

PARLIAMENT: Following up on our commitments to the people.

in session



Vol. 16 ISSUE 5 2016



Revisiting the past

Remembering the 16 June uprising



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Vision

An activist and responsive people's Parliament that improves the quality of life of South Africans and ensures enduring equality in our society.

Mission

Parliament aims to provide a service to the people of South Africa by providing the following:

- A vibrant people's Assembly that intervenes and transforms society and addresses the development challenges of our people;
- Effective oversight over the Executive by strengthening its scrutiny of actions against the needs of South Africans;
- Participation of South Africans in the decision-making processes that affect their lives;
- A healthy relationship between the three arms of the State, that promotes efficient co-operative governance between the spheres of government, and ensures appropriate links with our region and the world; and
- An innovative, transformative, effective and efficient parliamentary service and administration that enables Members of Parliament to fulfil their constitutional responsibilities.

Strategic Objectives

1. Strengthening oversight and accountability
2. Enhancing public involvement
3. Deepening engagement in international fora
4. Strengthening co-operative government
5. Strengthening legislative capacity



Mace of National Assembly



Black Rod of National Council of Provinces

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COVER: June 16 1976 veteran and now MP Mr Mnyamezeli Booi and PA in the Office of the National Council of Provinces Mr Kwazikwenkosi Mthethwa admire an exhibition at Parliament of Dr Peter Magubane's iconic photographs of the Soweto uprising. The photographs, which are lodged at Parliament, were exhibited to commemorate 40 years since the uprising.

Presiding Officers

Ms Baleka Mbete, Ms Thandi Modise,
Mr Lechesa Tsenoli and Mr Raseriti Tau

Secretary to Parliament

Mr Gengezi Mgidlana

Editor-in-Chief

Luzuko Jacobs

Editor

Moira Levy

Acting production editor: Mava Lukani

Design and layout: Vishaal Lalla

Copy editors: Jane Henshall and
Vusumzi Nobadula

Writers: Faith Kwaza, Temba Gubula, Mava
Lukani, Sakhile Mokoena, Abel Mputing, Jane
Henshall

Photography: Mlandeli Puzi, GCIS

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EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES

Telephone 021 403 8738 **Fax** 021 403 8096

E-mail insession@parliament.gov.za

Subscriptions zjzils@parliament.gov.za

Post PO Box 15, Cape Town, 8000

OUR IDEALS

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of South Africans and ensures enduring equality
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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strengthening oversight and accountability;
enhancing public involvement; deepening
engagement in international fora; strengthening
cooperative government; strengthening legislative
capacity.

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Speaker of the National Assembly,
Ms Baleka Mbete

Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces,
Ms Thandi Modise

On behalf of Parliament, the Presiding Officers of Parliament, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Thandi Modise, joined the nation and international community in commemorating the 40th anniversary of 16 June 1976, known as Youth Day.

June 16 was a significant political milestone and a catalytic moment in the evolution of South Africa's political system – a day when black students from all walks of life, across the country, raised their voices and demanded to be heard.

With its epicentre in Soweto, the student uprising marked a turning point in South Africa's history. It is due to the sacrifices of these young heroines and heroes, the class of 1976, that today we are a democracy and a free people.

The march that took place that day served as a spark that ignited the intensification of the struggle which ultimately led to the liberation of the country from the clutches of apartheid.

As 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of the march, it was important that the legislative sector paid tribute to sacrifices made by the generation of 1976 and celebrated and recognised their contribution to the successful transition to a democratic South Africa.

Parliament, along with the nine provincial legislatures, by its very nature provides a forum for public consideration of issues. It is against this backdrop that Parliament hosted a two-day event on 29-30 June 2016 in Johannesburg, Gauteng.

The event was aimed at creating a platform for dialogue between the youth and the organs of state.

It also aimed to encourage the youth to participate in the sector's programmes and to enable them to influence legislation relevant to their current needs.

In pursuit of that, Parliament believes that a collaborative approach by all legislatures in creating platforms for engaging the youth will assist with coordinated messaging and further create an integrated and unified approach of processing resolutions and recommendations.

Through dialogues with young people, Parliament hoped to achieve the following during and after the event:

- Deepening of democracy
- Inter-generational unity
- Strengthening of the Constitution by cementing sectoral events as platforms for public participation
- Locating Parliament and provincial legislatures at the epicentre of societal deliberations

In addition, Parliament hopes to achieve through these dialogues and activities, meaningful participation by the youth of 1976 who can mentor the youth of today.

In view of the significance of the Soweto uprising in South African history, Parliament approached the Gauteng Provincial Legislature to be the host province for the national celebrations. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), the youth population grew from 18,5 million to 19,6 million between 2009 and 2014.

In 2015, the subsequent population growth meant that by 2015 the working-age population stood at 35,8 million of which 19,7 million (55,0%) were youth and 16,1 million (45,0%) were adults. The growing youth bulge presents the country's economy with opportunities.

Parliament is mindful of the fact that the National Development Plan (NDP) recognises that the youth play a crucial role in the development of the country. The NDP acknowledges that South Africa has a large youth population, many of whom are of working age. However, it is this population that is largely exposed to the harsh realities of social ills, such as drugs and alcohol abuse.

Parliament calls on the youth who are registered to vote in the upcoming local government elections on 3 August 2016, to come out in numbers to participate in the democratic process of elections and claim their stake in the future of the country. 🇷🇵

i put the question

Questions asked in Parliament in June concerned, among other issues, the number of termination of pregnancies occurring in each province and the procedure to follow when reporting social security grant fraud or other illegal activity.



Ms Karen de Kock (DA)

Ms Karen de Kock (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, to provide details about the procedure that should be followed by grant recipients when they note unlawful, fraudulent and/or immoral debit deductions made from their South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) accounts. She also wanted to know what the department is doing to communicate the procedure to grant recipients.

The Minister replied: Any beneficiary noticing any unlawful; fraudulent and/or immoral activity on their social grant must immediately report this to the nearest Sassa office. At the Sassa office, the beneficiary will be requested to complete an affidavit confirming that they did not purchase any advanced airtime, pre-paid electricity or take out a loan. This affidavit can be commissioned by the Sassa official attending to them.

The Sassa official will then log the dispute and submit the affidavit to Cash Paymaster Services to facilitate the refund of the money deducted and to blacklist that social grant account for any future purchases. In terms of the approved Dispute Resolution

Mechanism, all cases must be dealt with within a time frame of 10 working days.

Alternatively, any beneficiary can call the Sassa toll free number 0800 60 10 11 and register a dispute. Again, that beneficiary will be requested to submit an affidavit confirming the dispute and that they did indeed not purchase any financial services or commodities. On receipt of the affidavit, Sassa will submit the dispute to Cash Paymaster Services, which has 10 working days in which to resolve the dispute.

Sassa has conducted a training programme for identified Sassa staff within all provinces as well as those manning the call centre at Head Office, to ensure that they are aware of the procedures to be followed.

The approved Dispute Resolution Mechanism has been made available to all staff as well as Cash Paymaster Services. In addition, Sassa is continuing with its communication programme through both print and electronic media (radio and television) to try to ensure that all beneficiaries are aware of the processes to follow, should they

become aware of any untoward activity on their social grant.

Sassa is also appealing to community leaders and non-governmental organisations to assist in directing any social grant beneficiary who may have experienced challenges with their social grant payment to the nearest Sassa office.

Notwithstanding these measures which have been put in place, notice should be taken of the amendments to the Regulations to the Social Assistance Act, Act 13 of 2004, which were published on 6 May 2016.

These amendments make it clear that no deductions or electronic fund transactions, apart from those authorised in terms of Regulation 26A for funeral policies which comply with the regulations, may be effected off the Sassa card account. This is effective immediately and should halt the type of challenges beneficiaries have been experiencing.

Should any beneficiary have access to the stop order or debit order facility, that beneficiary will be required to open a commercial bank account, and

request Sassa to transfer the social grant from the Sassa card account to the commercial bank account. This will be done at no cost to the beneficiary, who is then free to manage their bank account as they think best.

Ms Karen de Kock (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, what factors were taken into consideration when the 1 April 2016 increase in social grant pay-outs by her department were calculated. She also wanted to know if the increase in social grant pay-outs will allow the grant recipients to meet their minimum nutritional requirements, based on food price inflation.

The Minister replied: Social grant increases are determined in consultation with the National Treasury and Sassa. The amount of money available for grant increases is subject to government's expenditure ceiling and is guided by the appropriation made for grants by Parliament.

For this financial year a budget increase of 8.2% was allocated for grant increases. This increase needs to provide for both demographic and economic factors. All these factors have a considerable influence in determining annual grant increases. However, these increases are constrained by the available budget.

All grants, with the exception of the Child Support Grant (CSG), are above the country's food poverty line, as determined by Statistics South Africa. They are also above the highest upper bound poverty line (R753 per month in 2014). Hence these beneficiaries should have enough to buy adequate food as well as additional non-food items.

Ms Cheryllyn Dudley (African Christian Democratic Party) asked the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron

Motsoaledi, to provide the latest official abortion statistics per province.

The Minister replied: Eastern Cape 12 911; Free State 5 846; Gauteng 15 511; KwaZulu-Natal 12 233; Limpopo 9 600; Mpumalanga 1 797; North West 6 744; Northern Cape 1 402; Western Cape 19 254.

Ms Tandeka Gqada (DA) asked the Minister of Human Settlements, Ms Lindiwe Sisulu, if her department uses a standard checklist for the upgrading of informal settlements and if she can provide Ms Gqada with a copy of the specified checklist.

The Minister replied: The National Housing Code contains a comprehensive set of guidelines for the upgrading and development of informal settlements. The guidelines assist human settlements and housing practitioners in planning, funding and implementation of the approved informal settlements upgrading policy and programme.

It is to be noted that the guidelines contained in the National Housing Code have been benchmarked and aligned to international good practice and that component parts of the South African policy, funding and implementation good practice, have been incorporated into international and national country policies and programmes.

In terms of the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP), informal settlement upgrading should be undertaken in phases, with Phases 1 to 3 focusing on community participation, supply of basic services and security for all residents.

The priority is to address issues of household health and safety, including the provision of interim services as a minimum norm and standard, in the form of reasonable access to water,

sanitation, storm water management and road access to households. The current upgrading approach is incremental and infrastructure-led, and recognises that meaningful developmental improvements need to be provided to all informal settlements as rapidly as possible.

Upon a settlement having been formalised in the form of planning and tenure security, services and homes are built for qualifying beneficiaries.

The upgrading of a specific informal settlement takes place over a multi-year period, and is dependent on a number of factors, including stipulated time periods required in the town planning process, applicable specialist studies, including environment impact assessments, ecological, heritage, soil, vegetation and geotechnical studies. One of the major time delays are objections to the upgrading of informal settlements when they are situated adjacent to established townships.

The National Housing Code: Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme systematically details the process and procedure for the *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements in a structured manner.

The key principles to be followed by implementers of the programme are specified. Engagement with local authorities is of the utmost importance to ensure locally appropriate solutions.

A feasibility study is to be conducted on the upgradeability of the settlement, and households must be profiled to determine beneficiaries. Detailed settlement level plans are to be developed with the participation of the community.

This is an edited version of the Minister's answer. See www.parliament.gov.za for a full account. 🗨️



Epic journey of Africa's rebirth

The theme of this year's Africa Day debate, "An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's renaissance," emphasised Africa's determination to move well beyond its colonial past, **Abel Mputing** reports.

Africa's rebirth was symbolised by the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), said the Deputy Minister of Energy, Ms Thembisile Majola. Speaking at the debate in the National Assembly to commemorate Africa Day, she said the main objectives of the OAU were to promote the independence of African states. "On 25 May 1963, 32 independent African states gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to establish the OAU. The main objectives of this continental body were to promote unity, solidarity and the independence of all African states. This included coordinating and intensifying efforts to achieve a better life for the

peoples of Africa, to safeguard their sovereignty and territorial integrity and to rid the continent of colonisation and apartheid," she said.

Part of its global agenda was to ensure that Africa had a united voice in international affairs. "The OAU ensured that the continent, as a whole, had a presence and a voice in an international arena that was dominated by the superpowers, enabling it to define and direct its own destiny. At that point, the OAU was the only continental body in the postcolonial Third World. Africa's unity was its strength.

"A liberation committee was set up with its headquarters in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, at the invitation of the *Mwalimu* Julius Nyerere (former leader of Tanzania). Its role was to mobilise financial and material resources, logistical support, training and publicity for the liberation movements officially recognised by the OAU."

After many African countries had won their independence, the OAU was amended to reflect the challenges of a changing world order and to foster Africa's integration. Out of this process the African Union (AU) was established, she said.

"The AU's purpose was to build on the work of the OAU and accelerate the process of African integration as it sought to support efforts to fully integrate Africa into the global economy and address the myriad of social, political and economic challenges faced by its member states," she said.

Key to the AU is its Agenda 2063, which focuses on inclusive growth, sustainable

development, good governance, democracy and human rights, said Democratic Alliance (DA) MP Mr Stevens Mokgalapa. "These are noble intentions, however, they would not happen on their own and overnight, it is work in progress that needs bold innovative new thinking and visionary leadership that is not held back by old imperial, colonial, slavery thinking, but focused on building progress for the future generations," he said.

Prof Themba Msimang of the Inkatha Freedom Party said the Fort Hare centennial celebration should have been at the centre of the 2016 Africa Day commemorations because this institution ignited the intellectual consciousness of the liberation struggle heroes who went on to become heads of state of their respective countries.

African National Congress MP Mr Moses Masango said the establishment of the Pan-African University is aimed at harnessing Africa's intellectual capabilities to unlock its socio-economic potential that still remains untapped. "To attend to the information and communications technology (ICT), research and green economy, the AU has decided to establish the Pan-African University. This university aims to prioritise science, technology and innovative research that is uniquely African and to showcase the kind of work that is coming out of the continent. This is to ensure that we are gravitating towards the Africa we want," he said.

A better Africa will contribute to a better world because our continent has much to contribute to humanity, said Mr Ahmed Shaik Emam of the National Freedom Fighters. "Through political

unity we will restore the dignity of Africans, which had been destroyed by colonialism – and our social unity will unlock the human potential of all Africans to take us to heights of human kindness which will be a shining example for the world to follow," he said.

The United Democratic Movement's Mr Nqabayomzi Kwankwa said: "In a sad irony of history, once in power, the midwives of the rebirth of Africa turned on their own people by being worse oppressors than their former colonial oppressors. Most African governments have hardened into autocracies and often go out of their way to subvert checks and balances that seek to ensure that governments are accountable and democracy prevails. The ambivalence and the failure of the AU to take decisive action when African leaders illegally extend their stay in power, compound the problem."

Africa's hope must be pinned on its creative and entrepreneurial spirit that has propelled its positive economic outlook against all odds, said Dr Wilmot James of the DA.

"The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Africa Economic Outlook for 2016 declared that growth remained resilient in 2015 amid a weak global economy, lower commodity prices and adverse weather conditions in some parts of the continent. Real gross domestic product grew by an average of 3.6% in 2015, higher than the global average growth of 3.1% and twice that of the euro area. Africa remains the second-fastest growing economy in the world and several African countries are among the world's fastest growing economies." 🌍



Home Affairs crucial for effective government

The *Department of Home Affairs is a crucial aspect of government, as a country needs to know the number of its citizens, registered through births and deaths. This is what the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Social Services, Ms Landulile Dlamini, told permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) during a policy debate on Home Affairs in the NCOP recently, writes Mava Lukani.*

She noted during the debate that some members of the NCOP reduced the Department of Home Affairs to a visa-regulation entity. This diminished its importance. "It is important

because for any other government department to provide services, the Department of Home Affairs becomes crucial. Can you imagine if the Department of Home Affairs was not

there? How would the Department of Social Development know who qualifies for a grant or pension, who is still alive and who is dead?" Ms Dlamini asked.

She told the Minister of Home Affairs that to safeguard the identity of each new South African and the accuracy of the population register, all births must be registered and identity documents (IDs) provided to all adults within 30 days. "In order to achieve this, the Department of Health should ensure that no child leaves a hospital without an identity document. This will enable children to access social grants as soon as possible," she said.

Ms Dlamini said those who opposed the budget of the Department of Home Affairs were not clear about the department's importance and its role in other departments in government.



SERVING THE PEOPLE: The Department of Home Affairs has a crucial role to play in the lives of all South Africans.

services and the delivery period of birth certificates, identity cards, passports and other documents.

Those gains are diminished, however, by incidents such as the special treatment offered to the Gupta clan at the Waterkloof Air Force Base and the escape of Al-Bashir from South African soil also through the Waterkloof Air Force Base. "What are the consequences for transgressions such as these?" asked Mr Hattingh. He said the success or failure of the department in dealing with incidents of this nature is crucial.

Also speaking in the debate, Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP's) Mr Muntomuhle Khawula reminded the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Malusi Gigaba, that in his 2016 State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma promised to streamline and rationalise state-owned enterprises in line with the government's cost-cutting measures and yet in the same year a Border Management Agency (BMA) was established to manage borders.

According to Mr Khawula, the BMA was created to ensure effective and efficient management of the South African borders. "The department has previously admitted that South Africa has more than 200 unofficial entry points. That is where the biggest challenge is in respect of managing the inflow and outflow of foreign nationals," said Mr Khawula.

He said the IFP believes that as long as this challenge remains unattended, illegal immigration will remain a concern. He also told Mr Gigaba and the permanent delegates to the NCOP to refrain from using teachers who are members of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) as Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) officials. He said Sadtu is an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and Cosatu is in an alliance with the African National Congress (ANC).

He said as members of the IFP, they believe that by using Sadtu members in elections, the IEC compromises the fairness and freeness of the elections.

Mr Nkagisang Mokgosi of the Economic Freedom Fighters rejected the Budget Vote of the Department of Home Affairs. He said the department has no capacity to carry out its work and has now resorted to banks to help issue out identity documents to people. He said there was no clarity on how much funding was used by the department when it produced IDs or on how much funding is being used for the bank option. "The department must build its internal capacity to ensure that it doesn't outsource its core mandate and use the resources allocated to it to deliver services efficiently," said Mr Mokgosi.

Ms Thandi Mpambo-Sibhukwana, who is a permanent delegate to the NCOP and a member of the Western Cape delegation, highlighted the issue of identity card theft, which costs the South African economy R2bn every year. She asked the Minister of Home Affairs to tell the House about his plans to curb this problem. In March 2016, 123 cases of fraud and corruption against the department's officials were lodged, she said.

The Whip of the Northern Cape provincial delegation to the NCOP, Mr Dikgang Stock, praised the department for the efficient delivery of services. He said in the past, South Africans perceived the department as slow, offering low-value services in an inefficient and indifferent manner.

In supporting the Budget Vote, Mr Stock said: "The department is reinventing itself as a modern, digital, secure custodian of national identity, responding to the present and future needs and circumstances – and run by professionals operating in a highly secure environment to protect the precious records of the lives of our people." 🇿🇦

"Those of us who question the operations of the department might have lost the bigger picture of the policy level where we are as Parliament," she added.

She said her Committee welcomes and supports the budget allocated to the Department of Home Affairs for the 2016/17 financial year. "The Committee will continue to oversee the activities of the department to ensure that funds are spent to deliver important services to all South Africans."

Participating in the debate, Mr Chris Hattingh of the Democratic Alliance, praised the department for the gains it has achieved, which he described as considerable. Among those gains, according Mr Hattingh, is that the department has become more efficient and has reduced waiting times for

Protecting workers' rights and skills training key to growth

During *the tabling of the department's R2.8bn budget, Minister Mildred Oliphant said the main task of the Department of Labour is to protect workers from being exploited in the workplace, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

The Chairperson of the Select Committee on Trade and International Relations, Mr Eddie Makue, has applauded the Department of Labour for its continued efforts to eliminate inequality and discrimination in the workplace across all the economic sectors in South Africa.

During the debate on the Department of Labour's Budget Vote in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) recently, Mr Makue said he was impressed that the budget makes provision for the protection of the rights of workers.

"While interrogating the annual performance plan of the Department of Labour, it was a pleasure to observe that such rights are being considered and that the budget makes provision for protection and enhancement of the rights of workers," said Mr Makue.

He added that in addition to ensuring that workers are protected, the department's mandate is to protect vulnerable workers, ensure sound labour relations, and eliminate inequality and discrimination in the workplace.

"We have heard a lot in this Parliament about poverty, unemployment and inequality. Let us consider practicable strategies and plans for dealing with inequalities in the workplace. It is also

the recognised policy mandate of the department to enhance occupational health and safety and give value to labour market flexibility. In this constitutional democracy, it is vital that we revisit the Constitution as we engage in this debate on labour," he said.

Mr Makue made reference to Section 23 of the Constitution, which spells out what labour relations will be in a democratic South Africa. "Section 24 makes reference to an environment that is not harmful to the health and well-being of those in the workplace. Section 28 provides for the protection of children from exploitive labour practices and from work or services that are inappropriate. There are many other constitutional provisions and labour laws aimed at protecting the rights of workers," he said.

While Mr Makue commended the department's skills development and training programmes, other Members of the NCOP criticised the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) and put the blame for the high unemployment rate on the government.

"The government has not created the environment for opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Instead, the Department of Labour creates short-term solutions via the EPWP to

keep people dependant on piecemeal jobs to feed their families," said Mr Willem Faber, who is the member of the Northern Cape's delegation of permanent delegates to the NCOP.

Mr Johan Londt of the Western Cape delegation of the permanent delegates to the NCOP said South Africa was "in the midst of an extremely difficult period in our country's young democracy, with an economy that simply isn't moving forward to be able to help address increasing unemployment."

"Following from the rising unemployment, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) will be put under the spotlight, a spotlight it can ill afford. It is the lifeline for many who have been shoved into the uncertain world of the unemployed. The UIF is not a beacon of hope. Instead it is adding to the stress and anxiety by being disorganised, having long waiting hours, losing documentation and another thousand and one excuses for not paying those most in need," he said.

The member of the Limpopo Province's delegation to the NCOP, Mr Emmanuel Mtileni, suggested that only state ownership and control of strategic sectors of the economy could be the foundation for sustainable economic transformation in South Africa.

"It is only then that we will see employment equity transformation. Until such time that there is real and meaningful economic transformation,



BUDGET MATTERS: The Department of Labour is using its budget to protect the rights of workers.

the racial transformation approach of the government is a wild goose chase," said Mr Mtileni.

He accused the ANC of "colluding

with the DA" to reject a motion by his party, the Economic Freedom Fighters, to introduce the national minimum wage. "In 2014, we were told that the introduction of the national minimum

wage was a done deal and all that was left was to agree on the level. All indicators point to a deliberate misleading of workers, the government together with the Congress of the South African Trade Unions, has no intention to introduce the national minimum wage," he said.

During the tabling of the department's R2.8bn budget, Minister Mildred Oliphant said the main task of the Department of Labour is to protect workers from being exploited in the workplace. "We do this by passing laws that cater for the well-being and the development of the workers. When we pass these laws, we ensure that the process does not impact negatively on growing our economy – as well as on the job-creation programmes," she said.

The minister also announced government's programmes to fight poverty, which now include proposals to place those who complete the EPWP on skills programmes. "We have placed others in programmes that will give them skills to manage businesses and co-operatives, as long as there's proof that the affected people have previously made contributions to the UIF.

"This will ensure that, when our people complete the EPWP, they don't get subjected to poverty again, but are given opportunities to restore their dignity so that they can fend for themselves through being employed or becoming business owners," the minister said.

She said this will be a national programme, but will start in those provinces that are already engaged in the EPWP programme or are ready to do so. 🇿🇦

Our Parliament must play its role in development, says Secretary Mgidlana

It is now 18 months since the appointment of Mr Gengezi Mgidlana to the position of Secretary to Parliament. The Spokesperson for Parliament and InSession Editor-in-Chief, Luzuko Jacobs used the milestone to ask the Secretary to look back on his year and a half in office.

Q: Parliament recently released its 2016/17 Annual Performance Plan. It is a good time to look back at what we have achieved thus far and identify the challenges that lie ahead. What would you single out as Parliament's priorities?

A: Each year we have to prepare and produce the Annual Performance Plan (APP) and the budget, but we must do so in the context of the five-year plan of each elected Parliament. This time we have stretched it even further since South Africa has embarked on the 15-year National Development Plan (NDP), and have had to come up with strategic plans that look at delivery over a five-, 10- and 15-year period.

Our focus is on enhancing our core business, which is oversight, accountability, making quality laws and increasing public participation in parliamentary processes. If we want to improve the quality of the output of Parliament we have to focus on the public representatives themselves. Our strategy is therefore member-centric. It revolves around providing support to individual members to ensure that they can discharge their responsibilities unhindered. At the end, through the work done by Members of Parliament, we want to be an activist, transformative and people-centred Parliament that carries the hopes and aspirations of millions of South Africans.

As such, there are two crucial issues

that we need to look at internally. Firstly, we aim to improve our business procedures to ensure that they maximise efficiency. Secondly, as we enter the third decade as a democratic Parliament, we must review our systems, and update them if necessary to respond to the challenges of today. In other words, we have to work in two areas: our business processes and building the capacity of staff to provide services to MPs and the public. Those are basically the priorities of our APP.

Q: The global economic environment is challenging at the moment, requiring austerity measures in all countries. How do you intend to optimise Parliament's performance and efficiency given the financial challenges that we face?

A: Indeed, the current global economic outlook presents governments and public institutions across the world with a number of challenges. As such, under the current global economic climate, it becomes critical for public institutions such as parliaments to infuse fiscal responsibility and/or prudence in their systems and processes. In a world of limited resources and financial constraints, it becomes critical for public institutions like ours to ensure that there is an appropriate and balanced level of spending.

However, I would also hasten to say that the challenges presented by

the global economy that have also engulfed South Africa present certain opportunities. Those opportunities are to improve efficiency and explore innovative ways of providing service and delivery.

This is an opportunity to upscale our staff and policy environment so that they respond to the challenges of the day. The crucial issue facing South Africa in particular is that after 21 years of democracy, serious levels of inequality still exist. There is a plan [the NDP] that has been put in place, which we have adopted as Parliament, that spells out where we want South Africa to be heading. The question we then have to ask ourselves is, what role can we as Parliament play in facilitating that? Or, put differently, what role can the support staff play in supporting MPs to discharge their responsibilities so that we can realise the goals and objectives of the NDP?

Our aim is to improve the manner we provide services to Members [so that] we add value to the developmental trajectory of the country. We have to look at it from a parliamentary perspective and make sure there are quality laws that come through. We must also facilitate their implementation, assess their impact, and monitor and evaluate the implementation of the programmes approved in the Budget.

It is also necessary to conduct oversight over the programmes of the executive to make sure that delivery happens where it is needed. That is the connection between Parliament and the public – making sure that delivery happens where it is required.

Q: So you are saying that the needs of MPs and the public underpin parliamentary officials' responsibility. Can you explain why?

A: Firstly, we have to understand the constitutional basis of the state. When we talk about Parliament, we



SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT:
Mr Gengezi Mgidlana.

Q: Given the responsibilities you have outlined above, what is the skill set, competencies, attitudes and values required of a parliamentary official?

A: First and foremost you have to love your country because parliaments today are instruments and agents of development. They are there to improve the lives of the people. They are meant to address the challenges that people are faced with. We have to provide value, give them back what they expect. Officials have to be entrenched in their work and remember that we are not doing this for ourselves, but for the good of the public.

Q: Do you believe we have achieved that ideal?

A: To answer that question you have to analyse it within the context of the country. Parliament is not isolated from the events happening around us. Currently, as a country we have good policy platforms, starting with our great Constitution, but these need to be firmly implemented. The policies we have in place are good policies, renowned worldwide, but when it comes to implementation, we have challenges.

are talking about publicly elected representatives. Parliamentary staff, including myself, are here to support that democratic function and help MPs discharge their responsibilities. MPs come from a wide variety of places in society, and they have different skills, capabilities and interests. Parliamentary staff, however, must be experts in our own areas.

If we are required to support a particular Committee, for example, we have to make sure we have the appropriate expertise to better support the MPs working in that Committee on behalf of their party. Parliament makes its contribution directly through public representatives.

Secondly, using the analogy of a private company, the public are Parliament's shareholders. They own Parliament and are the beneficiaries of what happens here. Therefore, they have to be at the centre of this institution. Our Constitution mandates Parliament to allow the public to participate in its processes.

Citizens need to be involved in the planning and facilitation of its programmes and in evaluating the performance of government. We have to make sure that we facilitate this participation so that by participating, communities are empowered in a meaningful manner and given an opportunity to give feedback.

We have to realise that we are a very young democracy. At this point in time we need to develop and nurture skills. We have to develop depth in understanding the particular challenges we face, identify the outcomes that are needed and know what is required to implement them.

Developing that kind of skill and expertise takes time. Degrees and doctorates do not automatically translate into delivery. You have to combine skill and expertise with relevant experience, and you have to achieve a level of competency in delivering outputs. Then you can call yourself a "capable institution" and one that truly delivers. 🙏



Major effort to restore 'dignity' of the National Assembly

A recent debate in the National Assembly discussed ways to restore the dignity of the House, which has been sorely tested in recent months. The debate was requested by the leader of the African Christian Democratic Party, Rev Kenneth Meshoe, reports *Mava Lukani*.

"Most South Africans who are upset and disappointed by what has been happening in Parliament are hoping that this debate will result in the dignity and decorum of this institution being restored. I would like to apologise to the nation for the deplorable conduct of some of our members here," said Rev Meshoe.

"I want to appeal to all honorable members of this esteemed House to be more tolerant of each other's opinions as we seek to restore the image and credibility of this House. We must all take collective responsibility for what has been happening and allow constructive criticisms of ourselves, the President of South Africa, our speakers and all Presiding

Officers as we seek solutions to what is a serious deterioration of a vital institution in holding our democracy together.

He said on 18 November 2014 Deputy President Mr Cyril Ramaphosa met with all the leaders of parties that are represented in the NA and discussed the unacceptable events that were taking place at Parliament. Rev Meshoe said that after the leaders committed themselves to adhering to the agreements, Mr Ramaphosa promised to convene a follow-up meeting to assess progress, but that did not happen.

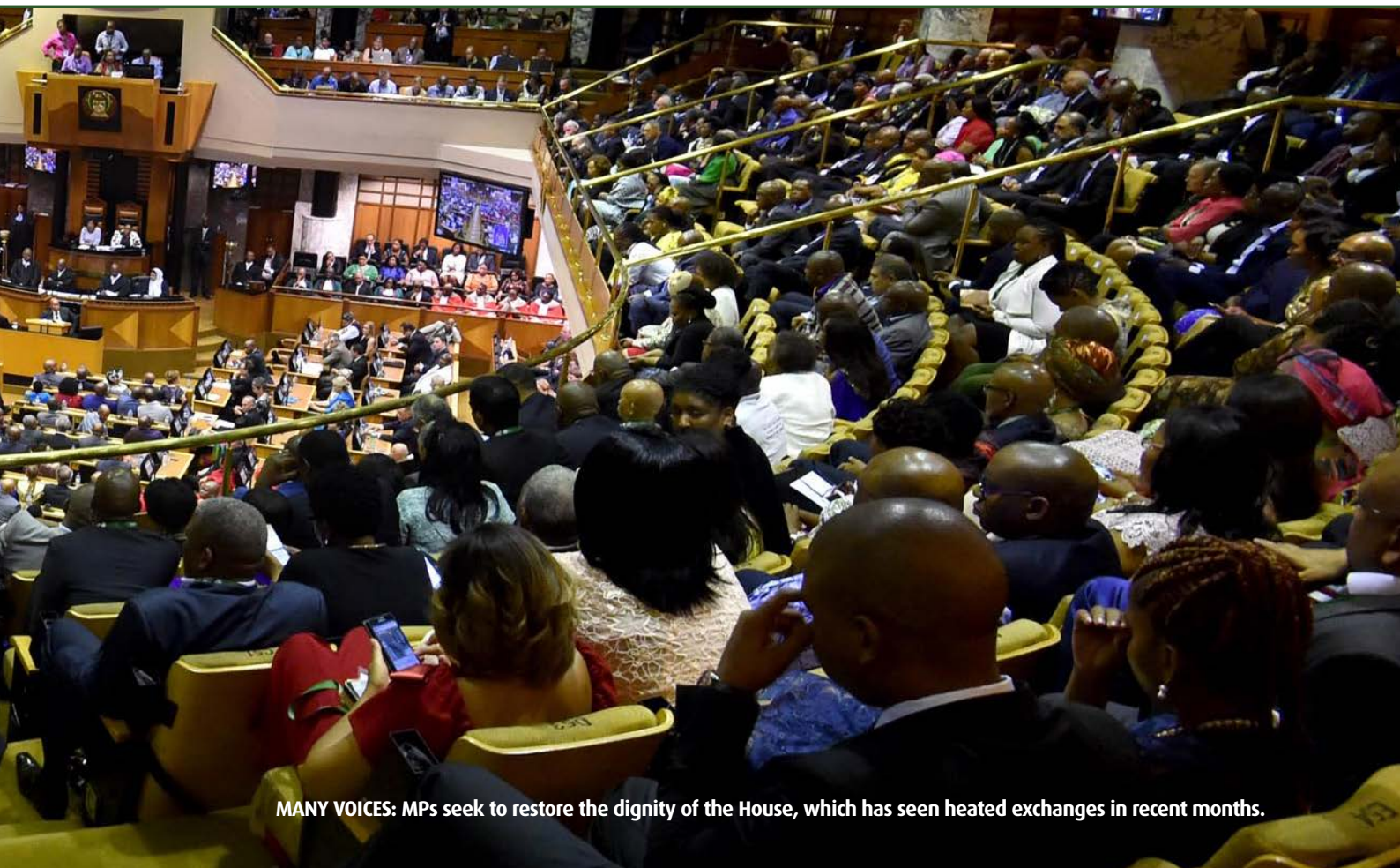
"I sincerely believe that if agreements that were made were introduced in this

House and that Mr Ramaphosa had held the follow-up meetings with party leaders, it would not have been necessary to hold this debate today," said Rev Meshoe.

Rev Meshoe said opposition MPs become frustrated when they note that the Presiding Officer who is supposed to apply the rules of the House even-handedly, favours the members of the ruling party and protects Cabinet ministers from scrutiny.

The House Chairperson Ms Thoko Didiza responded by saying: "I want to remind you that in August 2014, we had, in this very House, an unprecedented situation where the National Assembly could not exercise our oversight responsibility over the executive.

"The questions to the President were disrupted through the disregard of the Rules of procedure. On 18 June 2015, the



MANY VOICES: MPs seek to restore the dignity of the House, which has seen heated exchanges in recent months.

questions to the President again collapsed. On 17 May 2016, we again experienced a disruption of the sitting. The destruction of property of Parliament has made society wonder what kind of representatives we are. Surely, it is not all members, but we all carry the collective shame.

"Arguments have been advanced that in such instances where the House had been disrupted or has collapsed, it was because of questions that had not been answered adequately. In trying to reflect on these,

"I consulted the procedure on answering questions that are posed to the executive. The procedure states that questions must be answered but it does not prescribe how these must be answered.

"Deputy Speaker, should I not be satisfied with the answer, do I have the right to disrupt the business of the National Assembly when there are other mechanisms to address the concerns?

"Does it give one the right to impinge on the rights of others? In exercising our rights, we should also be mindful of the responsibility we carry in protecting the rights of others. It is in this instance where the presiding officers, in the execution

of their duty, have to protect the rights of others, and ensure that the Rules of debate are adhered to," said Ms Didiza.

Speaking in the same debate, the Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP's) Mr Jan Esterhuizen said MPs are destroying the country's stability from within the heart of its democracy by undermining the dignity of Parliament. "If Parliament is no longer seen to be functioning, why should the citizens believe in any of our institutions of democratic governance?"

He said when NA MPs disrespect the President of the Republic of South Africa, the Speaker and the Rules of Parliament, "we are disrespecting the people who elected us to represent them. We are tearing apart an institution in which they placed their trust, dishonouring the responsibilities they bestowed on us".

Mr James Selfe of the Democratic Alliance (DA) said the NA has become a circus. "We have become a comic opera, a sort of sordid reality television programme that ought to have an age restriction." He said the DA condemns in the strongest terms both the disruptive tactics of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the response of the NA's Presiding Officers. He

said the NA has become a laughing stock of the civilised world and a source of deep shame to "our country".

"Gone are the days when this Chamber and its Committees were the forums for the open exchange of ideas and the honest debate of alternative solutions. Now the currency of debate is the hurling of insults and the trading of innuendos."

Mr Mandlenkosi Mabika, of the National Freedom Party (NFP), said the NFP believes that there are two issues contributing to the collapse of the image of the NA. He said the first thing is that President Zuma showed contempt for the NA when he was called to account over Nkandla. According to Mr Mabika, President Zuma denied any wrongdoing when he appeared before the NA for Nkandla and instead mocked the opposition parties.

Mr Nqabayomzi Kwankwa of the United Democratic Movement (UDM) said that the impartiality of the Presiding Officers of the NA is at the heart of efforts to restore stability in the House. He said there is a mistaken notion that that impartiality means political non-alignment, but this does not exist in the real world. 🗣️

Building collective action for inclusive growth

In a debate in Parliament on inclusive economic growth, Finance Minister Mr Pravin Gordhan said that the economy is not generating enough jobs and that without employment creation, it is hard to reduce poverty, reports *Sakhile Mokoena*.

During the debate in the National Assembly on the topic: "Building collective action for inclusive growth", Members of Parliament lamented South Africa's slow economic growth and called for an integrated effort to avoid a downgrade of the economy by international rating agencies.

Opening the discussion, Finance Minister Mr Pravin Gordhan said the biggest problem was that "confidence is weak, investment is depressed and unemployment is rising".

"The reality is that the economy is not generating enough jobs. Without employment creation, it is very hard to reduce poverty. In the National Development Plan we set ourselves an aspirational target of 5.4% a year. We set ourselves an ambitious target because we appreciate the primacy of growth in helping us expand work opportunities for the millions of our fellow citizens," said the minister.

He added that in order for growth to be inclusive, it must create jobs and generate hundreds of thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises. "This has practical implications. But our growth has also to be sustainable, taking into account, for example, climate change," he said.

Minister Gordhan said the slow progress on transformation of the economy and the people created a breeding ground for a combative, winner-takes-all narrative.

"Without action, joblessness and inequality will set in motion a counter-reaction, the politics of desperation that could put in place perpetual fault lines in society and set back our quest for development even further.

"An inclusive society is one which prospers together. This occurs as we build trust, working with one another, but social change does not occur overnight. We need to trust each other's motives. South Africa has a long history of dialogue to solve our problems. Now we need to move to action to transform that dialogue into concrete outcomes," he said.

Prof Nhlanhla Khubisa of the National Freedom Party (NFP) said any debate about economic development should focus on landlessness, poverty, soaring unemployment and squalid living conditions, as well as crime, corruption and the violent service delivery protests.

"The majority of our people who are languishing in the daily grind of poverty today are previously disadvantaged black people who had historically been dispossessed of land and relegated as second-class citizens to live in the so-called 'Bantustans'.

"Today our political power has been restored yet the cycle of poverty has not been broken but is accelerating. Our rate of economic growth is slowing and the youth are losing hope of the bright future promised to them in 1994.



"The NFP believes that collective action for inclusive economic growth for all our people should be driven at grassroots level through local government," Prof Khubisa said.

The Democratic Alliance's Mr Geordin Hill-Lewis told MPs that the major sectors of the South African economy were already in recession, with manufacturing alone shedding 100 000 jobs.

"These trends will get much worse if our economy is downgraded to junk status. It will take years to regain investment grade if we lose it, that is why we must do everything today and in the days ahead to prove to the rating agencies that we are serious about making the real changes to our economy that are needed to drive growth and end uncertainty," Mr Hill-Lewis said.



CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY: MPs are looking for creative ways to grow the economy and citizens' role in it.

Mr Mncendisi Filtane of the United Democratic Movement was concerned that "massive poverty, sky-rocketing unemployment (especially among black youth), widening inequality as well as shrinking economic productivity have become defining features of our economy.

"The reality is that this country is fast becoming a welfare state rather than a developmental state, with a swelling number of departments on state-provided social security, with no growing entrepreneurship," he said.

The Pan-Africanist Congress's Mr Luthando Mbinda did not see the stagnation of the economic growth as a national crisis. "We see it as a crisis of capitalism and its Ponzi scheme structure. Growth that only results in dividends for foreign investors is

nothing but a Ponzi scheme. Growth that is concentrated and consolidates higher interests for banks is nothing but a Ponzi scheme," he said.

He said inclusive growth can only come from changing the relationship between citizens and the means of production.

"The more workers have controlling shares in companies, the more inclusive this economy will be. This inclusiveness will guarantee growth as wealth and income being redistributed. The greater economic redistribution and fewer monopolies will result in greater circulation of money and economic growth," said Mr Mbinda.

Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said government is aware that the economy was not growing the way it should.

"We are painfully aware of this and we are collectively determined to turn this situation around. We are working hard to get back to a healthy and sustainable growth path, and we will succeed," he said.

The minister said his department is working closely with the tourism industry to recover from last year's decline in tourists, to improve tourism's contribution to the economy and to help tackle the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

"It can, in a very significant way, help us to get to the promised land, offer our people hope to escape from poverty, real possibilities of decent jobs, and offer the opening of minds, and the restoration of pride and dignity," the Tourism Minister said. 🇿🇦

Huge economic benefits from ocean economy

South Africans *have yet to reap the full economic benefits of the ocean, but that is set to change, as an oversight visit to inspect the research ship South Africa Agulhas 2 in Port Elizabeth showed, writes Faith Kwaza.*

Speaking during a joint oversight visit with the Select Committee on Land and Mineral Resources to inspect the research vessel docked in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape, the Whip of the Portfolio Committee on Environmental Affairs, Mr Silence Makhubela, said there are huge economic benefits and opportunities in this area.

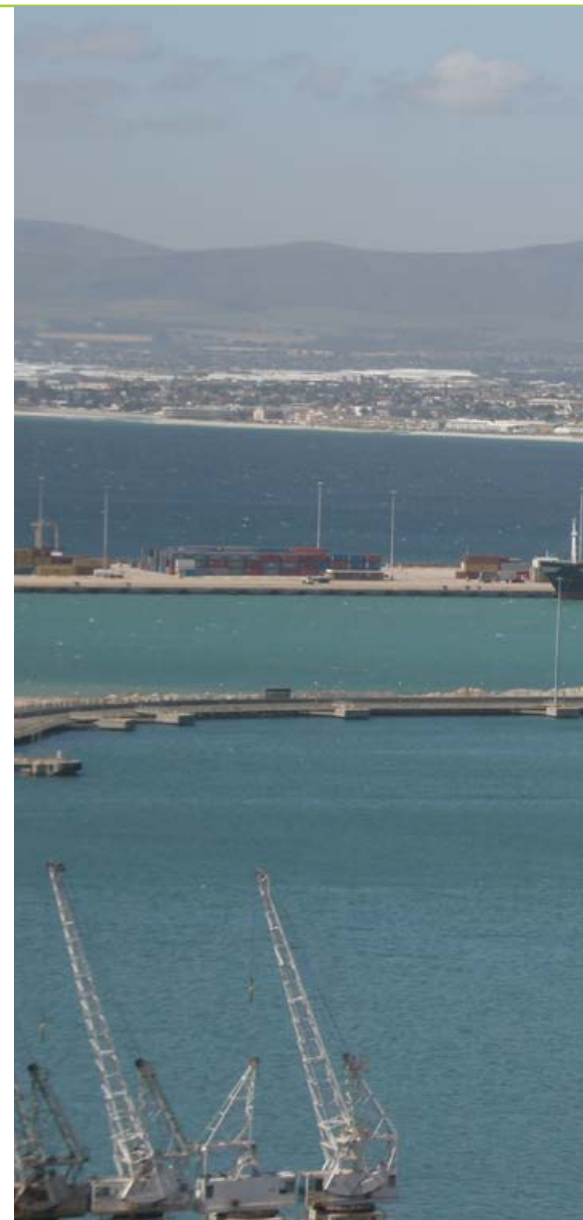
“It is an economy that our people should be able to participate in and take advantage of the opportunities that result from this programme. We still have to make general environmental issues a societal matter so that everyone understands the impact of the environment on their daily lives,” said Mr Makhubela.

The ocean economy sector of fast-tracked delivery programme Operation Phakisa brings together government, state-owned entities, industry, labour, civil society and academia to collaborate in unlocking the economic potential of South Africa’s oceans. The sector’s focus areas are marine transport and manufacturing, offshore oil and gas exploration, aquaculture, marine protection and oceans governance, small harbours development, tourism, skills development and capacity building, and research, technology and innovation.

Projected economic contribution to gross domestic product is between R129bn and R177bn by 2033 and 800 000 to one million jobs. The marine transport and manufacturing sector will create between 40 000 and 50 000 jobs by 2019, aquaculture is expected to create 15 000 jobs by 2019 and small harbour development is expected to yield 12 100 jobs in 2019.

“When the economic spin-offs of this programme are realised, a lot of people will have jobs in harbours as they build infrastructure and repair ships, among other skills that will be required. We must encourage the youth, particularly learners and students, to choose careers in this industry so that they are guaranteed opportunities of employment,” said Mr Makhubela.

South Africa has eight major commercial ports that could benefit from economic growth. R7bn has been committed and 177 jobs have already been created in new port facilities and the refurbishment and maintenance of existing infrastructure over the last 12 months. A new harbour is planned at Boegoebaai, near Port Nolloth, and a pre-feasibility study is currently underway.



Mr Makhubela said the Portfolio Committee on Environment Affairs has appropriated funding to the Department of Environmental Affairs to be used for the blue economy and will ensure that the money that has been allocated for this programme is utilised effectively and efficiently. The Committee has committed itself to unblocking intergovernmental relations challenges to enable Operation Phakisa to gain quick results so that there are no delays in the delivery of the set objectives.

“The ocean economy sector has the potential to achieve its objectives because of the passion and enthusiasm of the people involved in this programme, particularly the scientists, who are doing the kind of work that will ensure that government is able to gain more knowledge. This in turn will ensure that we can conserve more biodiversity and ensure proper governance and



DEVELOPING THE OCEAN ECONOMY: Unlocking the potential of this sector will benefit all South Africans.

management of our oceans and coastal economy. There is an encouraging collaboration between the various departments and scientists from various institutions within South Africa that gives hope in terms of the necessary capacity and skills required to achieve what is necessary," Mr Makhubela added.

This sentiment was echoed by the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Land and Mineral Resources, Mr Olefile Sefako, who said this is a highly intensive scientific research project. Mr Sefako thanked President Jacob Zuma for initiating the Operation Phakisa programme.

"In his State of the Nation Address in 2014, Mr Zuma indicated that South Africa is a better place to live in than it was before 1994. If you look at the research that is being conducted in this programme, you see this wealth of expertise," Mr Sefako said.

Mr Sefako also expressed the importance of parliamentary programmes, such as Taking Parliament to the People, in informing citizens about the ocean economy sector and the opportunities that it will bring to South Africans.

Mr Ashley Johnson, Director for Ocean Research in the Department of Environmental Affairs, said research has the potential to preserve existing jobs and infrastructure while unlocking further economic potential. "The poor and the vulnerable are always affected by adverse climate conditions, such as heavy rain and drought. It is our duty as government to at least give the cities and planners the information that is necessary for them to know where to build," said Mr Johnson.

Mr Makhubela emphasised the importance of producing the kind of tertiary skills required to ensure that this sector moves forward. "The Department

of Environmental Affairs is a scientific department and there is a need for intensive scientific research so that we have information of an international standard that will enable us to compete with the best in the world. This means that we must take care of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and Africa as a whole, as there are not enough resources and capacity to do this kind of work.

"We also want to encourage the Department and its Minister, Ms Edna Molewa in particular, to collaborate with her counterparts in the SADC region and other countries on the African continent to ensure that they commit human resources and funding so that Africa can compete globally in terms of knowledge and research. This will assist Africa to provide the necessary leadership in the ocean economy sector," Mr Makhubela concluded. 🇿🇦

Search for ‘fit and proper’ Public Protector goes public

With *the term of the current Public Protector due to end at the end of October 2016, the search for the new Public Protector is well underway, writes **Temba Gubula**.*

The process Parliament is busy with is expected to be finalised by 31 August 2016 and the name of the nominated candidate will only be passed to the President for his action if that nominee receives at least 60% of the votes from the Members of the National Assembly.

The parliamentary process kicked off with the National Assembly passing a motion to establish an Ad Hoc Committee, responsible for nominating a new Public Protector.

The Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by Dr Makhosi Khoza, has 11 members from various political parties represented in Parliament.

Previously, members of the public and civil society were only allowed to participate by nominating candidates to contest for the Public Protector position, but members of the current Ad Hoc Committee sought to improve this and called for better ways of public participation.

The multi-party members serving in this Committee unanimously agreed to extend public involvement in the search for the new Public Protector to go beyond only involving members of the public during nominations, but to also afford them an opportunity to comment on the names of those who had been nominated or had applied for consideration.

Mr Julius Malema of the Economic Freedom Fighters said allowing ordinary members of the public to comment or object on names or curricula vitae of candidates vying for the Public Protector position would assist the

Committee in nominating the best possible person whose integrity and honesty would be commensurate with the requirements of the Office of the Public Protector.

Mr Malema’s view was supported by Mr Steve Swart of the African Christian Democratic Party who further said the Committee should also accommodate the role of the civil society in this process and they should be involved in the recommendation stages, instead of only confining them to the nominations process.

The Democratic Alliance’s Ms Glynnis Breytenbach said public participation will make the process more transparent and will bind the appointee to do their job without fear, favour or prejudice.

Mr Bongani Bhongo of the African National Congress said the need for public participation in the search for the Public Protector is adequately prescribed in the Public Protector Act, adding that it would be remiss for the Committee to overlook this critical legislative requirement. Mr Bhongo further said Parliament’s processes are always transparent, and this process will be no different.

According to Dr Khoza, the Committee will do its best to involve the public in this process, as the involvement of civil society and public involvement is clearly defined in Section 59(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which states that the National Assembly must facilitate public involvement in its legislative and other processes and conduct its business in an open manner and hold its business or

meetings in public.

The advert was placed in all major national, regional and local newspapers with a closing date of 24 June 2016 and was also aired on all the radio stations as well as on Parliament’s multimedia platforms.

She emphasised the Committee’s decision that the advert was not limited to nominated individuals and also encouraged individuals who believed that they met the requirements to send applications for consideration for the position.

Next it was the turn of members of the public to make their comments or objections on the names of nominees or applicants, which were made public immediately after the closing date of the advert and finalisation of related processes. The period for members of the public to make their comments or objections was from 27 June to 1 July 2016.

After this public participation process, the Committee reconvened for short-listing during the week of 11 to 15 July 2016 with interviews expected to be held on 10 August 2016.

Dr Khoza described herself as a technocrat when she assured the Committee members that she would put her shoulder to the wheel to ensure that the Committee meets its deadline and tables the report to the National Assembly by 31 August 2016.

“All the Committee’s processes will be open to the public and the media. Nothing will be done under the carpet,” she said.

The Constitutional mandate of the Public Protector is to ensure government’s accountability and to



provide remedies for maladministration and abuse of authority. To do this, the Public Protector is empowered to investigate, report on and suggest remedial action for a wide range of wrongdoings in the public administration.

The Public Protector is one of the Chapter 9 institutions provided for in Chapter 9 of the Constitution, along

with other state institutions supporting constitutional democracy. It is therefore critical that the Committee nominates a “fit and proper person” to serve in this role. The “fit and proper person” requirement for the appointment of the Public Protector, according to Parliament’s legal services, is provided for in Section 193 of the Constitution and must comply with any other requirements that are prescribed in

ACCOUNTABILITY: South Africa is seeking a new Public Protector to take over from Ms Thuli Madonsela when her term ends in October.

national legislation.

Section 1A of the Public Protector Act 23 of 1994 provides for the appointment of the Public Protector. It states that the Public Protector shall be a South African citizen who is a “fit and proper person” to hold office; who is either a judge of a High Court or admitted attorney or advocate or has lectured law for a minimum period of 10 years or has specialised knowledge in public finance management, administration of justice for a period of 10 years or has been a Member of Parliament for more than 10 years.

Mr Nathi Mnjenxane, a legal adviser in Parliament, said it was important for the Committee to note that whilst the “fit and proper person” requirement is stringent as outlined in both the Constitution and the Act, it is neither defined nor described in any legislation.

Mr Mnjenxane said it was mainly the courts that have provided the much-needed jurisprudence on this common law principle of “fit and proper person” to hold office. He further said legal scholars on the other hand have termed the requirement of a “fit and proper person” as a “warranty given to the public that a person will act ethically”.

Mr Mnjenxane said it is commonly known that in order for a person to be a “fit and proper person”, they must display integrity, reliability and honesty, adding that these were characteristics that could affect the relationship between such a person and the public.

Dr Khoza said finding a “fit and proper” person to hold the office of the Public Protector, will be undertaken in a non-partisan manner. 🌟



Illicit financial flows in the spotlight

Illicit *financial flows from Africa, small arms trade and corruption are some of the major causes of underdevelopment and ongoing wars and conflicts in the continent which were discussed at a recent meeting of financial organs of state, reports Sakhile Mokoena.*

The international trend of transferring large sums of money from developing countries to tax havens illegally, combined with profit shifting and tax avoidance by commercial corporations and individuals, known as “illicit financial flows”, has been called a “new type of colonialism and a threat to Africa’s development agenda”.

Illicit financial flows are defined as money that is illegally earned, transferred or utilised.

These funds originate from three sources: commercial tax evasion, misinvoicing of trade and abusive transfer pricing; criminal activities, including drug trade, human

trafficking, illegal arms dealing and smuggling of contraband; and bribery and theft by corrupt government officials.

Parliament’s Committees of Finance, Trade and Industry, and Mineral Resources invited state organs in the financial sector to discuss illicit financial flows following the leaking of the Panama Papers.

The leaked papers contained confidential information concerning the provision of trusts, wealth management, international business structures and commercial services by the Panama law firm Mossack Fonseca for its clients in offshore jurisdictions.

It revealed the names of individuals and businesses who hold wealth in offshore jurisdictions and entities and provided insight into how



they structure their financial affairs to minimise tax exposure. The information consisted of 11.5 million documents covering services performed between the 1970s and the present.

A member of the Standing Committee on Finance, Dr Makhosi Khoza, said illicit financial flows are reminiscent of colonialism and undermine Africa's developmental agenda.

"This illicit economy is a new type of colonialism [but] it is digital and high-tech. The devastation of colonialism in the past will recur if this is not addressed appropriately," she told the joint meeting of the three Committees, together with the South African Reserve Bank, the South African Revenue Service, the Financial Intelligence Centre and the National Treasury.

In 2011, African ministers of finance, planning and economic development jointly convened by the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, identified these illicit capital outflows as constituting a major obstacle to development efforts. They decided to form a high-level panel to investigate and make recommendations about what Africa should do to stop these illicit financial outflows.

The Illicit Financial Flows Report by the panel, chaired by former president Mr Thabo Mbeki, exposed how Africa was losing more than \$50bn annually through these illicit financial outflows.

When he tabled the report before the Pan-African Parliament, Mr Mbeki said the figure of US\$50bn (about R750bn) was an underestimate, as it excluded such elements as trade in services and intangibles, proceeds of bribery and trafficking in drugs, people and firearms.

The panel reported that large commercial corporations were the biggest culprits of illicit flows, followed by organised crime.

The panel said it was sure that corrupt practices in Africa are facilitating these outflows, as is the related problem of weak governance capacity.

The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Finance, Mr Yunus Carrim, called on state institutions to work together and act decisively.

"What is being done by the Financial Intelligence Centre and all the other state agencies? Where is the evidence that it is being acted on? How many names did you forward to the police in the past two years and how many of them have been acted upon?" he asked.

Mr Ismail Momoniat, the Deputy Director-General for Tax and Financial Sector Policy in the National Treasury told the Committees that the issue of illicit financial flows was a high priority for government, especially for the National Treasury.

"We agree that we need to act decisively and not wait for all the information. This is like HIV and Aids. We didn't have to know the figure. Once you know it is there, you act," he said.

Mr Momoniat said the problem with the Panama Papers is that they offered limited information, and some of the information went back to the 1970s and is now outdated or some of the perpetrators were cleared during the 2003 amnesty period.

"We don't have the files. We only have information leaked by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. Let us not say the information is certain. Reading an article in a newspaper is not enough evidence. Yes, it alerts people and hopefully they can investigate, but we still need proof before any action can be taken."

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry, Ms Joanmariae Fubbs, said: "This impacts negatively on industrialisation. We would like the South African Reserve Bank, which has a hand on exchange control, to do something about it, because it is in exchange control that a lot of the transfer pricing happens."

Officials from the Reserve Bank told the Committees that illicit financial flows are a long-standing problem. The National Treasury warned against misconceptions that South Africa is lagging behind when it comes to transfer pricing. 🇿🇦



Speaker tells high school students to aim high

On *Take a Girl Child to Work Day, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, hosted a group of students from Fezeka High and Gugulethu Comprehensive High Schools from Cape Town, reports Abel Mputing.*

Ms Mbete encouraged them to set their ambitions high and not let anything prevent them from aspiring to be future Members of Parliament. “You must regard yourselves as the future Members of this Parliament. We are just warming the seats for you. That can sound like a far-fetched dream, but the future Members of this Parliament will come from your generation.

“Anything is possible in life. For instance, we never thought we would one day be Members of this Parliament, which was then exclusively white, but today we are. In conceiving

it, to make it to be as representative as it is today, we had to work with people we considered to be our enemies.

“When we came here in 1994, we were the first black people to occupy this Parliament. We started from scratch to think through how to organise it and ourselves to be representative of the aspirations of all the people of South Africa without regard to race.”

Today, this Parliament is representative of our country’s diverse racial groupings and aspirations due to the mutual respect of each other’s backgrounds

and open-mindedness, which our late President Nelson Mandela instilled in us, she said.

“As Members of Parliament you are bound to meet and work with people who don’t share the same background as yours. And you will have to work with them, be prepared to listen to one another and share different perspectives out of which something rich will come.”

Speaking of elections, she asked the pupils: “Do you know the IEC [Independent Electoral Commission]?” There was a lull and she chipped in, “You cannot say you do not know it.” A half-hearted answer emerged: “It is the body that runs elections.”

The Speaker explained: “The IEC is very

**TAKE A GIRL CHILD TO WORK:**

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, welcomes girl students to Parliament, along with the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi (far right) and the Serjeant-at-Arms, Ms Regina Mohlomi.

Committee, I need to have a secretary, a content adviser and a researcher. They all help me in conducting my constitutional mandate of overseeing the work of the department."

She then gave them a brief background of her professional background and how she got into politics. "I always wanted to be a psychiatrist. While studying, I was also an active member of the South African Student Congress (Sasco). When I finished my degree, I was forced to look for work. I worked in various places before being appointed head of projects in the Presidency. In 2009 I was nominated to come to Parliament."

It takes courage and conviction to be a Member of Parliament, she said. "I enjoy being here, but there are days when things are tough. After nights of fighting in the Chamber, my son asks me if it has to be like this. What makes me come to work is my commitment to serve. I took an oath and I am determined to uphold it."

Ms Zinathi Jubisa, a student at Gugulethu Comprehensive High School, said she was glad to have been given an opportunity to visit Parliament. "I have always seen Parliament on TV and now I am here today. Now I know that there are two Houses of Parliament with different constitutional mandates. I did not know that before. When I heard of Parliament, I thought of the National Assembly that is often shown on TV. I will cherish this opportunity for the rest of my life," she said.

"Before I came here I was not interested in politics because I thought it is the domain of men. Now I am," said another student, Ms Vuyelwa Sani from Fezeka High School. "I am inspired by the fact that the Speaker of Parliament is a woman, and there are female Committee Chairpersons. That has changed my perception about politics." 🌟

important in your life and the political life of your country because it governs our elections and one day you will be running it. And those of you who are 18 years old or older, it is your right and responsibility to register and vote."

The pupils then heard an address from the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi, who explained her responsibilities as the Chairperson of a Committee. "My responsibility is to ensure that the Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services presents the department's strategic plan and policy priorities and how they relate to the expenditure of their budget allocation. And they will have to justify their budget requests and we, in turn, have to determine the appropriateness of the department's budget allocation in relation to its priorities," she said.

Part of the work of the Committee is to regulate the information and communications technology sector to ensure that it complies with the rules and regulations that govern it, she said. "We are the ones who constantly

ask the cellular companies why their data is expensive and how that defeats our country's endeavour to bridge the technology divide that sets us back, compared to developed countries. Through our oversight of this sector, we set the regulations to ensure that you guys are protected from victimisation and online bullying.

"Most importantly, we seek to ensure that every school has a computer laboratory as one of its teaching and learning tools," she said. "It is critical to ensure that all schools have computer labs. Due to technological advancement, it is possible to teach pupils mathematics and life sciences by means of the computer. Part of our mandate is to ask the Department of Basic Education about its plans to ensure that every school has a computer laboratory, because that is no longer a luxury, but a necessary tool for teaching and learning," she said.

She also explained to them that there are other careers in Parliament other than being a Member of Parliament. "In order to do my work more efficiently as a Chairperson of a



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