

Speech by Francois Beukman, MP Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Police, Police and IPID Budget Votes

15 May 2015, National Assembly, Cape Town

Honourable Speaker

Minister of Police Hon Nhleko and Deputy Minister of Police Hon Soty

Members of Cabinet and Deputy-Ministers

MEC`s of the Nine Provinces

Honourable Members

The Accounting Officers of the Police, IPID, Civilian Secretariat and Director of PSIRA

Fellow South Africans

The Portfolio Committee on Police received briefings from the South African Police Services on their 2015-2016 budget and annual performance plan on 15, 17 and 21 April 2015. Briefings were also received from the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) on 23 April 2015 and the Civilian Secretariat for Police on 29 April 2015. The briefings were preceded by inputs from civil society, research institutions and trade unions on 14 April 2015. The reports dealing respectively with the three entities were adopted by the Portfolio Committee on 7 May 2015 and published in the A.T.C. on 11 May 2015.

In the findings and observations the committee specifically focussed on the importance of stable leadership and effective financial management in SAPS, IPID and the Civilian Secretariat. In the case of SAPS 29 recommendations were made; with relation to IPID 15 recommendations; and in the case of the Civilian Secretariat 20 recommendations.

I want to thank all members of the committee for their contributions during the process, and also the Deputy Minister of Police for her valuable contribution during the budget hearings.

The recommendations support the Building Safer Communities vision in the NDP, namely:

In 2030, people living in South Africa feel safe at home, at school and at work, and they enjoy a community life free of fear. Women walk freely in the streets and children play safely outside. The police service is well-resourced and professional, staffed by highly skilled officers who value their work, serve the community, safeguard lives and property without discrimination, protects the peaceful against violence, and respect the rights to equality and justice".

The Portfolio Committee will monitor the responses and implementation plans of the three entities relating to the adopted resolutions. If the need arises additional hearings will be scheduled during the Parliamentary year to evaluate progress.

The ANC recorded in the January 8 the Statement 2015 the following:

"We are now seeing a gradual, but steady decline in serious crime. However, crime still remains a major social and economic challenge. Communities are urged to participate fully in the various community safety forums and work with the SAPS and other law enforcement agencies to fight crime.

It is only by working together that we can eradicate crime from our communities and also hold the police accountable should they act outside the boundaries of the law.

We condemn, in the strongest of terms, the killing of law enforcement officers and urge communities to work with the police to eliminate this scourge. The ANC condemns the violent crimes against

women, children, the elderly and members of the LGBTI community. These attacks are despicable and they must be stopped.

The January 8th Statement also highlights the role of civil society in ensuring safety in our communities, community education on laws, rights and duties of South African citizens and furthermore for responsible citizens to respect one another, our laws, public property and the authority of the state. Members of the community are also urged to participate in campaigns against all forms of violence and also to report, to law enforcement agencies, any knowledge regarding these attacks."

The SAPS received a main appropriation of R 76.3 billion for the 2015/16 financial year, the IPID R 234.8 million and the Civilian Secretariat R 105, 1 million. The Police Vote represents 11 per cent of the total national budget which is the second largest allocation to a single vote.

We firmly believe that the National Commissioner, Genl R Piyega and her management team should ensure that the allocated resources are distributed fairly across police stations countrywide, more especially to previously disadvantaged and less affluent areas. All citizens are entitled to receive the same level of service. Rural and high crime areas should receive special attention. We welcome the commitment by the SAPS Management to investigate and implement alternative methods of resource distribution and to improve access to police service points.

Police stations are the backbone of the SAPS. If a station commander is ineffective and the station fails it fails the community. The constant up skilling of station commanders is an essential prerequisite to ensure that junior members receive the necessary mentoring and relevant in-house training to become successful law enforcement officers.

The Committee resolved that the leadership of SAPS must be stabilised and that accountability should be increased at all levels of the organisation.

The integrity of the SAPS leadership should be beyond reproach.

The vetting turn-around strategy, the new recruitment framework and the establishment of the Integrity Unit could also have a positive effect to strengthen accountability and adherence to integrity based values.

One of the critical areas to be addressed over the medium term is the professionalization of the police service.

A police service that wants to be trusted by the community should be professional at all times.

The Draft White Paper on Police reflects in Chapter 3 on the necessary qualities for a police officer in the 21st century, namely a career professional, a loyal public servant, respectful and accepting of public values, accountability mechanisms and policing systems.

We welcome the following action steps tabled in the Estimates of National Expenditure to professionalize the police:

Strengthen relations with research and academic institutions on curriculum development; and Including the Police Code of Conduct in the department's disciplinary regulations;

Performance appraisals;

Streamlining the process to deal with disciplinary cases;

Launching the community based recruitment and selection strategy.

However, these action steps should form part of a broader comprehensive implementation strategy to

professionalise the police.

Speaker, The President of the Republic, his Excellency, pres JG Zuma made the following remark in the 2015 State of the Nation Address:

"We have to continue working harder together to fight crime and to create safer communities."

Speaker, this effort is therefore not restricted to state actors only. It involves the total community.

The recent National Fire-Arm Summit that was held in Parliament brought stake-holders, role-players and ordinary South Africans - from SAFA to the Hunters Associations- to embark on a dialogue on the kind of society we wish to live in and enjoy in the context of gun control. All stake-holders agreed that all have a role to play in ensuring effective measures to regulate the ownership and distribution of guns and the prevent and reduce the impact of gun violence on society.

We once again want to call on all citizens to assist in removing illegal fire-arms from society. Let us work with the SAPS, CPF`s and community organisations in this important endeavour.

The Committee will keep a close eye how the police management transform and re-engineer the Central Fire-arm Registry to a more effective organisation and the strategy of punitive measures against Commanders and Members who are negligent in losing their firearms.

The recent incidents of xenophobic violence again highlighted the importance of intelligence-led policing and an integrated approach to curb public violence. We welcome the establishment of liaison forums and cooperation centres for migrants in conjunction with CPF`s, the assessment and management of illegal fire-arms in the hands of migrants and the increase deployment to enhance visibility and response to incidents.

Oversight over the police is entrenched in Section 206 and 208 of the Constitution of the Republic where provision is respectively made for the Independent Police Investigative Directorate and the Civilian Secretariat for Police.

The Committee believes that the IPID under the leadership of the Acting Executive Director Mr Israel Kganmanyane should take IPID services closer to the people; enhance integrity and quality of investigations and re-prioritise the fight against corruption and systemic corruption.

The Civilian Secretariat headed by the Acting Secretary Ms Reneva Fourie have an important role to play to improve the effectiveness of policing in South Africa through regular monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the SAPS.

The promotion of crime prevention partnerships and the hosting of dialogues on community safety and crime prevention could significantly contribute to the reduction of crime.

We also want to pay tribute to those members of the SAPS who died in the line of duty since the last Budget Vote debate. We want to extend our condolences to their love ones and families. We honour their contribution in the fight against crime and to keep our communities safe.

In the recent few weeks we saw the brutal slaying of members in KZN and Gauteng. The SAPS management needs to ensure that there is a constant review of operational training and tactical doctrines in high risk environments to maximize the safety of members.

Finally, let me extend a word of thanks to the Acting Content Advisor, Ms Nicolette van Zyl-Gous,

Researcher Mr Thembani Mbadlanyana , Committee Secretaries Ms Babalwa Mbengo and Mr Pilate Gwebu; the Committee assistant Mr Lobi, Mr Temba Gubula, our media liaison for their professionalism and hard work.

The ANC supports Budget Vote 23 for Police (including the Civilian Secretariat) and Budget Vote 20 for the Independent Police Investigate Directorate.

Thank you.