**2. REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ON THE STUDY TOUR TO SINGAPORE, DATED 4 DECEMBER 2018**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

A delegation of the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements (the delegation) embarked on an international study tour to Singapore from 13 to 17 August 2018. This is in part fulfilment of its strategic plan objectives to conduct a study tour to Singapore to learn best practice.

**1.1 Objectives of the Study Tour**

To meet with state bodies, institutions and people seized with the delivery of housing and human settlements in Singapore with particular focus on the following:

* Housing and Human Settlements Policy Planning and Coordination.
* Learn Best Practice with regards to Sustainable Human Settlements.
* Identify Possible Policy Approaches that could be adopted to ensure development of sustainable human settlements in South Africa.
  1. **Multi-party delegation**

The delegation consisted of Hon N N Mafu (ANC) as leader of the delegation, Hon M F Nkadimeng (ANC), Hon P L Khoarai (ANC), Hon M Wolmarans (ANC), Hon N K F Hlonyana (EFF), Hon M Bara, (DA), Hon KP Sithole (IFP) and Mr M Shelembe (NFP).

The delegation was accompanied by Committee Support Staff: Ms K Pasiya-Mndende (Committee Secretary) and Mr S Mnguni (Content Advisor).

The delegation was also accompanied by officials from the national Department of Human Settlements: Mr M Kraba, Director – Director-General’s office (Parliamentary Liaison Officer); Ms S Modimola, Deputy Director – Stakeholder and Intergovernmental Relation Coordinator; Mr S Watani, Parliamentary Liaison Officer (Deputy Minister’s Office) and Mr S Mcanziba, Chief of Staff (Minister’s Office).

**2. Singapore in Context**

Singapore is a sovereign city-state of approximately 5,5 million citizens, situated in Southeast Asia. It is characterized by a highly developed and advanced economy which ranks 5th on the United Nations Human Development Index as well as the 3rd highest Gross Domestic Product per capita. A highly urbanized country, ranked highly in education, healthcare, life expectancy, quality of life, personal safety and housing provision.

Singapore’s housing policy has evolved over time in response to different housing challenges. To date Singapore’s public housing has housed an entire nation across the island city-state.

The government developed its housing policies based on three pillars, namely:

* Establishment of the Housing and Development Board in 1960;
* Enactment of the Land Acquisition Act in 1966;
* Expansion of the role of the Central Provident Fund which later became a housing finance institution in 1968.

Notably, is the government’s significant ownership of land and the state’s provision of public housing to currently more than 80% of the resident population which therefore makes Singapore’s development model not easy to describe. Perhaps, it is best described as a hybrid of capitalist and socialist approaches to macroeconomic management. As a city-state, it is a single-tier state system.

However, it has not always been smooth-sailing as in recent times, Singapore has also been compelled to deal with housing policy challenges that include the need to curb speculative and investment housing demand, increase in income inequality, as well as aging population. In responding to these, the government has had to introduce carefully crafted macro-prudential polies, targeted housing grants to assist low and middle-income households, and programmes aimed at assisting elderly households monetize their housing equity.

**2.1 Briefing with the South African High Commission to Singapore, Mr M C Mokitlane**

His Excellency welcomed the delegation.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Ms N Mafu, introduced the delegation and outlined the purpose of the visit. His Excellency Mokitlane acknowledged the purpose of the visit and introduced Mr Sean Pike, Political Counsellor, who then presented an outline of the programme. The Chairperson also proceeded to introduce the South African delegation as well as briefly outline the purpose and objectives of the study tour.

**2.2 Visit to Parliament of Singapore**

The visit to the Parliament of Singapore provided insight on its Parliamentary and electoral System, Legislative/Law making processes, public participation as well as the oversight role of the Parliament. Thereafter, the delegation undertook a tour of the Parliament House.

**2.2.1 Background to the Parliamentary System**

In Singapore, Parliament is supreme, which in essence refers to the adherence to the doctrine of Parliamentary sovereignty, as was the case in South Africa during the pre-democracy dispensation. In such a system not only is Parliament the highest legislative body, capable of enacting any laws it wishes, but no court may test the substance of parliamentary acts or statutes against standards such as fairness and equality and the courts cannot declare such laws invalid if, for example, they are unfair or unreasonable. This was the system of government which operated in South Africa before the 1993 Constitution (Interim) came into operation. Today, the system of government in South Africa is based on Constitutionalism which in essence means government in accordance with the Constitution (1996).

The Parliament of Singapore is unicameral and consists of 100 elected Members. There used to be 101 elected Members of Parliament however, one has since assumed the highest office as the President of Singapore, who happens to be the first female President of Singapore.

In addition, there are Nominated Members of Parliament (NMPs) who are appointed by the President for a term of two and half years, on the recommendation of a Special Select Committee of Parliament. The NMPs are generally nominated by lobby groups such as civic organisations, non-governmental organisations, labour unions, advocacy groups, sports bodies and any other interests’ groups. Nominated Members of Parliament are intended to reflect independent, diverse demographics and non-partisan views.

Parliament has a life of five years from its first sitting, but it can be dissolved earlier. To qualify for election to Parliament, a person must be a Singapore citizen, be 21 years of age or older, and meet certain requirements set out in the Constitution. Every citizen who is 21 years and above is entitled to vote and voting is secret and compulsory.

Sittings of Parliament are presided over by the Speaker or, in his/her absence, by the Deputy Speaker and both are elected by Parliament. Sittings of Parliament normally commence at 12.30 pm. The general public can attend any sitting by obtaining an admission order on the day of the sitting.

**2.2.2 Law Making and Legislative Process**

The Singaporean electoral system is a First Past the Post Electoral System, elected in group representation constituencies (caters to the Chinese Indian and Malay races of the country) and single member constituency.

The Parliament of Singapore is unicameral and consists of 100+1 elected Members. With one being the president of the country.

The People’s Action Party (PAP) is founding party of the country post self-governance and is the only political Party to have been in power.

Breakdown by type: 88 elected members of parliament, 3 NCMP, 9 NMPs

**Breakdown by Party: 82 PAP, 9 workers party, 9 independent**

**Breakdown by gender: 77% male, 23% female**

With respect to Singapore’s Legislative Process, it is based on the Westminster Model. For instance, when the government decides on a policy and if that policy requires a change in the law, a Bill is drafted. Following its introduction, it is read the First Time and there is no debate. Members of Parliament are accorded at least 10 days to consider the Bill. The Bill is tabled for Second Reading and this is when the Bill is debated and voted on. In the event that the Bill is passed, Parliament will vote whether to refer the Bill to either a Committee of the Whole House or Select Committee on a Bill. After the Committee Stage, the Bill or Report will then be referred back to Parliament for a Third Reading. If agreed to, the Bill is then sent to the Presidential Council for Minority Rights (PRESCO) which is headed by the Chief Justice. If PRESECO approves the Bill, it becomes an Act of Parliament which then is sent to the President for assent. On being signed, that is, assented to, it is at this point that the Bill becomes law and is placed in the Statute Book.

**2.2.3 Oversight Model**

Parliamentary Business entail among others, the practice of Parliamentary Questions, Motions, and Adjournment Debate’

Parliament’s Committee System consists of Select Committees as well as Government Parliamentary Committees which are under the direct control of the ruling political party as opposed to being departmentally aligned.

Devolution of Town Management through Town Councils and running of Public Housing Estates by Members of Parliament in addition to constituency responsibilities. It is the Ministry that exercises oversight. Delivery of social services to the needy is the responsibility of Community Development Councils and Mayors who happen to be also Members of Parliament.

**2.2.4 Public Participation and Discussion**

Public Petition – the delegation was presented with instances whereby certain decisions were taken following public petition process. For instance, decision on the relocation of Sungei Road Market (“Thieves Market”) and Stallholders as well as the decision for more inclusive provision of Public Housing for Single Parents (Public Housing apartments).

The public is also encouraged to make written representation to a Select Committee of Parliament:

* Volunteering in Grassroots organisations/ Meet with the People sessions;
* Public consultations on Bills and policies;
* E-polls on policy and implementation issues;
* Feedback and Discussions.

The Portfolio Committee Members shared information on the South African Parliamentary System, made up of two Houses, the National Assembly (400 Elected Members), and the National Council of Provinces (consisting of provincial representatives from the 9 provinces). They also touched on Parliament’s Law-making and Oversight role through the Parliamentary Committee system.

**2.3 Meeting with the Centre for Liveable Cities**

**2.3.1 Background and Mandate**

This year marks a decade since The Centre for Liveable Cities was founded in Singapore for the purpose of trying to address the fundamental question on how people can live well in cities. The Centre for Liveable Cities was set up by the Singapore Government in 2008 this fundamental question.

In its ten years of existence, the Centre has become known globally as thought leader, a think tank and champion for liveability and good urban development through the following focus areas were Research; Capacity Development; Advisory Services and Knowledge Platforms.

**2.3.2 Presentation and Discussion**

The presentation distilled the process behind Singapore’s urban development into a framework that outlines how the country achieved its liveability outcomes, which are:

* A high quality of life;
* A competitive economy;
* A sustainable environment.

It is the systems underlying these outcomes that are key, emphasizing the importance of integrated master planning and development, and a dynamic urban governance.

The Centre for Liveability Cities provides a framework for planning and developing a city that has to become more liveable. The CLC is respected for the way it has connected city leaders, private sector experts, researchers and other professionals grappling with urban issues in order to share knowledge and experiences.

There is an urgency to the Centre’s work, especially as cities everywhere continue to experience urbanization and there has to be recognition that good city living does not come about naturally, or by chance. Cities must be carefully and thoughtfully planned and developed, and effectively run, in order to be highly liveable. Being mindful of the problems that may arise when urbanization goes wrong, just over 50 or so years ago, the city had just about every urban social ill, one could imagine such as overcrowded slums, widespread poverty, water shortages, poor sanitation, flooding, traffic congestion, crime, and disease. However, Singapore succeeded in turning the situation around, and is now one of the most liveable cities in Asia and the world.

The Centre is working hard to understand and share knowledge about how Singapore achieved its transformation. As cities mature and aspire towards new goals of walkability, ample green spaces, social inclusion, public participation, and affordability, the Centre is also studying the efforts of cities from all around the world, and sharing their lessons for mutual learning. Finally, since its founding, the Centre has built up a valuable body of research centred on this liveability framework and how it relates to Singapore’s past and future development.

**2.4 Meeting with the Housing Development Board (HDB)**

**2.4.1 Background and Mandate of the Housing Development Board (HDB)**

The HDB was established on 1 February 1960 to solve Singapore’s housing crisis, the entity was tasked with providing sanitary living conditions to replace the prevalent unhygienic slums and crowded squatter settlements.

Singapore's public housing has housed more than 1 million people with flats being completed in 23 towns and 3 estates across the island. The HDB flats are home to over 80% of Singapore's population, with about 90% of these resident households owning their home. For over 50 years, the HDB has provided quality and affordable public housing for generations of Singaporeans.

The Housing & Development Board (HDB) is Singapore's public housing authority and statutory board under the Ministry of National Development. The entity’s mandate is to plan and develop Singapore's housing estates; building homes and transforming towns. The HDB also provides various commercial, recreational, and social amenities.

**2.4.2 Presentation and Discussion**

As of 2018, there is approximately a million public houses in Singapore largely concentrated in a number of new towns which are along the city’s coastal zone and all the homes come with a 99-year lease which is sold at a below-market value price. All new applicants are required to wait for a period of three – four years for the construction to be completed. Through the use of the Central Provident Fund, more citizens had become homeowners and through this CPF, together with other schemes and grants introduced over the years, has made home ownership highly affordable.

During the interaction that ensued in the aftermath of the presentation, Members of the Portfolio Committee among others, raised the issue of the role of the Housing Development Agency (HAD) in South Africa and how the continued provision of free housing was unsustainable in the long run.

Following the meeting at the HDB, the delegation, accompanied by Mr Sean Pike visited show apartments at My Nice Home Gallery.

**2.5 Meeting with Surbana Jurong Consultants**

**2.5.1 Background and Mandate**

Surbana Jurong (SJ) is one of Asia’s largest consultancy firms that delivers urban, infrastructure and engineering solutions to support sustainable social and economic growth for its clients. It should be noted that SJ operates as a government entity in Singapore; however, it provides services on a private company basis in other countries.

Surbana Jurong has a rich 50-year heritage in the development of Singapore’s urban, industrial and infrastructure landscape. The entity has roots to the HDB – the government agency synonymous with Singapore’s early township efforts. The entity has 26 townships in Singapore which are home to 80% of the country’s population, over the last 50 years.

The Surbana Jurong Group currently has a global workforce of 13,000 employees in over 110 offices across 40 countries in Asia, Australia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas, with an annual turnover of around S$1.3 billion.

**2.5.2 Presentation and Discussion**

The group’s main focus areas are: Urban Development, Infrastructure Development and Management Services.

Within urban development, the company provides a full suite of services that cater to the built environment and have extensive experience in a broad range of developments, including residential, industrial and business parks and healthcare. They also provide engineering, architecture, master planning, landscaping and sustainability services for urban development projects. The entity builds homes, design cities, and improve infrastructure for sustainable industrial development and urban living. Surbana Jurong’ s global team of built environment professionals and other specialists, provides best-in – class consultancy across the full urban, industrial and infrastructure development value chain. With close to 70 years of track record in successful project delivery, the SJ Group has grown to become one of the Asia-based urban and infrastructure consulting firms, driven by progressive thinking and creative ideas.

Their Management Services to facilities management, development management, project management, BIM, asset management, smart city solutions and security services.

Surbana Jurong experience includes:

* Developing public housing for over a million households in Singapore over 50 years;
* Helping over 30 countries develop their city masterplans;
* Developing over 50 industrial parks worldwide that created jobs;
* Being ranked among the top 20 privately owned design institutes in China;
* Creating one of the world’s 7 engineering wonders of the modern world through the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme t in Australia;
* Being ranked 48 out of 225 international design firms in the Engineering News-Record for 2016;
* Providing innovative engineering solutions for iconic projects including Changi Airport’s Jewel (Singapore International Airport);
* Providing total security solutions for our clients’ needs.

**2.5.3 Surbana Jurong African Footprint**

The entity’s African presence is as detailed below: 20+ permanent offices in Africa, plus project offices, Diverse staff of over 1500 from the 20+ countries, Operations in Africa since 1974.

The presentation highlighted a few of the entity’s projects in Africa, with a brief on their South African projects detailed briefly below:

* The company has developed an Integrated Master Plan for the Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM) represented by the Royal Bafokeng Royal Council. The Master Plan was approved in 2015 by the council of the RLM. It has incorporated the aspirations of all stakeholders through interactive workshops and public participation.
* SMEC South Africa, Member of the SJ Group which has a staff component of approximately 700 people, 70 years in operation, 50+ industry awards and 6 Regional offices in South Africa.
* Programme Management: Provision of water and sanitation services to eThekwini Human Settlements.

**2.6 Meeting with the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)**

**2.6.1 Background and Mandate**

The URA falls under the Ministry of National Development and as the national authority on land use planning and conservation, the URA is chiefly responsible for managing and controlling the development of land in Singapore. This management and control of land development is carried out in accordance with the intentions and strategies articulated by the Concept Plan and Master Plan. Both land and plans are importanthigh-level documents that provide the roadmap for the physical development of Singapore.

The functions of URA are: Land Use Planning; Urban Design; Government Land Sales; Development Control; Conservation of Built Heritage; Place Management of Key Areas; Planning for a Good Quality Environment and the Focus on Public Transport.

**2.6.2 Planning Framework**

The Concept Plan: A Long–Range Land Use Blueprint for Urban Planning (Long-Term Vision). The Concept Plan is a long-range spatial strategy plan for future land development and transportation to support population and economic growth over the next 40 – 50 years. It helps to ensure that land is reserved for critical use and mobility corridors such as mass rapid transit (MRT) lines and expressways. Singapore’s physical transformation has been guided by four consecutive Concept Plan reviews in 1971, 1991, 2001 and 2011. In reviewing the decade-by-decade progression of the Concept Plan, it is possible to unearth the core planning strategies behind Singapore’s physical transformation and better understand the development priorities that were prominent in each decade.

**2.6.3 Implementation of the Concept Plan**

The notion of a Concept Plan and its processes were introduced to Singapore in the 1960s to provide an avenue for long-range planning, when the 1958 Master Plan proved inadequate. The 1958 Master Plan fell short in meeting the actual demographic shifts and land-use demands that were rapidly unfolding as post-colonial Singapore sought to urbanise, industrialise and modernize.

An expert team from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was invited by the Singapore Government to provide guidance on land-use planning. A task force, comprising of the (Housing Development Board) HDB (and the former Urban Renewal Unit), the Planning Development and the Roads and Transportation Division of Public Works, was formed in 1963 to work alongside the UNDP team. For the next four years, the task force embarked on a State and City Planning (SCP) study to determine Singapore’s growth potential based on a longer-ranger timescale. The SCP study resulted in the “Ring City Singapore” plan (also known as the Koenigsberger Plan 1963, named after one of the UNDP expert team members) which drew out the spatial strategies (for land use, road network and transport infrastructure) to cope with the demands of future growth. It proposed a ring of self-sufficient residential towns, encircling the Central Catchment area, connected by a road system to one another and to the financial district in the Central Business District. This plan evolved in 1971 to become Singapore’s first Concept Plan, imbuing the island with a “DNA” structure for future physical and spatial development.

A key strategic feature of the 1971 Concept Plan is the “ring and line” development pattern of urbanization. The “ring” segment encircles the Central Catchment area, along which high-density new towns comprising public housing estates would be developed. These new towns, organized around town centres with the provision of daily amenities, and served by parks and industrial areas, are separated from one another by green corridors. The green corridors are connected to the Central and Western Catchments, thereby forming a network of parks and open spaces. The “line” segment, which stretches from the Jurong Industrial Estate in the west to Changi Airport in the east, forms a trail of high–density new town developments along the southern coast. These new towns would be linked by two MRT Lines that, in turn, connect the new towns to the city centre. Another system of expressways, organized in a network across the island, further connects the township developments and the city centre.

This core-periphery connectivity was strategic for three reasons:

* First, the resettlement of residents from the highly-congested city centre to outlying new towns helped the urban poor in attaining modern housing (though it also resulted in the severance of established social networks and community bonds);
* Second, this decentralization of the population from the city centre opened up prime land in the urban core for higher-density office and commercial redevelopment while enabling coordinated environmental improvements to sanitation infrastructure;
* Third, with this expansion of business and financial activities, the city centre assumed its function as Singapore’s primary centre of employment – one that depended on a workforce that now resided in the peripheral new towns.

Here are four major tools and mechanisms that enable The URA to translate Concept Plan visions into reality:

* Land Use Master Plan;
* Urban Design and Conservation Guidelines;
* Development Controls;
* Government Land Sales Programme (GLS).

The Mater Plan (Integrated Master Planning and Development – City Design)

The Master Plan represents the first layer of land use control; its objective is to regulate the pattern and intensity of development in accordance with the broad land use strategies of the Concept Plan. By stipulating the detailed zoning and, where applicable, the plot ratio for each land parcel, the Master Plan serves as an operative document directly implicating the physical transformation of Singapore over a medium term of 10 to 15 years.

Land development in Singapore, though carried out predominantly by the Government for public programmes such as housing, transportation and parks, is strategically opened to private sector providers through the GLS programme which has been instrumental in driving economic growth through real estate and facilitating the implementation of the Master Plan by enlisting the participation of the private sector.

**2.6.4 Presentation and Discussion (Multi-Agency Effort, Public Consultation, Smart Planning and Data Analytics)**

The Master Plan is reviewed and updated every five years and this systematic process is essential for land-scarce Singapore where land policies and physical and physical development, if not considered thoughtfully, could have long-term implications. This vulnerability requires that the draft plans are made not only transparent, that is, through consultations with government stakeholders and the public, but also implementable through meticulous guidelines and controls. Again, the transparency of guidelines and controls is essential for the private sector to participate in the materialization of the Master Plan. This collaboration with the private sector translated to more transparent specific planning parameters and the principles upon which planning decisions are made. For instance, urban design and conservation guidelines provide illustrations and written statements towards achieving the spatial and aesthetic objectives, as well as the envisioned character of the built environment. This helps to ensure that developments provide quality public space where necessary, define the public realm appropriately and integrate cohesively with the surroundings. Development controls spell out detailed parameters and permissible conditions for property developments such that they are built and used in compliance with the zoning, gross plot ratio and built height controls imposed by the Master Plan.

**2.7 Meeting with the Singapore Land Authority (SLA)**

**2.7.1 Background and Mandate**

The Singapore Land Authority (SLA) is responsible for the administration of state land and its main functions include the alienation of state land to both the public and private sectors for development; compulsory acquisition of private land for public purposes; management and control of state land, collection of land revenue. In terms of the State Lands Act, land is technically owned by the Government of Singapore and thus all land in Singapore ultimately belongs to the State (90% of the land is reported to be under State ownership).

The Singapore Land Authority’s main focus is land administration and optimal use of land for both social and economic reasons. Its two main roles are developmental and regulatory. For instance, Singapore has reclaimed approximately 140 square km which represents 24% more land area and this reclaimed land, part of which is located in the east of Singapore, has allowed for the planning and building of new settlements as well as the development of national assets such as the Changi Airport together with major road arteries such as the one that links the airport to the Central Business District.

Further, the government is also the largest vendor of land, through the Government Land Sales (GLS) programme, also introduced in 1967, enables it to release state land for sale to the private sector, through a transparent tender process, in order to meet particular market demand as well as realizing its plans for residential, office, commercial and industrial developments. Important to note, is the fact that the tenure on state land operates on a leasehold basis – for example 99 years for public housing and 30 years for industrial sites. This land tenure system affords the government the option to recover land approaching the end of its lease and reallocate it for future development needs. It may be argued that indeed, Singapore’s land scarcity makes it all the more necessary for land to be carefully regulated and managed to support the country’s long-term objectives.

**2.7.2 Compulsory Acquisition of Private Land**

A look at Singapore’s land administration system reveals a situation in which the state is the largest single landowner. Thus most of Singapore’s land supply is state-owned, held and managed by various government statutory boards to facilitate direct planning and public provisions which include roads, housing, schools and parks.

The Land Acquisition Act (LAA), promulgated in 1967, represents a key legislative instrument through which the state can acquire and assemble, through compensation, private land if it is required for a strategic public purpose. In short, in terms of the Land Acquisition Act the State may acquire private land for public purposes. Thus it empowers the government to acquire land for public purposes and the Act provides for the payment of compensation to the owners of the land to be acquired and such compensation is market value-based (market valuation). However, the Act does also make provision for appeals against awards of compensation and such appeals are heard by the Land Appeals Board which is an independent tribunal. The Independent Tribunal has the power to confirm, reduce, increase or annul the award of compensation offered. In the event that a private landowner whose land is in the process of being acquired is not happy with the compensation being offered, the Independent Tribunal handles the case on appeal and the landowner can only appeal once. To note, the appeal process does not in any way delay the land acquisition process, as it goes ahead irrespective of how long the appeal process may take. In this manner, the LAA affords the state greater control and coordination in the timing and planning of land development for public housing and transportation infrastructure.

On the other side of the land equation is reclamation, a process of reclaiming land that extends from the existing coastline. In Singapore, land reclamation is undertaken as a planning measure towards land sufficiency for future generations as well as to drive economic growth and other forms of development in critical locations. For instance, the Changi Airport was built on reclaimed land and over the years more land has effectively been added to the original size of Singapore.

**2.7.3 Registry of Land Titles and Deeds (Titling & Strata Titles)**

The Registry of Land Titles is the land registration authority in Singapore and administers both the Registration of Deeds and the Land Titles Act, also known as the Torrens System.

* Members of the public who wish to make title searches to find out who the owner is and whether there are encumbrances, mortgages or caveats, can do so at the Land Titles Registry.
* The Registrar of Titles also administers the Land Titles (Strata) Act. Landowners, who have obtained approval for strata subdivision of the buildings erected on their land, can apply to the registrar for the issue of separate strata titles for the units in the subdivided buildings.
* Singapore Titles Automated Registration System (STARS) which is the computerized system of the Titles Register. Computerisation of the Registry’s registration and public search system for private properties is reported to have been initiated in 1995 and completed in October 2000.
* The objectives of the STARS include support of the registration functions of the Land Titles Registry; ensures accurate and prompt registration of titles to land; maintenance of up-to-date records on land ownership and land transactions; and provision of web-based searches on titles to the public through INLIS.

**2.7.4 Land Survey Department/Division/Services – Presentation**

The department undertakes three broad categories of survey work: -

Regulate Cadastral Surveys; Oversee Establishment and Maintenance of Geodetic Infrastructure; Manage National Cadastral Database.

However, the main function of the Survey Department is the following:

* Provide information defining land in any land title issued by the government;
* Compile records of land alienation necessary for efficient land administration;
* Inspect and approve title survey plans submitted by registered surveyors;
* Execute surveys required by the various legislation in respect of land titles and land use;
* Compile and maintain records and maps as required under the applicable legislation;
* Provide a horizontal and vertical control network; and
* To produce and maintain reliable maps of Singapore.

In place, also there is the computerized surveying and mapping system based on the Global Positioning System representing an Integrated Survey Network (ISN).

Survey information from the department is available to the public, government departments and statutory boards including the sale of copies of cadastral maps, survey plans, and topographical maps.

**2.7.5 Discussion**

State land used for public housing and industry as well as for private development is tied to a specific duration of tenure. Leasehold land for residential and industrial uses, for example, is based on tenures of 99 years for the former and 30 years for the latter. This impermanent hold on land by the occupier-user allows Singapore’s limited land stock to be “recycled” and redeveloped. In other words, it is returned to the state for long-term resource planning to meet future needs.

At the present moment, the Government owns more than 90% of all land in Singapore and with what may be described as a quasi-monopoly, the Government is better positioned to influence the market through regulations and policies that directly affect the use, supply and pricing of land. It can also continue to use this “urban laboratory” of Singapore – in collaboration with the private sector, research centres and institutes of higher learning – to experiment, test bed and refine land planning approaches, processes and urban solutions.

**2.8 Meeting with Singapore Discovery Centre (SDC)**

**2.8.1 Background**

The mission of SDC is to share the Singapore story and inspire a desire to contribute to Singapore’s future. SDC provides a mind-and-heart-engaging and multi-sensory learning experience which spans a selection of integrated themes. SDC is committed to educating students and educators about what makes Singapore tick and gain insights into Singapore’s challenges, dreams and aspirations.

**2.8.2 Presentation**

The delegation visited the SDC where a presentation on the overview of the SDC was made. This was followed by a tour of the Permanent Exhibit Gallery.

**2.9 Debriefing at the South African High Commission**

The delegation debriefed the High Commission.

**2.10 Observations made by the delegation**

The delegation observed that:

* The laws of the country were enforced and adhered into, the land was acquired from the private owners without compensation for the purpose of assisting residents with housing. Approximately, 80% of the land was owned by the Singapore Land Authority. Political will was needed in most of the time for people to act.
* Most of the land that was utilised for building was on claimed land e.g. the airport.
* The country was building high-storey flats for its citizen, this was due to shortage of land.
* Unemployment rate was at 2% that made it easy for people to acquire houses through the fund that is deducted on their salaries.
* Public transport was enforced and it was at 60% with the aim of increasing it to 80%.

**2.11 Lessons learnt by the delegation**

* Citizens are encouraged to purchase apartments through the public housing system and should hold it for five years before selling it.
* There were no homeless people in Singapore and no free houses were provided to the poor. The poor were offered jobs so that they could pay rent, even if it was a small amount.
* Government owns 80% of the land. This makes it easier to make decisions on housing development.
* Hard work and dedication by relevant departments are key for a country to prosper.
* Intergovernmental relations and coordinated planning are a prerequisite for the successful implementation of projects.