficiency of solar powered devices. Quartz glass is used in many facets of photovoltaic cell manufacturing, in light sources, reaction chambers, and tools used in the production of solar cells, thin films and silicon wafers. Test work at Riemvasmaak has revealed so far that the silica content is as high as 99.98% on some occurrences. Mintek will provide technical services to Difeme – a black-owned mining start-up company with a focus on the mining and beneficiation of quartz to a purity standard higher than 99.9%. Opportunity exists for the development of a minerals processing and beneficiation plant for high-purity quartz for use in advanced high-technology applications in South Africa.

Kimberley International Diamond and Jewellery Academy

- To date more than 406 learners were trained in MQA accredited courses. Seventeen (17) MQA Level 4 students of which eight (8) for Brillianting and seven (7) Crossworking.
- Of the seventeen students, thirteen have completed their training and their assessments and moderation reports have been forwarded to the MQA for verification.
- De Beers Sightholder Sales South Africa have awarded KIDJA an amount of R500 000 for bursary students.
- ALEXKOR has agreed to provide bursaries for ten trainees from the local Richtersveld communities to attend a MQA level three six month programme for diamond processing.
- Eight fee-paying students have commenced a three month rough diamond evaluation course in 2018 – two (2) of the students were sponsored by ALEXKOR,

Kimberley Diamond and Jewellery Incubator

- KDJI registered and successfully incubated nine (9) new SMMEs to date, twenty-eight (28) clients have been support and sixteen jobs have been created.

Together, a lot can be done to transform the mining sector to benefit our youth and future generations.

Tourism Market Development

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism work vigorously to develop and promote the Province as an equitable, competitive and sustainable tourism destination, to enhance its contribution to the provincial priorities.

In the 2018/19 financial year, 86 tourism entrepreneurs were skilled to improve quality assurance. Forty-three of these entrepreneurs were youth. Through financial support to Tourism enterprises, twenty permanent employment opportunities and thirty temporary employment opportunities were created.

To improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of Destination Northern Cape, the department supported a number of tourism experiences, namely 12 events supported financially, tourist maps were produced for walking trails in Carnarvon, Fraserberg, Sutherland and Williston, and a tourist booklet were produced for Upington Route 26.

In order to ensure an improved provincial tourism industry, key infrastructure projects supported in 2018/19. This included the facilitation of water supply to Hakskeenpan to make it attractive as an open air mega event facility. Coastal tourism infrastructure was improved in McDougall's Bay including upgrades to four tourism information offices. Heritage tourism attractions were rejuvenated such as Riemvasmaak; Wildebeestkuil Rock Art Centre; the Mayibuye Precinct along the Galeshewe Activity Route; McGregor Museum; and Magersfontein Anglo-Boer War Museum. Lastly, tourism route signs were installed on Karoo Highlands Route; Quiver Tree Route; and the Cape-to-Namibia Route.

The Department will continue to improve tourism entrepreneurial skills to support enterprise sustainability and destination competitiveness, as well as improve the product and service quality of black-owned tourism enterprises to support inclusive economic growth.

In collaboration with Northern Cape Tourism Authority (NCTA) we will improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of Destination Northern Cape by completing the precinct plan for Upington 26 Route; and revive the Kimberley Diamond Cup international skateboarding and extreme tourism event.

Tourism infrastructure projects for the 2019/20 financial year include:

- Upgrade of the water treatment works in Rietfontein to establish Hakskeenpan as open-air mega event facility

- Rejuvenation of heritage tourism attractions – Mayibuye Precinct (Galeshewe Activity Route), McGregor Museum, Riemvasmaak, living Khomani San Museum (in partnership with South African National Parks)
- Development of mountain bike trails on the properties of the McGregor Museum.
- Rejuvenation of the Namaqualand 4x4 trail

The Northern Cape Tourism Authority, as the official marketing agency for the Northern Cape will host five Business Events in the Northern Cape during 2019/20. These events will create up to 100 job opportunities and contribute R32 million to the Provincial Economy

Development of the Energy Sector

A report compiled by Deloitte for Eskom has indicated that the mining and manufacturing sectors account for 60% of the country's energy consumption.

The Northern Cape still occupies the central place in the world with regards to the Renewable Energy Sector. The Province is a host to 59 Independent Power Producers (more than 50% of the total number of IPPs in the country). The Province saw a need to host the RE Conference that took place in August 2018 under the theme "driving economic growth and transformation through renewable energy). The objective of the conference was to share crucial information pertaining to the green investment with the aspiring SMMEs, NC communities and the world. Eighteen resolutions were adopted and endorsed by the Executive Council. Skills development dominated the debate at the conference, there is a need to empower the people in the province to maximally participate in the sector.

The Province is now in the process of drawing up Action Plans to implement the conference resolutions to ensure that the people of the Northern Cape Province gain sufficient capacity to maximally participate in the sector. Furthermore, to open a dialogue between the province and the industry role players to agree on the type of support needed to implement transformation in the sector.

The 100 MW concentrated Solar Power Plant, the R11 billion Ilanga CSP1 plant, developed by a black-owned Independent Power Producer (IPP) Emvelo, is located in Upington, has officially entered into commercial operation with 1500 jobs created during the construction phase and 62 will be employed during the operational phase, 22 of whom are young people employed from communities around the plant. These youths will also participate in a 200-hour training programme. It is interesting to note that the 2018 draft Integrated Resource Plan has made no

mention of additional allocations for CSP projects to 2030. The CSP Ilanga has been a good indication that black industrialists are well equipped in the Northern Cape to conceptualise and lead large infrastructure projects. The Spanish Technology Group, Sener, has been actively involved in the engineering and construction of CSP plants which includes the 50 MW Bokpoort Plant, the 100 MW Ilanga 1 CSP and the 100 MW Kathu 1 CSP project which has been synchronised to the grid.

Other Provincial Initiatives in terms of the energy sector include the following:

- Energy efficiency - The Province is currently participating in the Shared Water Efficiency Programme set up by National Public Works and thirty (30) properties have been identified for inclusion in this project.
- Solar energy solutions to public schools - The Northern Cape Government has applied and requested to partner with the Central Energy Fund to roll out solar energy solutions to public schools in the Northern Cape. The solution will be for schools with poor electricity infrastructure and it will promote the changeover to solar energy as a less expensive and environmentally friendly alternative.
- Installation of solar energy solutions in our schools - The Northern Cape is a regional solar hub of energy in Southern Africa. The spin offs both in terms of the manufacturing sector and the creation of the much needed employment are immense. Should this bid be successful, the Province will form part of a national pilot by the Department of Energy for the installation of solar energy solutions in our schools.
- Solar water heaters - Together with the Department of Energy, we will also be introducing the second phase of the rollout of solar water heaters in the Sol Plaatje municipal area. Part of the programme will entail the training of young people to maintain and repair the geysers.

Manufacturing and Trade

While there is a perception that advanced manufacturing has a negative impact on jobs, international experience suggests the opposite. A World Economic Forum (WEF) newsletter states that while technology is often blamed for unemployment, in practice jobs were not disappearing but evolving – job losses in one sector often mean gains in another. It is also well known that manufacturing activity is associated with good economic multipliers and an International Finance Corporation (IFC) study has also shown that the job multiplier effect rises as the manufacturing becomes more sophisticated, from about two for traditional manufacturing to 15 for the most advanced forms of manufacturing.

The Northern Cape has ample opportunities to grow its manufacturing base in a broad range of sectors and industries. Northern Cape is also rich in resources. A new zinc mine project at

Gamsberg is attracting large amounts of foreign direct investment, as are several solar farms. The province's huge iron ore mines remain profitable. The prospect of a Special Economic Zone at Upington could boost the manufacturing sector, especially with regard to renewable energy components. The Province has experienced a high volume of mining activity without the corresponding rise in manufacturing and related long term economic and social benefits, and job creation. For the Province to grow, there has to be a shift towards industrial minerals and value addition. The Department is in the process of establishing the Metals Industrial Cluster to promote manufacturing of steel and metals related products and ensure value addition. Located in Kuruman, it is to be constructed on 47 hectares of along the N14. It has the potential to create approximately 10 000 jobs with an investment potential of R500 million.

The establishment of the Kathu Industrial Park by the IDC in collaboration with the mining companies will give added impetus to the metals cluster. Kathu Industrial Park development will also include SMME incubators. This is a key enabler for the Kathu Industrial Park and will enable local entrepreneurs to access infrastructure, have a better chance to be suppliers to the mines and enable the mines to comply with the mining charter requirements.

Competitive Infrastructure Development

The Honourable President, Cyril Ramaphosa, has placed the creation of a public –private infrastructure fund at the centre of the economic stimulus package with a dedicated team appointed from the public and private sector to drive this fund. He also announced that over the next three years R400 Billion would be spend on public infrastructure projects. There are eighteen (18) strategic integrated projects and the projects of specific relevance to the Province is SIP 3 and 5 (Transport infrastructure), SIP 8, 9 and 10 (Energy Infrastructure), SIP 14 (High Education Infrastructure), SIP 15 (Communication Infrastructure), and SIP 16 (Knowledge Infrastructure).

We have invested more than R2 trillion in infrastructure projects over the past 10 years to build more schools, clinics, roads and the freight logistics network.

Higher Education Infrastructure (SIP 14) - The construction of the Sol Plaatje University Expenditure since 2013: R 1.56 billion (R 1 564 596.00). Local Jobs were created during the construction phase the SPU Infrastructure Project with an average jobs of 120 jobs per year for last three years. However, there were periods when up to 534 local persons were working on site.

Communication Infrastructure (SIP 15) -The 4th Industrial Revolution is here, technologies are emerging and affecting our lives in how we work, socialise and most of all, deliver services. As the

Northern Cape Provincial Administration, we have embraced this new era of digitization and are working to ensure that we do not lag behind. As a first step in addressing the network infrastructure challenges, we implemented a Provincial Virtual Private Network earlier this month. The next step is a project that addresses the old and outdated technology through a technology refresh project and work has already started. In an effort to drive down Information Technology costs, an Information Technology Shared Service Centre (ITSSC) proposal is approved and a high-level implementation plan has been developed with the development of a detailed implementation plan underway. This Information Technology Shared Services Centre, once established, will drive service delivery improvement across all departments, using Information Technology as an enabler in line with the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Broadband and S.A. Connect - The province in partnership with the National Department of Communications and the S.A. Connect project will be connecting 225 sites over the next 3 years. Site identification and verification has been completed and thus far, 6 sites have been connected. BBI and SITA have been officially appointed to rollout Broadband Connectivity where SITA will upgrade 257 facilities and BBI 313 facilities.

mLAB - The Province in partnership with mLab Southern Africa has established the mLab Northern Cape in Kimberley. This facility will focus on the development of critical skills in mobile application development, business incubation and technology entrepreneurship amongst others this is much needed in our province. mLab Northern Cape will increase the province footprint in the establishment of innovative enterprises through the development of local ICT solutions for local problems. The recruitment of the first intake, that is, sixteen participants, is scheduled for early March, next month.

Road Infrastructure - The Department of Roads and Public Works provides road infrastructure which is a balanced, equitable provincial road network that is accessible to all. According to the most recent condition assessment data of 2018, the overall condition of paved DRPW roads can be classified as good, and holds a VCI network status of 77%. Substantial preventive maintenance from 2012 increased the average network condition from mid fair to good in 2018. The technical needs determined for the provincial road network amounts to R8,6 billion and an additional R1,3 Billion is required for rehabilitation. An audit was conducted of 371 bridges and the findings indicates that there is an ageing bridge stock in need of repair and maintenance requiring R38 million for bridge maintenance and R136 million for critical repair.

The Northern Cape is still heavily impacted by drought with especially areas in the winter rainfall area experiencing below normal rainfall for the last four years. Since 2018 various drought projects to the value of R36.8 million have been implemented through the Provincial Disaster Management

Centre in our groundwater dependent towns and villages such as Port Nolloth, Garies and Calvinia to ensure a reliable basic water supply. A further investment of R9.7 million will be spent this financial year to address the persistent water shortages in Buffelsrivier in the NamaKhoi municipality.

As part of the regional bulk infrastructure programme several major bulk water supply schemes are under construction and making good progress. These include the Namakwa and Vaal Gamagara schemes which are key to sustaining and opening up new opportunities for growth in the Province. We are glad to announce that the people of Loeriesfontein in the Hantam Municipality now have access to good quality reliable water supply following completion of the Loeriesfontein Bulk Water Supply in June 2018.

There are still a myriad of water and sanitation challenges facing the Province, but we are confident that through further investments through our Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant and Water Services Infrastructure Grants these will systematically be addressed. Water and sanitation master plan for the Northern Cape will seek to consolidate interventions required and develop a comprehensive implementation plan towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the National development Plan vision 2030.

The Maritime Economy

It is estimated that the oceans economy has the potential to contribute up to **R177 billion** to Gross Domestic Product (**GDP**) by **2033** (compared to R54 billion in 2010) and create approximately **1 million jobs** (compared to 316 000 in 2010).

The mine assisted and contributed in terms of the following during 2018:

- Driver Assistance Project - total expenditure of R395 000.00 for 82 people
- Student Assistance – total expenditure of R637 850 .00 towards different institutions for 116 students
- Local Area Committee – total expenditure of 401 824 .00 towards 26 community projects under categories such as: Education, HIV-AIDS and Wellness, Education, Environment, Sports, Arts and Culture

DAFF has received an Expression of Interest for an abalone hatchery in the Northern Cape which now needs to be actioned. Feasibility study currently being undertaken.

In terms of Coastal and Marine Tourism projects that were implemented in the Northern Cape in 2018 which includes the:

- Orange River Mouth Master Plan
- Concept development for Hondeklipbaai and McDougall's Bay Campsites
- Feasibility Study for Northern Cape coastal aviation infrastructure
- Concept development for Kleinzee Beach Precinct
- Hondeklipbaai -Port Nolloth Master Plan

We need to drive and embrace a vision that show cases the entrepreneurship and innovation through cultivating a conducive environment for a thriving private sector and strong civil society institutions, with shared and complementary responsibilities. We are therefore committed to forging closer relationships with the Private Sector, Chambers of Business, State Owned Entities, Development Finance Institutions and Academia to deliberate on the development of an Economic Blueprint for the Province. Through joint commitments we can put the Northern Cape on a path – an Economic 2040 Vision which will ensure economic transformation, inclusive growth and social justice for all.

To grow and enable the South African economy a quadro partnership will be required that all South Africans as government, society, knowledge partners and industry alike will have to commit to!

Ladies and gentlemen, I implore you to take on this challenge. Let us take transform and build the economy of the Northern Cape together.

Environmental sustainability and Resilience

The Northern Cape Province has an abundance of natural resources and environmental assets. While these present a plethora of economic opportunities, a concerted effort must be made to ensure that these are protected and enhanced. At the same time, the Province must ensure that enough is done to protect communities against the potential threats of environmental harm and unsustainable resource exploitation.

The green economy presents a real opportunity for the Northern Cape to reposition the economy along a developmental path, which is resource efficient and generates low levels of carbon emissions.

We call on all members of the public to join us on the 8th March 2019 in the Sol Plaatje Municipality as we heed the call by the Honourable President Cyril Ramaphosa to have a National Clean-up campaign.

A Provincial Climate Change Summit is being planned for March this year, and will serve as a catalyst for departments to develop sector specific climate change action plans to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Social Transformation

According to Statistics South Africa, households living in formal housing increased from 83.6% in 2014 to 86% in 2017. The past 10 years we have built houses for our people in all five districts of the Northern Cape and are committed to providing adequate human settlements and quality living conditions, which will remain a priority for the Province going forward.

Social grants are renowned to reduce poverty. Just about 38% of the population received some type of social grant in 2017/2018. The number of Northern Cape social grants has steadily increased from 97 610 in 1999/00 to 471 432 in 2017/18. This reflects an increase of 9.1% per annum. Most grants are child support grants (65%), followed by old age grants (18%) and disability grants (11%). Over the past years a total of 98 629 individuals benefited from the social relief programmes. The total budget for social relief programmes amounted to R 58 998 million from 2009/10 to 2017/18.

The Balelapa Household Programme is the most comprehensive poverty alleviation programme in the Northern Cape aimed at waging the War Against Poverty one household at a time through an integrated basket of services.

The main focus of the social relief programme is to render temporary relief to families experiencing undue hardship and distress as well as those affected by natural and unnatural disasters. Social relief is usually provided in the form of, amongst other things, food parcels, blankets, school uniforms and household utensils.

Addressing challenges of food insecurity in the province through the Sustainable Livelihood programme of which Drop-in-Centres, Soup Kitchens and food production initiatives have been established. For the past eight-years (2009/10 to 2017/18) a total of over R 79 867 million was spent on the provision of meals through the soup kitchens (social development supported on average about 110 soup kitchens annually) An additional R 61 437 million was spent through Drop in Centres of which part of their mandate relates to the provision of meals and developmental programmes.

To date, the Northern Cape Substance Abuse Treatment Centre has been completed and handed over to the Department of Social Development. The recruitment process for the staff of the treatment centres has been finalised, to date 67 officials have been appointed on a permanent basis (fixed contract), and three people have been appointed on a sessional basis, namely; the Medical Practitioner, the Occupational Therapist and the Psychologist. In February 2019, the Department had its first intake of 32 service users for a period of three (3) months in-patient treatment service.

The Department has trained 245 social workers through the National Social Work Scholarship Programme of which 209 have been absorbed while 36 remain unemployed. However, due to challenges to absorb social work graduates, the National Department of Social Development has suspended scholarship intakes.

In Advancing Transformation of the Northern Cape's Heritage Landscape We recognise Credo Mutwa - a Traditional leader, a Sanuse, African Indigenous Knowledge Expert, Spiritual leader, herbalist and Organic Intellectual - enormous role, sacrifice and contribution in transforming the Heritage Landscape of the Northern Cape as well as the Country, we honour him through the CREDO Mutwa Museum and Library which will be completed and opened later this year.

The declaration of the Richtersveld as a World Heritage Site is also a notable success in preservation of our heritage.

Since 2017 because of serious protests and upheavals in the arts sector we resolved to change the Social Cohesion Summit to become Artists Summit addressing the concerns of Artist in the Province. In 2017 the Summit was held in Upington and in 2018 in Kimberley. We as province is also committed to promote indigenous languages and foster usage and preservation to protect them from extinction. The 2019 Artist Summit which will be held in November will not only focus on the challenges artists experience in their industry but will also extend to Writers and a key component will be the WRITERS Guild, Roundtables on Nama and Xhu and Khwe Languages. The initiative is also complemented by the implementation of Nama in Riemvasmaak and KoeboesSchool's curriculum in 2019.

Resistance Liberation Heritage Route (RLHR) - The three (3) Provincial Liberation Heritage Route Projects i.e. Mayibuye Route in Galeshewe, Upington 26 in Paballelo and Langeberg war of Resistance in Kuruman are all continuing in 2019. The commencement of feasibility studies of which each project will receive R500 000 .00 to do the study will commence in June 2019.

Health

We will be judged by our effectiveness in delivering services that meet the basic needs of all citizens. The health sector's plays a critical role in the delivery of public service that our people most value although we need to reflect on our achievements the past 5 years we must also take stock and recognise the challenges in the delivery of essential healthcare services within the province as to plot the path to prosperity for the next 5 years. The province has made significant progress in the delivery of healthcare services, witnessing improvements in health systems and population health outcomes over the last two and a half decades. Since 1994 major improvements and key achievements:

- The average life expectancy at birth increased by 8 years for male and 9 years for female over the past 10 years between 2008 and 2018. Average life expectancy at birth is 60 years for male and 66.3 for female in 2018.
- In the Northern Cape Province, 89 health facilities out of 159 which is (56%) of facilities achieved ideal clinic status in 2017/18 financial year. This shows there is continuous improvements in ideal clinic realisation and maintenance status.
- Health financing - Finance can make healthcare services more accessible and affordable to all. Health sector was the second largest recipient of the provincial total budget following to Education. For instance, the allocated budget to health sector increased from R1,577,465 in 2008/09 to R4,735,195 in 2018/19. The allocated budget showed a 200% increase between 2007/08 and 2018 financial year. The financial inputs have supported to produce many commendable health outputs and outcomes, though all needs are not always adequately addressed.
- Reduction in HIV/AIDS - The province has one of the lowest HIV prevalence rate in the country. Strengthened prevention programmes which resulted in reduction in the HIV positivity rate among 15 – 49 years, from 7.5% in 2012/13 to 4.0% in 2017/18 financial year.
- TB - The treatment success rate increased from 0% in 2007 to 66, 5% in 2016 and notable decline in mortality rates has been observed amongst XDR patients (i.e. 76.5 in 2007 to 32.3% in 2015). The opening of the TB site at the Dr Harry Surtie Hospital not only contributing reducing work burden at West End Hospital, but also assisting patients to get the required services at the closer vicinity.
 - Partnerships - Partnership formed with 11 mines to address TB in the mining sector. These mines are now rendering health services to non-medical aid mine workers and their families
- Maternal and Child Health - A significant improvement in maternal and child healthcare outcomes reported due to government's free healthcare services access policy and high coverage of antenatal care and other services. For instance, antenatal care services obtained

by 64% of pregnant mothers in 2017/18 financial year, compared to which was 52.9% in 2011/12 financial year. The integration of PMTCT and maternal and child health also contributed for reductions in mortality rates. The MMR figure shows significant decline from 250 MMR per 100,000 live births in 2009/10 to 67 MMR per 100,000 live births in 2017/18 financial year. This suggested that the province already achieved the 2030 SDG targets.

- Health service infrastructure - Since 1994, the Northern Cape Department of Health has managed to construct new twenty-four (24) clinics, two (2) CHCs and seven (7) hospitals. As well as a number of facilities undergo refurbishment and equipping them with essential equipment required for their level of operation. This was critical to improve the quality services delivery to people living in rural and previously disadvantaged areas.
 - 72 Hour mental health services are rendered in eleven district hospitals
 - Completion of the 287 bed New Mental Health Hospital.
- Capacity scarce skills - Appointment of personnel in the order of 300 plus between the years 2012 and the current year, either by way of contracts or advertising.
- Going forward our immediate attention will be toward improving health care infrastructure and providing quality health care services. Collaboration with social partners have shown improvement in the quality of healthcare services as well as health outcomes.
- This facility was renovated on behalf of the client department, the Department of Health. The New De Aar Hospital is designed to accommodate 158 beds, level 2 service hospital and 24 staff accommodation units. The construction of the New De Aar Hospital Health facility is undertaken in De Aar, Emthanjeni Municipality, Northern Cape. This facility needs to be developed to serve as a Level Two hospital for the south-eastern part of the Northern Cape.

Education

Education is a critical aspect in emancipating our people from the scourge of poverty and economic marginalisation. From early childhood and continuing throughout the course of a working life education has tremendous potential to combat inequality and unlock the potential of individuals and entire economies.

In 2014 we committed to aspects which include the improvement and expansion of education and training, greater support for the needs of students.

According to the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), school violence and bullying occur mostly inside and around the school premises such as play grounds. The ZF Mgcawu Education District held two very successful School Safety Symposiums on 19 September 2018 at the District office. It was attended by Upington School Principals and their respective SMTs, SGBs, SAPS, DTSL, DoJ and the Speaker of the Local DawidKruiper Municipality.

The same programme unfolded on the 20th September in Keimoes, Kakamas and Groblershoop, and on Friday, 21 September 2018 in Postmasburg and Rietfontein. Some of the critical discussions and resolutions emanating from these engagements include:

- That there is a need to improve physical security;
- That there is a need to share stakeholders (such as unions, DSD, SGB Bodies, SAPS, Council, etc.) initiatives and expand successful programmes where possible
- It is imperative for social partners to build on work done in promoting safe schools.

Roundtable conversations on School Safety were held on 10 October 2018 in Hopetown, whereby all provincial education stakeholders were invited and took part.

The Northern Cape Department of Education has entered into partnerships with the South Africa Police Service, culminating in the signing of the Provincial School Safety Protocol by the MEC of Education, the MEC of Safety & Liaison and the Provincial Commissioner of SAPS. This partnership supports the objectives and priorities of both departments to reduce crime and violence in schools and in communities.

Collaborative Programmes:

- DSD – Victim Empowerment and Support, KeMoja, substance forum
- Department of Justice – Human Trafficking, Child Justice Act, Trafficking in persons and cyber bullying
- South African Police Service: Crime and Violence in Schools based on the collative protocol
- DTSL – Safety Debate

The Provincial Early Childhood development (ECD) is currently being coordinated and developed by the Department of Social Development, whilst the DOE's role has primarily been in terms of the development of the curricular. The province is currently facilitating the migration of this mandate from the Department of Social Development to the DOE in collaboration with the national departments.

The Department was allocated R13 million in terms of the ECD Conditional Grant for the appointment of staff and maintenance and infrastructure upgrade in order to improve registration status of ECDs from bronze to gold registration status. Sixty Six (66) ECDs were identified for upgrades to the value of R130 000,00 per centre, however, only 65 centres qualified for the upgrades. As at 31 March 2018, 60 ECD's had successfully been upgraded. This has led to increased access to children 0-4 through subsidy of R 15 per child per day for 264 days to 1 221 children in 11 Centres.

The migration of ECD to education will address a number of challenges, namely safe infrastructure conducive to learning and teaching, increased access to the +/- 72% who are currently locked-out of ECD services, funding for ECD services and training, capacity building and retention of ECD practitioners.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it fills me great pride to congratulate Amy Lee Visage and Chrislin De Koker, from the Carnavon High School, for winning a national tourism research competition for their contributions on Astro-Tourism benefits in the region. I also need to congratulate Danté Jansen from Northern Cape High School achieved 1st place at the National Radical Debating Competition in the Province and the public speaking team from the Staats Primary School in Kimberley won the national competition.

I am especially proud of the ZFM District for winning the national top performing district in both Mathematics and Physical Sciences from 2015-2018.

The 2018 NSC Results:

- A total of 9 909 candidates (+1638 more than last year) completed the NSC Examination, of which 7 264 candidates passed;
- The Northern Cape recorded a pass rate of 73,3%, a decline of 2,3%;
- All Districts recorded a pass rate above 70%; Namakwa District 83.7%, ZFM District 74,6%, JTG District 73,2%, Frances Baard District 71,4% and Pixley Ka Seme District 70,2%;
- Four (4) schools have recorded a 100%; 1 562 candidates obtained distinctions; 2 589 candidates obtained bachelors passes;

The Northern Cape Department of Education will through the School Guardian Programme provide special attention to underperforming and chronic underperforming schools, in an effort to ensure that no school in the Province achieves less than 75% pass rate in the National Senior Certificate Examinations in 2019 and beyond. As a means of ensuring continued quality basic education, the last education summit resolutions will be implemented as a matter of urgency.

The School Guardian will address and mitigate the poor performance in the 2018 NSC examinations. The purpose of guardians is to conduct baseline assessments of school efficiency and report on and attempt to address any identified inefficiencies. The guardians serve as direct link between the school and the relevant units/directorates/chief directorates within the department responsible for efficient management of schools and the curriculum so that the necessary guidance and support can be rendered.

As our honorable Mr. Nelson Mandela said” education remain our most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” we are still committed in realizing his vision and education remains core to our long term development agenda 2040 and the province is not only producing tomorrow’s leaders but we are also enabling them to embrace the global landscape, more so in this information age. The year 2018 was a year to celebrate the achievements of our youth – the voice of the Northern Cape is loud and clear.

- Grade 11 SA winners of the GTTP-SA Innovation in Tourism winners from Carnavon High School (Amy-lee Visagie; Chrislin de koker)
- Nicole Rief (9) LaerskoolKleinzee – nationale Gr. 3 Spelkampioen 2018 - Sanlam WOW Spelfees (more than 300 students competed and 129 Schools)
- Dante Jansen – Northern Cape High school – 1st Place RadikaleRedenaars National Competition in Pretoria 2018
- Carnavon HS Robotics Teams will represent SA in Uruguay this year.

Since the announcement by President Cyril Ramaphosa to eradicate all PIT latrines, we have identified twenty-three (23) schools in the province for urgent interventions. To date nine (9)schools received additional ablution facilities. The remaining schools will be addressed towards the end of this year.

Crime

Crime does not only impact on the safety and wellbeing of our people but it seriously threatens the economic development of our Province as a whole. The annual release of crime statistics therefore gives us an indication whether we are on the right path and where we need to improve and work harder to ensure that we protect and serve or people to the best of our abilities.

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Ladies and gentlemen, it is encouraging to note that the Province has recorded a decrease of - 3.8% in reported crime. However,forty-two thousand five hundred and forty (42 540) of priority crimes that have been reported for the period under review remains a serious cause for concern.

We have learned that murder has decreased by -1.2%, which is a decrease of 4 cases compared to the previous financial year. Attempted murder has also decreased with -12.7%, which represents a decrease of 70 cases. In general crime remains an unnecessary evil that we can

most certainly do without. The number of murders will always be of grave concern because one murder, one act of violence, one robbery is one too many.

Although the total sexual offences have decreased, this still remains an indictment on the life of the victim and as Government we call on especially men to lead the charge against protecting our women and children against these heinous acts.

We also need to enter into partnerships to ensure that those found on the wrong end of the law are successfully rehabilitated for integration into their communities. One such partnership, which is commendable is the one between the DawidKruiper Municipality and the Upington Correctional Services Centre. This is done through the municipality donating seedlings and materials which the Correctional Services uses to plant food gardens and produce coffins. These are then provided to families in aid of relief especially for funerals. Further to this, the Department has also constructed 24 wendy houses, which has seen them win the "Centre for Public Service Innovation Award". I want to applaud the municipality and the department and encourage more such innovative partnerships.

Gender Based Violence

South Africa is among the countries with the highest rate of violence against women and children (VAW&C) despite the political will the unprecedented body of laws and world best practice model institutions to address this scourge. Several studies have attempted to identify the root causes of VAW&C in South Africa, and revealed that these comprise a complex web of factors that have conspired to make VAW&C an accepted norm. To un-root this plague will take a fundamental transformation of societal attitudes and mind-sets cemented over generations and every day reinforced by culture, tradition, religion, popular culture and the media, to mention but a few, that is, we need the deconstruction and reconstruction and development programme (RDP) of the mind-sets of members of the society, including perpetrators and victims.

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women states that "*violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.*" (Article 1) It further asserts that states have an obligation to "exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons." (Article 4(c)) Gender Based Violence has been identified as a critical challenge facing the province with political commitment expressed at

different stages in addressing the scourge. A Gender Based Violence Strategy is currently being developed in the Province.

The safety, security and quality of life of our women and children cannot be politicized. It is a societal issue that transcends race, political, religious, cultural and socio economic spheres and it therefore calls on all of us to join hands and to collectively fight this scourge. South Africa can end violence against women and children through the collective efforts gender activists, religious groupings, bold men and women and society in general.

In the fight against abuse of women and children, the Inter-Faith Sector was identified and have therefore successfully hosted the very first Interfaith Sector Summit in an effort to mobilise the interfaith sector to work with government as we exorcise the demon of senseless violence against women and children. We have also held our inaugural civil society summit to ensure that we develop a comprehensive programme in our fight against poverty, unemployment and other social ills.

The fight against violence against women and children and in general calls for a collective effort to combat such. In the past rallied men to be the example to others in their condemnation of violence, hatred and bullying. I am pleased to announce that we have made serious impact with this programme and I call on all men to form part of these Men's Forums as well as join our Call to Action programmes.

The platform has been extended to boys and I am pleased to announce that the Deputy Minister of Social development in collaboration with the Provincial Department will convene a boy's assembly in March to get boys and young men to join in the fight against violence and bullying.

There is a white paper on persons with disabilities which guide all Departments to mainstream persons with disabilities. Ideally we want to see a representation of persons with disabilities in the formal job market and more than that to be trained to become self-reliant. Our efforts towards this will be doubled in the next three years with a greater focus on the job training as well as disability awareness and integration programmes.

Our The Moral Rejuvenation Movement (MRM) was revived in 2017. In 2018, all five MRM district municipalities a MRM Forum was established.

Youth

The Northern Cape youth households consist of 24,2% of the total households in the Province Youth with no school has diminished over the last fifteen years. There is, however, a need to promote post-school education. We are very pleased to have one of the first universities of the

post-apartheid era, the Sol Plaatje University, in the Northern Cape to create access to and opportunities within the post-school education environment.

The youth population was 34,2% of the total population in the Northern Cape. A positive growth rate of youth experienced over the last five years in the Northern Cape. It is interesting to note that the Pixley ka Seme has a higher proportion youth population with the country. To date we established 25 Youth Service Centre across the province to provide a range of youth development services and programmes in terms of social cohesion and basic life skills interventions. Since 2013 more than 2000 youth benefited from social development skills development initiatives.

Youth unemployment and development is undoubtedly a priority to our Government. The focus of this administration has been and will always be to increase economic participation and empowerment of designated groups including the youth. The Provincial Economic Growth and Development Fund (EGDF) and other funding instruments in the tourism sector have always prioritised Black women, youth and people with disabilities. Going forward, the objective is to fast-track the development of youth employment and empowerment strategy in order to achieve a paradigm shift in this group from job seekers to job creators. It will also explore the establishment of a Youth Business Development Fund within the current resources envelope of the EGDF and other sector specific funding from Government and other stakeholders.

Conclusion

As we close the chapter of the current administration I would like to thank my Private Office, the Director General of the Province, the Office of the Premier, the MECs, the HODs and all the dedicated public servants who have served under this administration with dedication and high work ethics.

When I took office as Premier of the Northern Cape, a position I accepted with great humility and gratitude towards my beloved African National Congress almost six years ago, I pondered deeply on what this Province that is home to us should be like. What is it that I can do to position us as a home for all and a place of peace and prosperity?

I am a child of the Northern Cape with my roots firmly anchored in the soil of the Kalahari and I stand here today proud of what the collective African National Congress led Government has achieved not only during my term of Office, but as far back as 1994. I have worked with the best of the best, been guided by the humblest and most progressive leaders in the Peoples Movement

and similarly criticised by not only my adversaries, but so too by my peers, my comrades, my friends and my family for which I am grateful.

I stand here today to acknowledge that leadership in our day is not the easiest task but what has kept me grounded is the fact that in carrying out of my responsibilities was my connectedness to my faith life. Amidst my human failures and weaknesses, I knew that I could always return emptied as person to a resource I continue to have in my God that carries us beyond human failures and weaknesses. Assured over and over again of the guidance and strength and wisdom He gives, I knew that through every challenge and difficulty He is with me, He is with us.

A special word of gratitude to my colleagues in the Legislature, the executive Council and the colleague's occupying the opposition benches. We might have been at odds with one another on many an occasion, but I believe that we all worked together for the greater good of the people we were elected to serve. And to all of you out there, every citizen of the Northern Cape and beyond our borders who championed change and who tirelessly worked to make this a better Province than yesterday, I will forever be grateful. You are the change we all need and deserve. That's why I leave this podium today even more optimistic about this Province than I was when we started. Because I know our work has not only helped so many; it has inspired so many – especially so many young people out there – to believe you can make a difference. This generation coming up will need all the assistance, guidance and good fortune they can get. I believe in them and they will ensure that we Grow South Africa Together.

My comrades in the Province and the National Executive Committee of the ANC- Baie dankie vir die ondersteuning, onderskraging, wysheid, leierskap en eerbied. Dit bly vir my 'n eer- en een waar mee ek met my hart en siel uitleef, om te dien onder die vaandel- die geel, groen en goud van die African National Congress- die organisasie van die mense.

Last, but certainly not least to my family, friends, my elders, church people and congregation, thank you.

Allow me to take this opportunity to call on everyone to cast their votes during the forthcoming General Election on 8 May 2019 as announced by the President during his SONA speech. This will be a fitting tribute to those who died in the quest for our liberation and right to vote and to those who still live – those who fought for our freedom and democracy.

I would especially like to appeal to our youth to make use of the opportunity until the 26th of February 2019 to visit the IEC Offices to register to vote.

Let us continue to serve the people of this beautiful Province. Let's join hands as a new chapter begins in our journey towards achieving social and economic transformation and a better life for all in the Northern Cape.

I thank you.