

SPEECH NOTES BY SANELE MAGAQA MPL, DA SHADOW MEC FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS SPEAKING ON THE BUDGET DEBATE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

- Budget must address provincial housing backlog
- IDP must prioritise the destitute and the vulnerable

Honourable Speaker.

The Premier of the province, Members of the executive, Leaders of political parties, Members of the house, officials and guests I greet to you all.

I want to thank the Chairperson of the committee, the members and the officials for a good working relationship, when the time calls.

Honourable Speaker, I stand before this house as the son of this province, a proud black South African, a son of the African Soil.

I stand proud to live in a country that is no longer the skunk of the world, proud that out of the painful past, a new nation was born, a rainbow nation where we all are equal irrespective of ones colour, background or religion.

Madam Speaker, I am standing as an individual with the right to decide, analyse for myself and make the choice that best represents my ideology and that of my party the, Democratic Alliance.

Madam Speaker I therefore, cannot be free while our people out there are still crying for the right to own a house, yes indeed, a lot has been done in a number of areas to improve lives and open opportunities for all South Africans who were previously disadvantaged. But Madam Speaker, millions are still waiting for a better life and thousands are and have been on waiting lists for decent houses for a number of years. That means there is a lot that needs to be done to rectify the imbalances of the past in this department.

For every challenge Madam Speaker, there is a solution, one needs to create space for that and it starts with all of us, the MEC and the staff of the department.

We need 100% full disclosure of interest by the departmental officials and one can take that very lightly but it remains the major contributor of outsourcing without skills transfers for years and ask yourself ku benefitter bani?

We remain bound by our shared history and common destiny to provide decent shelter to the poor citizens of this province.

The Eastern Cape therefore, needs leaders that deal with the challenges facing our people using an eye of the eagle to assess and act decisively with fraud and corruption in the Human Settlements Department. The good work that is being done by the department year after year is being tarnished by the shoddy work done by the

contractors, and they are not alone Madam Speaker. The District officials in the Nelson Mandela Bay have been implicated in a number of cases but they are still employed. Madam Speaker this is the worst affected municipality with more than 80 000 houses to be built and thousands more to rectify, the commitment of the officials in the municipality leaves a lot to desired.

This department has channelled half a billion rand towards Human Settlements crises in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality but that was like a drop in the ocean, as thousands more people are still living in shacks and in dilapidated houses.

Madam Speaker, I have no reason not to support this budget vote, it is meant to improve the lives of our people in all corners of the province not NMBM as it is the case, Kunzima yonk'into iya EBHAYI!

Honourable Speaker, the Eastern Cape Department of Human Settlement budget for the 2016/2017 financial year has decreased by more than 2% compared to the previous financial year, this is becoming a trend.

Honourable Speaker, the budget for this financial year will not be sufficient to deal with the housing needs that are facing this province; we still have areas in Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo District municipalities that are of great concern.

Madam Speaker the budget allocated to deal with the destitute and vulnerable is not enough and will never be, but I am appealing to the office of the MEC to send one of its officials to ward 23, Sea View in Mbizana the worst performing municipality in the country and see the conditions in which the elderly people are living under. This is along the coast in a very windy and sloppy area with no roads and the worst part of it all no water. There is little or no story to tell for this community.

It is a fact Honourable Speaker, that the confidence and the respect that the people of this country had for the government in the past years has now been replaced by disappointment, anger and frustration, especially among the young and unemployed.

The current unemployment rate of 43% in the province means that this government will continue to build houses for poor, rather than creating jobs and improving education so that our sons and daughters can build houses of the choice and not wait for RDP. We are creating a dependency state! The people of Grahamstown and Mbizana are waiting for their door handles and roof tiles to be fixed by the government, our people are not empowered, they remain dependent on the state. (That will mean you vote for me I provide!)

The housing target has been declining in the last five years and is currently sitting at 13 180 houses for this financial year. And the shrinking budget indeed proves that the department, with a backlog of more than 600 000 houses is chasing a moving target.

Given the fact that department is chasing a moving target with declining resources and a growing housing backlog ,the department will have to respond to this threat by implementing and availing a mixed basket of affordable housing options .

The department would have to determine additional ways of saving costs and working more efficiently, as the current budget is not enough.

To decrease this housing backlog and to overcome the ineffectiveness of municipalities in the provision of bulk infrastructure, the IDP should be in place, in line with the use and the promotion of alternative building technologies. The office of the MEC must seriously consider inviting the private sector and the manufacturing sector of South Africa into the housing delivery chapter to assist Human settlement with housing solutions that will enable the department to drastically reduce the backlog.

Okoku gqibela, the department's target of 10 783 jobs ambition will be realised only when there is a commitment to connection between, innovation, manufacturing, a clear plan to reduce fraudulent and corrupt activities within the department leading to the creation of jobs and fighting poverty.

The Democratic Alliance supports the report.

Thank you.