



INAUGURAL ADDRESS

2024

ADDRESS BY
DR. ZAMANI SAUL

as Premier of the Northern Cape

TUESDAY. 25 JUNE 2024

LEGISLATURE. NORTHERN CAPE

"Modern, Growing and Successful Province"



Province of the
Northern Cape
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



LEAVE NO
ONE BEHIND

Inaugural Address by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr Zamani Saul

Northern Cape Provincial Legislature - Kimberley

25 June 2024

Speaker of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature, Ms Newrene Klaaste,

Deputy Speaker, Mr Mangaliso Matika,

[Let me therefore also take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to these very important positions]

Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces, Mr Kenny Mmoeimang

The leader of the Opposition, Mr Harold Mcgluwa

The Leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters, Mr Shadrack Tlhaole

The Leader of the Freedom Front Plus, Mr Theodoris Joubert

**Members of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces,
Members of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature,**

Chairperson of the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders, Kgosi Pelonomi Toto and all our Traditional Leaders

Judge President of the Northern Cape High Court Division, Judge Pule Tlaletsi,

Heads of State Security Services,

The Provincial Commissioner Otola and all men and women in blue

**Chairperson of the South African Local Government Association - Northern
Cape, Councillor Segede**

Mayors and Councillors,

Heads of State Institutions supporting our Constitutional Democracy,

**The Director General and Heads of Departments and Government Officials, The
Provincial Secretary of the ANC and other political parties,**

**Leaders of the Alliance and Mass Democratic Movement Formations Leaders of
Organised Labour,**

Business leaders, Members of the Media, Distinguished Guests,

Fellow residents of the Northern Cape

Ladies and Gentlemen

I stand before you, a few days after taking Oath of Office as the Premier of the Northern Cape Province. Let me express my appreciation to Judge President Pule Tlaletsi for presiding over our inaugural House Sitting on the 14th of June with such exceptional diligence; which saw the swearing-in of Members of the Provincial Legislature, the election of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the Premier.

Honourable Speaker, last week it was the inauguration of the President of the Republic of South Africa. On behalf of the people of the Northern Cape, I extend heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa on his election and inauguration for his second term as the President of the Republic of South Africa. President Ramaphosa is tasked with steering the formation of a Government of National Unity.

The GNU marks a new era where diverse parties cooperate for the common goal of improving the lives of the citizens of this country and fostering national solidarity. We are entering uncharted waters, with a capable captain, His Excellency President Ramaphosa, to take the country through this murky situation.

Honourable Speaker, we thank our people for the over 400,000 ballots they cast in our Province by exercising their civic duty with admirable patience and tolerance. According to the Independent Electoral Commission, the Northern Cape voter turnout stood at 58%, which was very low, but an impressive reflection of a people's democracy that is not only maturing but getting entrenched. As we commemorate three decades of freedom, this inauguration underscores our ongoing commitment to uphold the principles of democracy. I am thankful to all the contributors who played a role in facilitating a peaceful electoral process in the country.

The ANC received 49.34% of the votes and that represents 15 of the 30 seats in the Provincial Legislature. The people of the Northern Cape have spoken, and their voices have resonated with a call for unity, progress, and shared growth. As I am standing here, Honourable Speaker, I can assure the people of the Northern Cape that this is a moment of accelerated progress, accelerated development and accelerated growth. This is a moment of increased speed in our work and we will not disappoint you.

I am deeply honoured and humbled that the African National Congress has demonstrated confidence in me to lead the people of this Province for a second term

of Government. I stand here today with gratitude to once again address this August House and the people of the Northern Cape as the Premier.

Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, we meet at a time when we are commemorating Youth Month under the theme, “**Actively embracing the socio-economic gains of our Democracy.**” This theme is in line with the theme of the 30 Years of Democracy.

In our country, June is Youth Month, and June 16 is Youth Day. In 1953, the Apartheid Government passed the Bantu Education Act, transferring Black education to the Department of Native Affairs. The 1976 uprising was a genuine protest against Bantu Education and raised political awareness that led to country-wide protests against oppressive Apartheid education policies. Today, Youth Month and Youth Day commemorate the sacrifices and resilience of the nation’s young people during the liberation struggle.

Young people comprise about 60% of the population, which is the largest cohort of our population. They are crucial to the current and future development of our country and in particular this Province. We should actively involve young people in the development initiatives of the Province as co-creators. We should continue to give special attention to addressing the challenging circumstances faced by our young people.

We give our commitment that this ANC-led Provincial Government will continue to address the challenges confronting our young people in this Province. We will continue to build on the successes of the past administration and still focus on creating jobs, building an inclusive and growing economy and we will equally focus on implementing a programme focused on skilling young people. Young people in the Province must have jobs and have access to job opportunities. We will further strengthen our collaboration with SETAs.

Honourable Speaker, we have already launched some impressive programmes with two SETAs (merSETA and servicesSETA) and UIF this year at a total cost of R800 Million to benefit about 26,000 unemployed people.

With MERSETA, we have launched a skills development and bursary programme totalling R210 million, that will ultimately benefit 2,000 young people. Thus far, 956 beneficiaries have been enrolled in the National MERSETA database and will

commence classes once registration is confirmed and completed in the National System. As part of the programme, 387 employed beneficiaries attached to the Department of Roads and Public Works will have their skills upgraded.

The investment by the servicesSETA in the province is R45 210 350 with 755 beneficiaries that will be subjected to artisan training programmes for three years.

Last month, we introduced the Labour Activation Programme through the UIF Fund of the Department of Labour. This programme will offer skills development opportunities valued at R545 250 200 to benefit 23,000 unemployed young people in the Province. The Labour Activation Programme (LAP) is designed to address the challenge of youth unemployment in the country. One of the programme's goals is to improve the employability of the unemployed through training and enterprise development. The training opportunities cover various sectors such as construction, enterprise development, ICT, agriculture, security, mining, and hospitality.

The recruitment and selection of beneficiaries has already begun, and the appointed service providers are actively contracting the beneficiaries. The programme will be implemented in phases to ensure adherence to the time frames as per the Memorandums of Understanding entered into with the service providers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Speaker, when we started with the Sixth Administration in 2019, I committed to work on building a Modern, Growing, and Successful Province to address the triple fault lines of poverty, inequality and unemployment. I am proud of what we have achieved collectively in the space of five years. As a result, the unemployment rate in the province has systematically decreased since 2019 and remains lower than the national average. We have boosted the economy through investment and job creation, more especially targeting the youth.

We have built a solid foundation upon which we can further improve and advance people-centred development during this Seventh Administration.

We appreciate the fact that a lot more work needs to be done to restore the faith that our people have placed in this Government and to ensure that we deliver on the mandate bestowed upon us by a large number of our people.

During this Seventh Administration, we remain dedicated to our vision to modernise the province, grow the economy and make the province successful. This will be done

with much greater speed and will be underpinned by the six priority areas of the 2024 ANC Election Manifesto, which are:

1. Making South Africa work: our jobs plan;
 2. Building our industries for inclusive economy;
 3. Tackling the high cost of living;
 4. Investing in people;
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1. Defending democracy and advancing freedom; and
 2. Building a better Africa

Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to construct a new Social Compact as we jointly steer the Northern Cape onto the path of becoming a Modern, Growing, and Successful Province.

As a country and a Province, we have made significant progress in delivering basic services to the poor. Before 1994, many communities were deprived of basic services, which included clean running water, electricity, housing and education. Since the dawn of our democracy, we have reduced the backlog of basic services and have improved living conditions for many citizens.

The ANC as a governing party has relentlessly worked over the past 30 years to fundamentally change the quality of lives of our people in the Northern Cape.

We have seen improvements in access to basic services with the province's performance for access to water, electricity and sanitation consistently being above the national average. This is further reflected in the Census 2022 report which

indicates that the number of households with formal dwellings increased from 78,3% to 85,9% in 2022.

The total number of households that have access to onsite piped water (either inside the dwelling or yard) increased to 82% in 2022; the percentage of households that had no access to piped water in the Province declined from 19,7% to 8,7% in 2022. The total number of households that had access to electricity as a main source of lighting increased to 92,5% in 2022.

Honourable Speaker, we are happy now, as we surpassed three months with no load-shedding, and there are clear indications that load-shedding is becoming something of the past. Infrastructure roll-out was the hallmark of the Sixth Administration, over the past five years more than R20 Billion was invested in both social and economic infrastructures. More schools, clinics, roads, and libraries were built and some are still under construction. More than 18 000 serviced sites were built and building top structures have commenced in earnest with the R1 Billion housing project.

The total number of households in the Northern Cape with access to flush toilets increased to 73,0% in 2022. This indicates a huge improvement in the provision of basic services. We have indeed improved the quality of public education and all indicators attest to that. The proportion of persons aged 5-24 who attend an education institution increased from 64,2% to 70,3% in 2022 in the Northern Cape; this represents the largest increase in attendance observed in all provinces. The percentage of persons aged 20 years and older with no schooling in the Northern Cape declined from 22,7% to 6,7% in 2022.

Honourable speaker, we will accelerate the work of the Seventh Administration to address the triple fault lines through ongoing efforts at creating a decent standard of living for our people.

Addressing the lingering effects of apartheid is a political imperative that we must take up vigorously. The Constitution prescribes for progressive realisation of social and economic rights, including social security, food security, and children's well-being, as outlined in South Africa's Bill of Rights. We must work towards building a fair and compassionate society, acknowledging that this can only be achieved through

meaningful partnerships and proactive efforts to promote social cohesion. This should guide our discussions on the revival of positive values and moral regeneration.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we embark on this new journey, I am reminded of the words spoken by our President in his recent Inauguration Address. He emphasised the importance of working together, transcending political divides, and focusing on the common good of all South Africans. It is this spirit of unity and collaboration that will guide us as we move forward in the Northern Cape Province. Thus, our journey into the next five years will require intensive engagement with political parties, civil society, the private sector, academia, and all spheres of government.

We need to reflect on challenges and draw on the key insights and lessons from the Thirty-Year Review. Co-operative governance represents the basic values of the government as stipulated in Section 41(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as well as the implementation of these values through the establishment of structures and institutions.

The Seventh Administration will work tirelessly to bring all stakeholders together towards the realisation of the vision of the Northern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan Vision 2040 for the realisation of a Modern, Growing, and Successful Province. This plan outlines a bold and ambitious path to transform our Province into one that provides opportunities for all.

Honourable Speaker, a Modern, Growing, and Successful Province requires strong partnerships between government, business, labour, civil society, and most importantly, the citizens we serve. My role as Premier will be to provide strategic leadership and coordinating mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and working in concert. Our Integrated Governance, Coordination, and Service Delivery Model is designed to bring various role players and stakeholders together to build partnerships towards achieving our Provincial Vision.

As a collective, we will craft a Provincial Medium Term Development Plan for the 2024 to 2029 period and identify desired outcomes towards 2029 across economic, social, environmental, and governance. The plan will translate our shared priorities into tangible actions and measurable outcomes. These outcomes will be bolstered by the tireless work we did in the past five years on the mega economic projects.

One of our major accomplishments is securing the Boegoebaai Port. Transnet has issued a Request for Qualification (RFQ) towards a Request for Proposal (RFP) for constructing this critical infrastructure, marking a tremendous breakthrough. Additionally, the Province has achieved its first licensed Special Economic Zone (SEZ), the Namakwa SEZ, which will pave the way to link the proposed Boegoebaai SEZ with the Upington and Kathu Industrial Parks. These clusters will also include notable projects such as the Prieska Power Reserve, Upilang, and SASOL's Boegoebaai lighthouse investment, all of which will drive the energy sector and support South Africa's Just Energy Transition through green hydrogen, renewable energy, and dedicated grid and pipeline infrastructure solutions.

Honourable Speaker, as we construct a path to a new dispensation and social compact in the Province, we take a leaf from the book of John Schaar who stated that **“The future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found but made. And the activities of making the paths, changes both the maker and the destination”**.

Honourable Speaker, as I stand before you today to usher in a new era of the Seventh Administration in the Province let me take a step back and briefly reflect on my journey as Premier in the Sixth Administration. I once again have a renewed appreciation for this amazing Province of the Northern Cape, which offers a powerful combination of experiences – traditional cultures mixed with modern urban rhythms; being transported from our collective human origins right through to cutting-edge scientific discoveries and technologies.

I have realized that there is no better way to experience our Province than through our people. I also need to mention that each district in the Province has its DNA or uniqueness that exhibits features of the Province's competitive and comparative advantages such as the Karoo, ocean, arid and semi-arid desert, wide open skies, the green Kalahari and rich endowments of a variety of mineral and semi-precious stones.

Our journey through the Sixth Administration was riddled with challenges. As the Sixth Administration commenced, we were struck by a global pandemic – namely COVID-19. The pandemic affected the lives of every person in this Province in one way or another. The COVID-19 period also brought the use of digital technologies closer to the fore. We were also confronted by the aftermath of the State Capture Report.

Honourable Speaker, as a Party and a Government, we have learnt from our mistakes and want to ensure the people of the Northern Cape that we will do anything possible to close the trust deficit. We will do things differently – it won't be business as usual.

I acknowledge the mixed resolve that is there amongst our people. Some regard this period as the “**Winter of our discontent**”, whilst others view it as a time to take hands and jointly address the challenges confronting the people of the province.

There is no doubt that the next five years (2024-2029) will go down in the annals of history as a pivotal juncture in our transformation journey. The next five years will determine and shape the socio-economic and political landscape of our Province and country.

At this hour we are reminded of our motto in our Coat of Arms which calls for unity. The motto: !ke e: /xarra //keis, written in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people and literally translates to “diverse people unite”. This is still pertinent and relevant within the current dispensation.

As the Premier, I want to reassert my commitment to lead with honesty, empathy, and hard work. Following the national goals that the President has set forth, we will work together to give economic growth, job creation, social welfare, infrastructure development, and good governance priority.

I am appealing to each of you to support and work with this Provincial Administration to create a better future for the people of the Northern Cape. Let us continuously collaborate, motivated by the spirit of progress and solidarity that characterises our country at this critical moment.

Honourable Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, modernising our Province, Growing its economy to create much-needed job opportunities and making it Successful with better and improved outcomes in education and health is our key mandate and indeed represents our greatest hope.

Across our different political affiliations, as Northern Capers, we have to converge and use the power in our hands to attain these goals. Hence, my invitation to all opposition

parties to support the work of the Seventh Administration in the struggle to attain a better life for all.

As I conclude **Honourable Speaker**, I want to take this opportunity to thank my family for their support, my mom, my wife, my children, brother, sisters, cousins, and nephews and thank you very much for your presence, which I highly appreciate.

Thank you

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