**JUSTICE, CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY (JCPS) CLUSTER**

**DRAFT POST SONA MEDIA BRIEFING STATEMENT**

**5 March 2017**

**Ministers,**

**Deputy Ministers,**

**Directors-General and Heads of other institutions present,**

**Members of the Media,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Introduction**

President Jacob Zuma delivered the State of the Nation Address on 09 February 2017 under the theme ***“The Year of Oliver Reginald Tambo: Unity in Action Together Moving South Africa Forward.”*** Oliver Tambo was the longest serving president of the ANC from 1967 to 1991. He led the organisation through the difficult years in exile and participated in ushering in a new democratic South Africa. In honouring Tambo, the JCPS Cluster echoes the call for 2017 to be the year of unity in action by all South Africans as together we move South Africa forward.

During the State of the Nation Address, the President emphasised that the fight against crime is an apex priority of government. The Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster is committed to ensuring the realisation of the NDP vision of a South Africa where by the year 2030, all people living in South Africa feel safe, have no fear of crime, and are properly served by the criminal justice system (Government Outcome 3). The JCPS Cluster has to ensure that Government meets its constitutional mandate to protect citizens against crime by intensifying the fight against crime.

**Interventions for domestic stability**

We have noted recent concerns raised by our communities regarding certain criminal activities including

* drug trafficking,
* prostitution,
* illegal firearms,
* house hijackings
* labour practices favouring migrants and criminal activities associated with immigration,
* as well as the anti-immigrant sentiment resulting therefrom

These impact on relations between South Africans and foreign nationals. Government interventions spearheaded by the Home Affairs Minister in this regard are welcomed as they did much to respond, responsibly and speedily to concerns of citizens, through among others, meetings with stakeholders in the business sector such as the hospitality sector.

The Cluster welcomes prompt interventions spearheaded by the NATJOINTS following attacks on foreign nationals accused of involvement in illegal activities including drugs and prostitution. The interventions have helped in emphasising sharply the issues affecting communities in the area, in particular on matters around policing and the alleged illegal activities of migrants. In this regard, joint business inspections were carried out with 56 business premises inspected, resulting in 7 employers charged for employing undocumented migrants and 147 undocumented migrants were arrested. Furthermore, most of the foreign owned shops inspected did not comply with the 60/40% ratio as they employ only foreign nationals in possession of asylum seeker permits.

We have noted the issues raised with government, and reiterate the need to expedite matters in this regard, through among others:

* Establishing an integrated Border Management Authority to improve border management
* Ensuring compliance with laws and the SA Constitution by citizens and foreign nationals
* Taking “a whole of state approach” to concerns raised by communities, and
* Promoting better dialogue on policing between communities and authorities.

The JCPS will ensure that matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the South African public. We also reiterate the Home Affairs Minster’s call for responsible public comments by all leaders and public representatives. We should all act responsibly to prevent any loss of life and damage to property.

The launch and renaming of Marabastad as Desmond Tutu Reception Centre is a step in the right direction. It demonstrates South Africa’s commitment to an improved system of asylum seeker and refugee management. It discourages queues and helps in combatting corruption and bribery. The new improved and modernised centre, with an automated booking system, was launched on Friday, 17 February 2017 by President Jacob Zuma.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration, led by Minister Jeff Radebe, continues with the work of addressing the underlying causes of the tensions between communities and the foreign nationals. Some of the challenges that have been identified and being addressed are: the strict implementation of our Labour Relations policies as they pertain to foreign nationals; the implementation of the laws that govern business licenses; the country‘s border management and the country’s migration policies in general. While this work continues, we urge our communities to isolate the criminal elements who are hijacking the concerns of communities to loot shops and attack innocent people just because they come from other countries.

Anyone who feels that their rights are being infringed upon should report to their nearest police station. Our country has the institutional and legislative framework to peacefully resolve any challenge without resorting to violence. We want to assure all people in our country that the law enforcement agencies are monitoring the situation on the ground closely. A situation where people take the law into their own hands or incite others to commit violence will not be allowed to continue.

**Fighting crime**

During his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma reflected on the crime situation in the Soshanguve area. We would like to reassure South Africans that these matters are being addressed. Multi-disciplinary operations and deployments concentrating on hotspots, not only in Soshanguve, but in all station areas bordering Soshanguve are being intensified. A special team of detectives which deal with these cases (hijackings and robberies) has been reinforced. We call on all sectors of the Soshanguve community to work closely with law enforcement agencies in the fight against crime in that community. Progress in relation to these crime fighting operations will be provided at the next briefing of the Cluster.

We have noted Stats SA’s recently released Victims of Crimes survey and are currently working with all key stakeholders and specialist to respond to it responsibly to some of its assertions. We remain committed to instilling public confidence in the police and the entire criminal justice value chain at all times, especially among victims of crime.

According to the statistical data, overall crime in South Africa has decreased between 2015 and 2016, with 2.1 million crimes reported in the 12 months measured. Although still concerning this overall improvement comes on the back of the implementation of an effective crime combating strategy which includes actions to reduce contact crimes.

The JCPS Cluster remains resolute to rid our communities of criminals and the realisation of a South Africa where all citizens are and feel safe.

The JCPS Cluster continues to implement various crime-fighting operations across the country to ensure communities are and feel safe. Some of these include: School Safety Programmes to ensure that conditions at our schools are safe and conducive for teaching and learning to take place.

The commitment of prosecutors to focus on specialised crime is further reflected in the high conviction rates obtained in environmental crime, rhino poaching prosecutions and copper theft prosecutions in which a 93% conviction rate was maintained, coupled with an overall conviction rate of 91% in all organised crime.

**Unrest at institutions of Higher Learning**

The JCPS Cluster would like to commend members of the SAPS who worked long hours under difficult circumstances in maintaining safety, security and stability and exercising maximum restraint even in the face of extreme provocation. We further reiterate that such acts of violence as witnessed at our universities, have no place in our democratic society.

**Safer Festive Season Back-to-Basics operations**

After conducting thorough analysis of past and recent performance of the SAPS, police leadership concluded that urgent, focused action was required to ensure that the SAPS is an organisation every South African can be proud of. It was at that point that the back-to-basics approach to policing was introduced. The approach focuses on every police officer doing the basics of policing properly and consistently. Amongst others, the approach prioritises the building of stronger police-community relationships to improve community safety.

The Safer Festive Season operations launched in October last year to help make South Africa a safe place during the 2016/17 festive season period, has yielded remarkable successes. The operations were characterised by high police visibility in all areas with many people such as shopping centres, malls and beaches. Notable successes of the operations were as follows:

* Contact crimes decreasing by 5.3%,
* Contact-related crimes decreasing by 5.4%,
* Property-related crimes decreasing by 2.2%
* and other serious crimes decreasing by 5.3%.
* A total of 83 479 persons were arrested during 705 639 policing operations
* and 1 060 firearms, among other items, were confiscated.

**Tackling the social and Economic consequences of the illicit drug Trade**

President Jacob Zuma has committed government to immediately review and enhance its programmes and strategies that are aimed at fighting crime and drug abuse in order to ensure safer and peaceful communities. The President recently undertook visits to the townships of Shoshanguve, north of Pretoria and Nyanga in Cape Town to interact with residents, recovering drug addicts and the leadership of the SAPS. He led the discussions about challenges as well as support needed in relation to the fight against crime in those specific communities. These visits underscore the commitment at the highest levels of our government to build safer communities, free of illicit drugs and crime.

The JCPS Cluster is currently following these instructions of the President in looking at ways of improving its policies and strategies.

The Department of Social Development established the Central Drug Authority to coordinate efforts to combat substance abuse in terms of the Prevention and Treatment of Substance abuse Act 70 OF 2008. The Central Drug Authority developed the National Drug Master Plan (NDMP) 2013/17 which is currently under review. The NDMP is a government blueprint for strategic interventions to address the problem of alcohol and drug abuse. The NDMP has these three pillars; supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction. Supply reduction is to address the issues such as illegal manufacturing, distribution, sale and trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals. Demand reduction mainly deals with early intervention and prevention of the abuse of drugs and alcohol. On the other hand, harm reduction focuses on treatment, reintegration and aftercare services.

Government currently has seven (7) public treatment facilities that are operational in Gauteng (1), KZN (2), Western Cape (2), Mpumalanga (1) and Eastern Cape (1). We have finished the building of three (3) treatment centres in Limpopo (1) and North West (2). Two other treatment facilities are currently being built in Free State (1) and Northern Cape (1). The government has further developed treatment model to ensure quality and easy delivery of treatment services. Prevention programmes has also been strengthened to support treatment services. There are education and awareness raising campaigns being conducted around the country. These campaigns are targeting students, learners and out of school children and youth, women, adults and the general public. These campaigns include: Ke Moja Education and awareness campaign, International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Institutions of Higher Learning campaign, and Festive Season Campaign.

**Violence against Women and Children**

Government continues to rollout designated victim-friendly facilities to ensure that victims of interpersonal violence (such as sexual offences, domestic violence) and others are handled with due sensitivity. These designated victim-friendly facilities are located at 1 034 sites around the country, including at police stations, airports and railway stations.

Recently, the Minister of Social Development launched a disability enhancement tool for the 24-hour Gender Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC).

There are currently 55 Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) across the country. The conviction rate of cases stemming from TCC for the year up to the end of August 2016 was 72% (719 of 1102 cases finalised). The TCCs are working closely with Sexual Offences Courts in providing victim-support services to make the court experience less traumatizing, informative and responsive. Between August 2013 and November 2016, 51 out of a target 57 courts around the country have been upgraded into Sexual Offences Courts and are fully operational.

The NPA performed excellently during the reporting period April 2016 to December 2016, by achieving a remarkable 72 % conviction rate in sexual offences cases and obtaining 3 681 convictions. This represents a 1.5% increase in the conviction rate achieved through the collaborative and focused approach followed by all key stakeholders.

**Correctional programmes to prevent recidivism**

The Department Correctional Services continues to reform in tandem with the rest of the criminal justice system. We remain committed to building a humane, efficient and effective correctional system. Implementation of a multi-disciplinary strategy in its operations which has resulted in an unprecedented number of offenders participating in various rehabilitation programmes.

One of the strategies of fighting crime is to ensure that those who are released from prison do not relapse and commit crime again. The Department of Correctional Services continues to work hard to turn prisons into correctional centres through offering various services. We are encouraged that compliance levels with parole and probation conditions have improved to reach a historic mark of 98%.

Overcrowding in our correctional centres is a stubborn challenge that remains a key concern. The JCPS cluster has agreed that there is need for continuous engagement, and a collective approach, at national, provincial and local level to find lasting solutions to the challenges of overcrowding in the country’s correctional facilities.

**Fighting corruption**

South Africa continues to reap the benefits of a strong anti-corruption architecture. Progress in the fight against corruption continues. The Anti-Corruption Task Team (ACTT) continues to coordinates our multi-agency approach to fighting corruption and maladministration.

This year the SIU will work towards re-establishing the Special Tribunal as per the legislative mandate, this will ensure a fast tracking of SIU civil cases instituted to recover money and or assets lost by the state.

**Border line management**

As part of the JCPS cluster, the SANDF continues to be involved in the government national security strategy and the imperative for security, as well as the fight against crime and corruption.

The SANDF continues to play a pivotal role in safeguarding South Africa’s borders. Members of the SANDF have been deployed along all the international borders in 7 of the 9 provinces. In the first 2 months of 2017 (1 January 2017 - 17 February 2017) major successes have been registered.

**Countering terrorism and violent extremism**

We would like to reiterate our position that no country in the world is immune to the threat of terrorism and its related activities. The JCPS Cluster, through its law enforcement agencies, continues to identify and address violent extremism and terrorism-related activities. We are committed to ensure that our country remains relatively safe and free of any attempts to destabilise it. Joint operations of all intelligence community structures will continue as well as the sharing of information critical to countering any threats that is identified.

**CONCLUSION**

The task of accelerating radical economic transformation is intrinsically linked to that of ensuring that our people continue to live in conditions of safety and security. The South African government takes its responsibility of ensuring safer communities very seriously. The plans that have been outlined during the State of the Nation Address for intervention in the socio-economic conditions of our people will assist us in addressing some of the underlying causes of insecurity.

The JCPS cluster has outlined various policy interventions in response to developing trends and causes of insecurity in our society. Recent events where our people have, at times, taken to the streets have necessitated a relook in the functioning, structuring and capacity of our criminal justice system. The National Crime Prevention Strategy adopted in 1996 requires a review to address new challenges that confront the criminal justice system. While lawful protests are provided for in the country’s legislative framework, of national security concern are cases of premeditated violence that at times accompanies protests. The incidents of the Marikana tragedy, the violence and torching of schools that erupted in Vuwani and the damage to institutions of higher learning, have overstretched the criminal justice system and we have to plan better for these.

The work of the JCPS Cluster of ensuring that all people in South Africa are and feel safe will continue in earnest in the next year. However, government alone cannot defeat the scourge of crime and corruption. We reiterate the call on all people and sectors in South Africa to join the fight against crime and corruption. The fight against crime cannot be separated from the need for transformation of the social and economic circumstances of our people by tackling the three challenges of unemployment, poverty and the unequal distribution of the country’s wealth. Each sector of our society has to play its part in creating conditions where crime may no longer thrive.

We further call on each member of the public to stop looking away when acts of crime and corruption are committed. Anyone who has information about crime or suspicious criminal activity has a responsibility to promptly report such incidents to police. Members of the public should also desist from offering bribes to public servants. Those public servants who solicit bribes should be reported to government’s national anti-corruption hotline – **0800 701 701**

What OR Tambo said at Georgetown University on January 27, 1987 still rings true today; and I quote: "We seek to create a united Democratic and non-racial society. We have a vision of South Africa in which black and white shall live and work together as equals in conditions of peace and prosperity.” Only when we work together shall we achieve this vision of OR Tambo that is consistent with Vision 2030 as set out in the National Development Plan (NDP) to build safer communities and a just society.

Thank You