

**CLOSING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**HONOURABLE SE LUCAS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION FOR THE COMMITTEES OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

Venue: Virtual

Date: 02 March 2022

Time: 09h00

Programme Director

Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces

House Chairperson for Committees and Oversight

**House Chairperson for International Relations and Members
Support**

Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces

Chairpersons of Committees and Whips

Permanent Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank all of you for having graced this important session of the National Council of Provinces, Strategic Planning Session for Committees.

We welcome your introspective and analytical inputs in helping us bridge the gap between where we are and where we want to be as an institution as Parliament, which is of paramount importance in advancing, deepening and defending our democratic gains.

Oversight and Accountability

With only two and half years remaining in the sixth dispensation, we must seize the opportunity to embark on strong parliamentary oversight that is outcome-based, vigorous and effective public involvement and we must become more effective in tracking the implementation of strategic policies and programmes.

Our plans must be supported by better communication processes, better coordination and an emphasis on deliverables.

Through our Committee Work we must do away with poor or inadequate coordination of government interventions and the non-enforcement of legislation passed and agreed upon.

We agree with the Chairperson of the NCOP, that our oversight and push for accountability should be undertaken in a manner that takes into account the principle of co-operative governance and intergovernmental relations into consideration.

We further agree with the House Chairperson of Committees, that we need affective Committees that can plan their work ahead of schedule, so as to ensure that there is sufficient time for engagement and implementation.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the 2021 July unrest that left the destruction of business and public and the burning of our national key point Parliament, all illustrate that our transition is one process that is characterised by different phases and emphases. Hence in order to be equal to the task before us, Our Select Committees will need

to be dynamic, flexible and be able to find linkages between plans and budgets, which will ultimately lead to integrated developmental gains.

Gender Transformation

Programme Director, we hope and believe that Select Committees have included in their strategic plans a mechanism to demand that government departments must incorporate tangible gender perspectives into the design, development, adoption and execution of all budgetary processes as appropriated by Parliament, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation to support gender equality.

We further believe and hope Select Committee plans will encourage development of necessary analytical, methodological tools and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, to accelerate the implementation of the Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework and to ensure there is implementation of the Framework across all spheres of government.

Administration of Parliament

Karl Marx on the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, reminds us that “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under-circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past”

To the Acting Secretary and her Collective, we note the reduction of Parliament’s budget by 10%, the burning of Parliament and Covid-19 related restrictions which are hard circumstances not chosen by you but are transmitted by the evolution of society.

However, we applaud you for embarking on a process to redesign Parliamentary services. We welcome the initiative to advocate for technological enabling processes, for less office space, which enables knowledge workers to be more productive, downscaling and phasing out of some services and new ways to measure productivity. Equally, we urge you and your collective to embark on a tight social compact with labour. Work with them, consult them and ensure that whatever changes you bring, they must have limited consequences to the plight of workers and their security. As parliament we must promote equality, inclusiveness and opportunities for all.

We must ensure that we have a motivated and engaged workforce and embark on a continuous process to enhance institutional responsiveness and develop our research capacity in order to enable our Members to be thought leaders and to effectively conduct oversight with sound knowledge and facts.

Parliament must foster greater level of Member capacity and specialization, particularly because the NCOP Member are faced with many issues that they must master in a clustered manner, due to membership composition of the NCOP. The NCOP therefore, needs dedicated attention from the administration to help it achieve its Constitutional mandate.

Conclusion

All the strategic plans of Select Committees must strive to commit us to ensuring open and transparent government and to ensure that we have an informed and active citizenry and that our parliament is people-centred and people driven.

Go and implement your Committee Strategies and may they create the much needed impetus to drive South Africa towards attaining a better life for all.

Thank you