**WEDNESDAY, 10 JULY 2019**

***PROCEEDINGS OF MINI-PLENARY – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAMBER***

Members of the mini-plenary session met in the National Assembly Chamber at 16:35.

House Chairperson Mr C T Frolick took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Debate on Vote No 32 – Telecommunications and Postal Services and Vote No 3 – Communications:

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS: Hon House

Chairperson, Minister Mboweni, Minister Dlodlo, Minister Nzimande, Deputy Ministers led by Deputy Minister Pinky Kekana, chairperson of the portfolio committee, hon members of the

portfolio committee, the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, directors-general, chairpersons and CEOs of state-owned entities, captains of the industry, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. We dip our banners and join South Africa in mourning the tragic loss of Mr Mandla Maseko, the aspirational astronaut who died in a bike accident over the past weekend. His untimely death comes as the continent prepares to laud him as the first black African to travel to space. We also learnt with sadness about the passing of a veteran actress, uMama Nomhle Nkonyeni earlier this morning. A recipient of the Order of lkhamanga in silver, Mama Nomhle boasted a career that spanned 50 years and starred in various television, film and stage productions such as *lgazi, Gazlam, Red Dust and Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena*. May their souls rest in peace!

Distinguished guests, delivering the inaugural state of the nation address of the Sixth administration, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, emphasised that the resolution of our developmental challenges, namely, the triple evils of unemployment, poverty and inequality that they largely depends

on growing our economy. We must add that this economic growth that we desire must be inclusive, to gain traction given the historic exclusion of the black majority. The importance of inclusive growth is becoming more pronounced given the reality that key sections of our society such as the youth and rural communities are bearing the most brunt of a sluggish economy.

Within the construct of inclusive economic participation, government, labour and the private sector must work together through a social compact that recognises the need to be single- minded in accelerating economic growth.

Contributions must come from all industries and our efforts must seamlessly be felt within and outside the borders of our country. In this respect, our response to the Fourth Industrial Revolution presents us with a unique opportunity to harness our individual and collective talents, energies and strengths to decisively address the economic and social challenges that we currently face. It presents an opportunity for all in society to participate in the digital economy, whether it is for social welfare or business interests, as creators or consumers of goods

and services, and whether trading locally, regionally or internationally.

Irrespective, the Fourth Industrial Revolution represents an opportunity for inclusive contributions to the national effort of turning around our economy and society for the benefit of all. At its core, it represents the extent to which the digital economy is becoming a key ingredient to the production processes, in various sectors such as education, health agriculture, manufacturing, financial services or infrastructure development. Further, it represents the extent to which societies can overcome their traditional challenges and people can lead dignified lives, be it through better guarantees of safety and security, easier access to effective healthcare, broader access to education, better social mobility through gainful employment or more comprehensive and responsive social protection systems. Public services are also not immune from this development as governments and cities recognise the need to invest in smart digital services to better understand societal needs and optimally design legislative, policy and regulatory responses to those needs.

Recent studies by Accenture and the World Economic Forum estimate that the aggregate value that can be derived by our country from the digital transformation of our society and the economy is about R5 trillion. More specifically, this economic value addition would result in roughly four million new jobs. Whilst we acknowledge that some jobs will become obsolete, we cannot afford to bury our heads in the sand and ignore this critical phenomenon, the opportunities it presents, and the necessary steps that we must take as a nation to minimise risks and maximise benefits.

As a government, we are committed to transforming the telecommunications and digital industries market structure. Key to such an objective is the requirement to remove barriers to entry for new market players, noting that the mobile industry is highly concentrated. We must therefore be forthright in investing in digital skilling and reskilling of our people as an imperative for inclusion in the digital economy.

House Chairperson, in June, Minister Ebrahim Patel and I had the privilege of participating in the G20 Summit that was held in

Osaka, Japan. This summit brought together, for the first time, trade and digital economy Ministers from various selected countries to present opportunities and deepen understanding of the interface between trade and the digital economy.

As respective G20 Ministers, we acknowledged the fact that digitisation presents both benefits and challenges to society. We also agreed that this phenomenon of digitisation presents us with a rare opportunity to drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth amongst our people. This has reaffirmed our resolve as the South African government to locate digital innovation at the core of our economic growth.

In our quest to digitally transform the nation, we also acknowledge the fact that the vast majority of our people still lack access to digital infrastructure, which is the bedrock for the digital economy. In this respect, the Fourth Industrial Revolution must therefore be viewed as providing impetus to the objectives of the National Development Plan. Our challenge therefore is defining the strategic areas of investment in the

Fourth Industrial Revolution that will position South Africa as a leader in this revolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is against this background that in March 2019, President Ramaphosa established the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution comprising eminent persons drawn from across sections of industries, academia, labour and civil society. The commission, as chaired by President Ramaphosa and his deputy, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, has been inducted and is already hard at work focusing on the following six delivery areas: policy and legislation; human capital and the future of work; research, technology and innovation; infrastructure and resources; industrialisation and commercialisation; and economic and social impact.

To ensure that the work of the commission is realised into government priorities, the President has appointed the interministerial committee on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, 4IR, which comprises the following Ministers: the Ministers of Communications and Digital Technologies, who is chairing the interministerial committee, IMC, Basic Education; Employment

and Labour; Higher Education Science and Innovation; Trade, Industry and Competition; Mineral Resources and Energy; and Small Business Development. Within the next few months the commission will engage with key stakeholders and the public, working towards the development of South Africa’s blueprint on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Hon members, on 5 July, we hosted the Digital Economy Summit in Midrand as the first step towards bringing all economic and social players to the table on the collective effort of understanding the drivers for unlocking the value of the Fourth Industrial Revolution within the economy and society and with a focus on the specific drivers for job creation in this new world. The outcomes of the Digital Economy Summit will serve as an input into the work of the Presidential Commission.

Further, to showcase technological innovation, we enacted, through collaboration with the Nokia and Vodacom, a replication of the summit in Rustenburg using a holographic projection. This was the first time that a Head of State was broadcast live utilising 3D holographic technology. [Applause.] This move

signalled our readiness to cement South Africa's position as a leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

As we deal with policy for the digital economy, the Electronic Communications Act has played its role in transforming the industry to its current position. However, overhauled instruments need to take into account the plurality of players across all aspects of the value chain as well as new emerging markets. As indicated, we need to immediately overhaul our policies in order for them to respond to a changing industry that is increasingly dominated by data and an ecosystem of digital platforms.

On reconfiguration of the portfolio, the merger of the Ministries of Communications and Telecommunications and Postal Services into a single Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies is designed to ensure better alignment and co- ordination on matters that are critical to the digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution. We have, together with the Deputy Minister since our appointment, been seized with the task of creating a new department that places at its centre, the

digital transformation of government and support for a digital economy and society. We are currently designing an optimal structural and institutional framework that will speak to our new mandate. This entails defining the focus areas and operating model of the new department and aligning these with the outcomes of the Presidential Commission in order to ensure that the new department is indeed the champion leading on matters related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The design and alignment of work will inform and guide how our continuing operations in relation to some of the key public policy promises made under the previous department. To this end, we are also engaging our stakeholders, departmental employees and unions about the new mandate. All these processes will culminate in the finalisation of the organisational structure for the new department and a strategic plan. The annual performance plan will therefore need to be reviewed and amended in line with the new mandate and structure that will feed into a single budget for the new department.

The state-owned entities under the department are also being reconfigured to make sure that they are in line with the new mandate. Trough the reconfiguration of some of our state-owned entities, we will establish a new infrastructure company that will be responsible for the roll-out of infrastructure and connectivity. As part of the creation of this company, we will ensure that all state infrastructure initiatives are harmonised and co-ordinated.

We will further reconfigure our entities to create a streamlined regulator that will respond to the emerging needs of the digital society. As we ready South Africa to take its leading position in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we will also position the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa, Nemisa, to be a digital skills institute that will train government employees and members of the public.

As part of ensuring development of the sector, we will also present to Parliament the digital development fund Bill to establish the fund to support innovation.

In order to drive digital transformation in government, there is a need to establish the state information technology, IT, company. This will entail the repurposing of the current State Information Technology Agency to drive innovation, transformation, localisation, cybersecurity, e-government and IT service management.

We will further repurpose the SA Post Office to take advantage of the thriving e-commerce and financial services environments, with the latter through the Post Bank. All these will be done in this financial year, 2019-20. [Applause.]

Finally, government is actively looking at strengthening the SA Broadcasting Corporation. As we reported in the portfolio committee last week, we continue to engage with the National Treasury on a lasting financial solution for the public broadcaster. To this end, working with the National Treasury, we will in the next 10 days provide a portion of the interim relief and the remaining balance within the next 45 days. [Applause.] However, this is subject to the SABC meeting all the set conditions and requirements. In this regard we will work with

the Minister of Finance towards an institutional mechanism to support the turnaround effort, and this includes the appointment of the chief restructuring officer, CRO.

On digital transformation of government, the digitisation of government services is an important pillar of digital transformation and therefore the department will lead the process of fast-tracking the digital transformation of government services with a particular focus on front line services.

In responding to the President’s call for the district service delivery model, we will be working with all government departments and stakeholders to support cities in digitising their services. Government will, within 90 days identify priority districts for this purpose.

To date, the department has facilitated broadband connectivity to 570 facilities including schools and health facilities. In addition to what the industry is doing, the department continues to engage all. For example, Telkom has about 160 000 km of fibre

which will be critical as we move forward towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Broadband Infraco has rolled out 15 000 km of fibre and 147 points of presence throughout the country. Sentech has an extensive wireless network with more than 300 sites to deliver digital and broadband services.

Going forward, the department will focus on rolling out broadband services to additional 400 sites, majority of which, ones more, will be schools and health facilities.

Through the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, Icasa, we will also review the current universal service obligations to ensure alignment with the SA Connect standards.

During the Medium-Term we will review the download speeds to be in line with international best practice. This will form part of the work we are currently doing with the Development Bank of Southern Africa which will be concluded by the end of the financial year. Furthermore, the feasibility study for the second phase of the roll-out will be co-ordinated and the study will investigate cost-effective and efficient ways, inclusive of

public-private partnership models, of rolling out services as well as funding broadband on a much larger scale.

On high demand spectrum licensing, the licensing of unassigned high demand spectrum, we will within the next seven working days, issue the final policy and policy direction to Icasa. As the international information and communications technology, ICT, community prepares for the World Radio Conference that will be held in Egypt in October 2019, plans are afoot for South Africa's participation in the discussions in the Southern African Development Community, SADC, Africa and the International Fora to ensure that this time we are not left behind and do not delay our people and country the meaningful role they can play as 5G is not only telecommunications-based, but cuts across all sectors. We have to treat it the way we deal with the land.

Accelerating the broadcasting digital migration programme, within 90 days, the department will present the reviewed broadcasting digital migration delivery model in order to enable the swift release of the high demand spectrum needed for the

roll-out of broadband and effective digital terrestrial television, DTT, migration. We have to build a capable army if you are to ensure that our people get to benefit on the spoils that are presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, the late former President Nelson Mandela once said, and I quote:

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language that goes to his heart.

Indeed, the language that we use influences the way that we think and act. Therefore, making content readily available in multiple languages enables a connected society. As such and as part of the Internet for All Initiative we have established a Working Group on Content which has commenced with translating Wikipedia content into the 10 official languages of South Africa, save for English. [Applause.] To this end, both isiXhosa and isiSwati translations have been completed and learners from schools in the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga have already started

with the project. Of course isiXhosa and IsiSwati understanding people can have access irrespective of their geographical spread.

You will recall that in my 2018 Budget Vote speech I made a bold statement to train one million young people on data science and related skills to ensure that they are equipped to take advantage of new digital technologies, unlock future jobs and drive competitiveness. To this end, the National Digital Skills Strategy has been submitted to Cabinet for approval and we have, through a partnership with portfolio entities and stakeholders such as the Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority, MICT Seta, Telkom, Cisco, Vodacom, MTN, Google and Microsoft, amongst others, trained more than 20 000 young people in data science and the skills, namely, cloud computing, digital content production, 3D printing, drone piloting, cybersecurity and software development. [Applause.]

Further, Accenture is investing in future skills development with a special focus on the youth and contributing to the

township economy. This is exemplified by the Accenture Java Academy in partnership with Codex and the long-standing, proven Skills to Succeed Programme. We invite partners to join us in these digital skills revolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, cumulatively, portfolio entities and private sector companies spend approximately R20 million per year on bursaries for tertiary students studying in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics, Stem, fields. The sector also utilises about 300 interns annually, most of whom are then absorbed into the respective companies. We don’t make... [Time expired.]

Thank you, House Chairperson. Ladies and gentlemen I present the budget allocation for the department, R1,0576 billion and for the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services...[Time expired.]

Mr A H M PAPO: House Chairperson, Minister and Deputy Minister of Communication and Digital Technologies, fellow Portfolio Committee Members, fellow Members of Parliament, invited guests

from the ICT sector, Ministers who are attending the session and fellow South Africans,we are having this Budget Vote debate one day after the birthday of a veteran, stalwart and intellectual giant of the South African and international struggle for social and economic justice, Tata Govan Archibald Mvuyelwa Mbeki.

It is also month in which our leader Mama Adelaide Frances Tambo was born in 1929. We are also having this debate during the national and international July month dedicated to the Volunteer in Chief of the Defiance Campaign, founding father of the democratic South Africa and founding Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

The Budget Vote happens within a context of the ANC commitment to build a national democratic society as reflected in the ANC ideological document, the strategy and tactics document as adopted by the 54th National Conference held in December 2017 which states and I quote: A national democratic society should be founded on a thriving economy and structure of which should reflect the national endowments of the country and the creativity that the

skilled population can offer. It should be an economy in which cutting edge technology, labour absorbing industrial development, a thriving small business and cooperative sector, utilisation of information and communication technologies and efficient forms of production and management all combine to ensure national prosperity.

The debate is also informed by the ANC policy positions reflected in the 54th National Conference resolutions on communications and the battle if ideas and the 2019-24 ANC Election Manifesto under the section on transforming the economy to serve the people which says: The country and the world are at a critical point in the digital revolution. We must craft our digital future and devise a national programme for innovation that will unleash the talents and creativity of South Africans. Our country must become the centre of digital transformation in Africa. Its benefits must be spread across the economy and society rather than reinforcing existing inequality.

The Budget vote debate is also informed by a decision taken by the ANC government in 2018 to reconfigure the Department of Communications and Telecommunications and Postal Services with the 13 entities namely: the South African Post Office, SAPO, Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa, USAASA,

.ZADNA, Broadband Infraco, SENTECH, National Electronic and Media Institute of South Africa, NEMISA, State Information Technology Agency, SITA, SABC, ICASA, Film and Publications Board, FPB, Government Communications Information Services

,GCIS, Media Diversity and Development Agency, MDDA and Brand South Africa which reported to the two departments in 2018

A further decision was announced by President Ramaphosa in his June 2019 state of the nation address to rename the department as the Department Communication and Digital Technologies with a deadline of the end of March 2020 to have completed the integration and reconfiguration of the two departments.

Government Communications Information Services, MDDA and Brand South Africa were transferred to the Ministry in the Presidency to ensure effective coordination.

As reflected by the observations and recommendations of the Portfolio Committee report and for the Air traffic control, ATC there were two reports because the process of reconfiguration has not yet been completed but it was decided there will only be one debate.

The Portfolio Committee will play an oversight role in the reconfiguration process to ensure it happens in a manner which takes into consideration all the laws governing the sector, the country, existing skills and new skills which must be created for the country to ensure our effective participation as a country in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. I see the Minister and the Deputy Minister are already in the dress code and are already in that revolution. [Applause]

The Portfolio Committee report notes a number of successes and challenges which face the department and entities reporting to the department and makes recommendations on them. Some of the issues noted by the portfolio committee are as follows: the department’s plan on the digitization of government information; that government employees would be provided with digital skills;

that the Banks Act was amended and that such amendment would enable the Ministry of Communications to begin the process of amending the Postbank Act; that the Director Generals, DGs of Treasury and Communications were going to meet last week Thursday, 4July 2019 for further discussions about the SABC financial challenges that the Minister has now alluded to ongoing discussions even on Monday there engagements on the SABC; government’s commitment in assisting the SABC to deal with its financial challenges; that the Department would be tabling… but obviously the issue of the strategic plan which can deal with medium short and long term sustainability of the SABC being sorted out; the department will be tabling the Broadcasting Amendment Bill in 2019-20 Financial Year which would seek to assist among others, the SABC as well as respond to the dynamics of a technology-driven sector; that the Department would soon be issuing a spectrum policy directive; the Minister had established work streams to ensure a smooth reconfiguration; and a moratorium is in place to merge possible duplicate positions as well as the skills audit instituted to evaluate skills resources available to the Department.

The Committee also noted with concern the serious financial challenges facing the SABC. The Portfolio Committee agreed when we adopted the report that the Minister will update it on progress in relation to the ongoing engagement between the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, the SABC and National Treasury on the challenges facing the SABC.

Some of the recommendations made by the Portfolio Committee is for the Minister to: ensure the department implements a coordinated strategy with clear internal processes on how the two departments will merge in respect of the reconfiguration and report to the Committee when requested to about the programme of action especially relating to staff; ensure that during the reconfiguration, the role of its entities must be clearly defined to avoid further duplication; ensure that in the creation of a highly industrialised economy, favourable conditions are created to ensure that Small, Medium and Micro- sized Enterprises, MSMMEs and cooperatives sector survives and thrives; ensure that the department expedites spectrum policy so as to ensure that spectrum is released without further delay; adequately capacitate ICASA to ensure the licensing of spectrum

is equitably favourable to all; ensure that strategies are in place to facilitate further reduction of data costs and the cost to communicate in general and ensure that the sector remains competitive; ensure that its focus to digitise government structures does not result in unintended job losses; that a thorough policy review is conducted for the digital migration process; promote regulation in order to stimulate growth and sustainability of SMMEs; profile Digital Terrestrial Television DTT user experience and share that with committee; share with the committee more information relating to the study measuring the gap in information and communications technology, ICT skills in South Africa; and that government should take advantage of the world stage at the World Radio Conference, WRC19.

In our country we already have the South African Affiliate Centre for the World Economic Forum Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution based at CSIR in Tshwane launched in April 2019. On behalf of the legislative sector, National Parliament convened a seminar and exhibition on the Fourth Industrial Revolution this year. Various other discussions and practical initiatives are taking place as part of contributions towards

the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Government and all sectors of society must diligently consolidate and coordinate all these initiatives related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution to ensure maximum benefit for the economy of the country, to assist us with innovation and the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

For maximum impact we cannot afford the old sterile silo mentality. We expect the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution which held its inaugural meeting on Friday

5 July 2019 through its six work streams to coordinate and galvanise all efforts towards developing a national strategy for the country by the end of March 2020.

Instead of sloganeering and fear mongering, we as law makers have to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution and immerse ourselves in the theoretical, policy and practical aspects of it. There are a number of scholars and practitioners in this area of work who have done research and can assist us to be active industrial revolutionaries to completely change the socio economic face of our country.

As elected public representatives we have a responsibility to ensure that the Fourth Industrial Revolution practically benefits the people of South Africa, majority of whom are black, women and working class. We will do our oversight in a robust manner, strong manner but majority of committee members agree that, that oversight should be done not in rude and abrasive manner.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Hon Chairperson, on the Sona red carpet, Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams said her dress was to remind South Africa that Stella is a princess. It was bizarre that a Minister – a public representative would see it fit to remind South Africa that she is a princess and not a humble servant of the people ... [Interjections.] ... as she was elected to be.

Princess Stella ... stop my time Chair, please!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Order, hon members. Don’t drown the speaker with your interjections. Hon members ...

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: On a point of order, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): I will recognise you now Deputy Minister.

*IsiZulu:*

Nk P T VAN DAMME: Kwasho yena nje.

*English:*

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member at the podium, if you want the protection of the Chair, then you must also try not to elicit the response; to be drowned while you are delivering your speech. Why are you rising, hon Deputy Minister?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: Because the hon member is misrepresenting the hon Minister.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): That is not a point of order.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: The hon Minister is a princess ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Thank you, hon member. Please, take your seat.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Hey, she said so. Princess Stella’s attitude was unfortunately not limited to the red carpet. It became patently clear that the Minister thought herself to be a fairytale princess to whom all must bow.

Her approach and treatment of the SA Broadcasting Corporation, SABC, is indeed of one who considers themselves above the law that applies to us common folk.

Last week, the Minister ...

*IsiZulu:*

Ubukhona wena ...

*English:*

... claimed that the judgement of the High Court in the case SOS Support Public Broadcasting Coalition versus the Minister of Communications and others and by implication, the Broadcasting Act, did not necessarily apply to her in all cases as the Minister of Communications.

In reference to the effects of the Broadcasting Act and its implication of the Minister’s relationship with the SABC board; in the judgement, Judge Matojane held – listen carefully here –

Because the SABC is medium ... [Interjections.] ...

Lalelani! [Listen!]

... that should allow the free flow of ideas that are necessary for our democracy to function, the state must ensure that it has structural and operational independence.

The judgement further reads:

The Minister as a soul shareholder and not a member of the board does not have the right to act on behalf of the SABC or manage its business or affairs. The ultimate decision- making power is that of the board and not the Minister as a soul shareholder. [Applause.]

Listen, this means that the Minister has a constitutional duty to work with the SABC without unduly interfering in its operational decisions taken by the board.

Before you deny it, this is not my own interpretation of the judgement in the Broadcasting Act but that of a constitutional law professor.

Minister, through you, Chair, if you consider yourself above the law and the courts ...

*IsiZulu:*

Hhayi, uzoshelela kabi. [Ubuwelewele.]

*English:*

The editorial of the *City Press*, this Sunday, if your behaviour thus far is anything to go by is correct.

Hlaudi Motsoeneng took the SABC to the edge of the cliff and you appear to be determined to push it over.

Minister, please, be sure to protect ... [Interjections.] – I don’t know why they get so excited ... [Inaudible.] - my time, please!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Order members. Hon member, one of your members is now taking a point of order. So, he is taking up your time. Have a seat, please. Yes, hon member.

Mr K J MILEHAM: Chairperson, we all enjoy a little bit of heckling and joshing but it is starting to drown out the speaker. I would ask for your protection.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Minister, please ensure that the important role that the SABC plays in our democracy is protected, supported and respected. This a hard thought plea I make on

behalf of those people of our country who do not have money for Netflix, Showmax or DStv and in some cases do not own TVs and only have Radios.

You know that the majority of South Africans rely on the SABC’s radio and TV stations. Please ensure that they can continue to be provided with information, education and entertainment by the public broadcaster. Day Zero must never come for it will be them who will suffer.

You may live a life of luxury; they do not. This is also a heartfelt plea I make on behalf of the thousands of SABC staff who lived through Hlaudi Motsoeneng’s reign of terror and low live in a time of uncertainty with only three months of salaries left in the SABC’s coffers.

We applaud the SABC staff that made sure that, probably for the first time in a democratic South Africa; election coverage was fair across all parties. That’s why nibuhlungu ... [That’s why you are bitter.] ... That’s why the Minister is upset because the SABC is no longer under the ANC’s control. The Minister is

upset because the SABC bravely reported her attempts to block the SABC’s covering of the protest at a manifesto launch. If you are upset, build a bridge and get over it. Stop putting yourself and your party’s ego above that of the people of South Africa, enough!

You have National Treasury’s 11 preconditions; work on building an amicable relationship with the SABC so that the people of our country do not have to suffer because of the bad blood you have with the SABC and your bad-mouthing.

To the SABC I say continue your good work thus far but please release the following reports that are long outstanding: The Revised Editorial Policy Report, the Report on Political Interference the SABC and the results of the staff and salaries audit that you conducted. This is work that does not require funding from National Treasury and we trust that these reports will be released soon for public scrutiny.

I must state that I am incredibly excited about the inclusion of digital technologies as part of the department’s mandate. I

trust that adequate funding will be allocated to this important function. I will offer the Minister suggestions from the DA, which I hope she will consider in good faith. This is but one idea I look forward to sharing many with her.

Last month, the UK government announced new measures to ensure that their regulatory system can effectively support technology innovation. A council will be formed to advice government of regulations they need to adapt and respond to changes in technology.

I believe that the same is needed in South Africa. Companies in this sector should not be hamstrung by onerous red tape. Please make sure that this sector is provided with enough support so that it can create jobs.

To my fellow committee members, I have already suggested that as a communications and digital technology committee, we must live by example in creating a digitised Parliament – Yeah, Waterfront is where you buy your expensive outfits with money you got from the Guptas. [Interjections.]

Ms M L MASHILE –MAKHUBELE: On a point of order.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Thank you. We must drive a digitised Parliament. We would also like to see ... [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V SIWELA): Hon member, can you take your seat? There is a point of order. Hon member, what is your point of order?

Ms M L MASHILE–MAKHUBELE: A point of order is that the member on the podium said the Minister bought expensive clothes ... [Interjections.]

Ms P T VAN DAMME: All of you.

Ms M L MASHILE–MAKHUBELE: ... with money from the Guptas. That is not correct and it is unsubstantiated. She is making allegations. She must withdraw. [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V SIWELA): Order, hon members. Unfortunately, there was a lot of noise, I didn’t hear that. Hon Van Damme, can you confirm if you did say that.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: I said all of them, especially the one in a Burberry scarf – Please, my time. [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V SIWELA): Hon Van Damme ...

[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: Chairperson?

[Interjections.]

Mr K J MILEHAM: Chairperson, excuse me, I had the floor before the Deputy Minister.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V SIWELA): I was still talking. Can you all take your seats? Hon Van Damme, I want to rule. If you said that, can you please withdraw because it is unparliamentary?

Ms P T VAN DAMME: I withdraw because I don’t know where they all shop. We would like to see a far more robust Parliament and committees in holding companies in the private sector accountable. The DA took on Bell Pottinger and won. There is no reason why Parliament couldn’t have done so. [Applause.] That does not only protect our people from the misdeeds of government but also the private sector.

As my final word to the Minister, it is early in your tenure. She has the time to right wrongs and be the Minister of Communications that South Africa deserves; if not, ...

*IsiZulu:*

Sizofaka upelepele.

*English:*

I have just been informed of the passing of legendary springbok wing, James Smal. On behalf of the DA, I would like to send our deepest condolences to his friends, family and the global rugby fraternity. We will forever remember your contribution to South Africa’s victory in the 1995 Rugby World Cup – a victory that

united South Africans at a fragile time in our country’s history. Rest in peace.

*Afrikaans:*

Rus in vrede, James. [Applause.]

Mr L G MOKOENA: Chair, let me add the condolences of the EFF to the passing of Nomhle Nkonyeni. She has led an entire generation of artists and we send our condolences and respect.

*IsiXhosa*:

Ulale kakuhle Sisi Hlehle Nkonyeni.

*English*:

Minister, let me start by saying that we welcome the decision by the ANC, finally, to amalgamate the two Departments of Communications and Telecommunications. [Applause.] It’s an overdue decision and we don’t understand why they were separated in the first place – actually we do know – but we welcome the decision.

We think that immediately after announcing the amalgamation, the President should have also introduced the operation of the Post Bank as a full bank because it is an extremely important pillar of the economic emancipation of our people. It is important that the Post Bank must take advantage of the Financial Matters Amendment Act and start operating as a fully licensed bank now that the Banks’ Act has been amended to allow SOEs to carry and operate under the banking license. The EFF is proud to have initiated this process through its Private Members’ Bill of the

15 May.

So, back in 2017, the Post Bank applied for a license to operate as a bank. When it did so, it should have had a business plan and that business plan would have outlined shareholders, operations strategy and all of that. Your department comes to the committee last week and says; now that the legislative environment allows for the bank to operate, they are now speaking to shareholders and they understand the modus operandi. So it means that they don’t have a plan as yet.

Since 2017 up until the announcement of the amendment on the

23 May, this year, there was no plan. This is what characterises the Department of Communications, generally. So, we have a few suggestions. This is how you do it. Because you have a Public Investment Corporation, PIC, you have the Industrial Development Corporation of SA, IDC, the National Arts Festival, NAF, Sassa, you have government department, you have the ANC account, and even the EFF will throw their money into that account of the post bank. You then have a strong leverage ... [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Order hon members!

Mr L G MOKOENA: You then have a strong leverage. Use that leverage to go to the poorest of the poor, to the marginalised, go to ... where the establishing banking system is exploiting our people. Go to Nxamakwe, go to Qumbu, the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo, go there and go service our people there and go reduce charges and reduce tariffs. That is the mandate that the post bank should ... forget what Minister Cele was saying about a development bank and all of that. This must be a mainstream bank that services the

marginalised and the poorest of the poor. This could be one of the strongest pillars of the economic emancipation of our people. So, we implore that you that very seriously.

Now, the SABC, you must talk to that Minister of yours, he is not here. You must tell the Minister of Finance ...

*IsiZulu*:

Ukuba uxobana nathi uma engafuni ukubhekela i-SABC ngezimali

*English*:

... if he is not going to finance that SABC. It’s extremely important that he finances it. Now we know that the reason why he is using the turnaround strategy as a scapegoat, as reason not to finance the SABC, is because we understand his attitude towards SOEs. But the SABC is an extremely important pillar of our democracy so it has to be financed even before those timelines that you are mentioning and you put a proviso that, no, if they meet certain ... [Interjections.] Chair, can I be

...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon members order! Can you allow him to speak please?

Mr L G MOKOENA: ... you give a proviso that if they meet certain functions then they will be financed. The SABC must be financed, it is absolutely important. Now, the SABC ... [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon members order! Can you allow the speaker to speak please?

Mr L G MOKOENA: So, the SABC has had more turnaround strategy than any SOEs ...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon member, can you take your seat, there is a hand. What is your point of order, hon member?

Mr D BERGMAN: Chair, on a point of order, this sound like the conversation between the Minister and the speaker ... [Interjections.] ... must go through the Chair, please. [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon member that is not a point of order. Hon member, can you proceed? [Interjections.] Proceed!

Mr L G MOKOENA: Thank you Chair. So, the SABC has had more turnaround strategy than any other SOE and those turnaround strategies have never worked. The SABC keeps getting worse and worse, you know why? It is because the problem is not the turnaround strategy, the problem is that people ... [Interjections.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Order hon members! [Interjections.] Order hon members! We want to listen to the speaker. Can you give him a chance please?

Mr L G MOKOENA: The problem is not your turnaround strategy, its people, implementation and policy, right? So this is how you fix the SABC. The SABC needs to be depoliticised. We are hearing all kinds of stories that ...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon member, can you speak through the Chair? [Interjections.] Please, hon member ... [Interjections.]

Mr L G MOKOENA: I don’t understand, does it mean I must look at you? [Interjections.] [Laughter.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: Order Chair!

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V IWELA): Hon member, I am trying to protect you because they are disturbing you. I am saying please speak through the Chair. [Interjections.] Please continue

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: Order Chairperson! Order Chairperson!

Mr L G MOKOENA: Okay, thanks Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: Order Chairperson! I think it is important to protect an hon member because there is jealousy on the side because he is facing this side. He is

saying all the sensible things and not looking at them. I think you must protect the hon member, please Chair. [Laughter.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY: [Laughter.] Hon member, proceed otherwise you are finishing your own minutes, please.

Mr L G MOKOENA: Through you Chair, hon Minister ... [Laughter.] [Interjections.] ... we must depoliticize the SABC. This is crucial because we are still hearing stories of politicization of the SABC and its going to destroy that institution. We must release the Stealth AUDIT and we must solidify the definition of roles. People are running around the SABC, they don’t know what they are doing and it is important that everybody understands what their role is. You must put in proper financial and operational systems and we must not tolerate corruption because what has happened is that we have had the SABC enquiry.

There were recommendations and people are still running around and some of them are even opening their own political parties with the monies of the SABC. So we must go and arrest those people. We must recoup the monies that we have lost in the SABC

through corrupt operations, with the Guptas, with multichoice, we have lost archives, we have lost a lot and we must recoup all that money. And we must go back to the basic principles of broadcast, its information and education, entertainment and fairness. Those are all embodied within the broadcasting Act.

These are some of the things that we need to look at in order for us to bring back the dignity of the SABC.

Ma’am, leave the broadcasting Act alone, leave it alone. There is nothing wrong with the Broadcasting Act. Now what happened in the last tenure is that your Minister when you were the Deputy Minister, your Minister went into that corner office of hers there and fiddled with the Broadcasting Act. We learned later that what she was doing was to centralize power between herself, Hlaudi and other corrupt individuals. Don’t do those things.

There is nothing absolutely wrong with Broadcasting Act.

Let’s go to the SABC and fix what is in there. That is where we need to start. On digital migration, digital migration must now be the cornerstone of broadcasting in South Africa. Now, your department already told you that ... [Interjections.] ... I have

got a lot of time, thank you very much. We want numbers, we have got time now. [Laughter.] Your department already told you that we are already paying money towards Santech and preparing Santech for the digital migration so it is not operational but the money is already going out. So, its wasteful expenditure by definition, so to speak and failure to do so will result in the stifling on the development of the SABC.

The SABC should be giving us a whole lot more channels and it should give us a whole lot more service. Your stifling in the development of local transmission now at the moment the process of applying for a local television station is so cumbersome that there are at least five provinces that don’t have those things. So, the digital migration will make it easier for them to open up and have ... we will continue to engage on these issues.

There is a whole lot more that we are going to discuss but thank you very much but we will not be supporting your Budget until you do these things. Thank you very much.

Mr J D MAMABOLO: Chair, point of order, this very important. Hon Chair is hon Mandla waKhethiwe lebhuti Tau aware that for people

at home to watch *Generation The Legacy* at eight o’clock. If they have to watch you, they need budget to pass? I don’t think he is aware, hon Ringo Madlingozi you don’t know it know more.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (MS V SIWELA): Hon member...

[Interjection.]

Mr J D MAMABOLO: Hello...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (MS V SIWELA): ... hon member, you should address the Chair not the member. So...hon Mokoena.

Mr L G MOKOENA: Through you Chair, I appreciate my friend there, we are not the chief, and we are in Parliament now. We are discussing Telecommunications, ok; I will deal with you afterwards at eight o’clock, thank you very much.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (MS V SIWELA): Hon Mokoena, you are doing the same mistake, you must address the Chair. Can you take your seat, I have made a ruling. Let us proceed with our debate. The

next speaker is hon Majozi; she is making her maiden speech. Over to you Mbokodo

Ms Z MAJOZI: Hon Chairperson, this department is the custodian of information and is responsible for the national communications policy and strategy, information dissemination and publicity; and the branding of our country. It is incredibly difficult to discuss only budgetary matters when 91,3 per cent or R4,6 billion of the department’s total budget will be transferred to entities for the implementation of communications and broadcasting policies. It is no surprise who will receive the bulk of the billions, but the uncertainty around the sustainability of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and its current business model is what affects the work of this department most.

As the sole shareholder, Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams has not been doing a “stella" job. Without having to debate inconsistencies and the relationship of the department with National Treasury, we must never forget that the people who will bear the brunt due to a lack of financial certainty, poor management and lack of

oversight and blatant ineptitude - are the many faces behind the public broadcaster. They need to put food on the table. They need to ensure their children’s school fees are paid and that they are able to cover their bonds, or their car payments or their credit.

The board’s pockets are lined as they are getting paid per meeting, yet producing zero results. There is no bang for buck and if this were to be any company, it would be addressed. If key performance areas are not to be met over this medium term, all hope would be lost. We must never forget that when right at the top things are unravelling, the worst affected are the ones who put in the hours of work to make ends meet.

The situation at the SABC right now, is not something we should as a nation take lightly. There are many lessons which have been learnt over the years and there are many examples of state owned entities which have become successful enterprises by opening up to private sector investment and shareholdings. Such a public and private partnership is required to move the SABC forward and out of the red. It is a shame really, that we have found

ourselves in this position. The lack of consequences for gross neglect flies in the face of the millions of South Africans who rely on the SABC for their information, their entertainment and their upliftment.

It is unacceptable, it is a waste of public funds and it is grave shame that various Ministers have failed to fix and clean up the public broadcaster. The welcomed merger and rebranding of the department to include digital technologies is a step in the right direction. But face painting is meaningless without action. The state of the telecommunications industry in our country is a missed opportunity to unlock jobs for our people and to reach out to the millions of people who live in rural South Africa. Digital technologies and opportunities have been squandered due to the lack of policy certainty within that department and the political will has not been there to turnaround the entities of the department.

Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams certainly does have a challenging portfolio of entities, boards and industries to manage. It is important that she focuses and is able to navigate the industry

sharks in prioritising the creation of jobs and opportunities for young South Africans in the tech space. Chairperson, the IFP is extremely concerned over the possible adverse health effects associated with the roll out of 5G Communications. We urge government to exercise the utmost precaution as is mandatory in terms of international agreements to which we are party as well as in terms of our own constitution.

We must caution and conscientize this house of the many dangers which are posed by the radiation which are scientifically proven to be harmful when exposed to humans, particularly young people in the roll out of 5G. In this respect we have submitted a number of parliamentary questions to the Ministers of Health and Communications, Environment, and the JCPS cluster. We urge the Minister to conduct independent investigations into possible adverse health and well-being effects of 5G. The IFP supports this budget. I thank you.

Mr W W WESSELS: Thank hon Chairperson; communication the human connection, is key to all forms of success, therefore the importance of this department should be underestimated.

According to President Ramaphosa, the merge of the Department of Telecommunication and Postal Services and the Department of Communications will ensure better alignment and co-ordination of matters that important to our economy. This can however only be obtained if the different components of this department function properly, which currently is not the case at all. The instability in leadership of this department has had a detrimental effect on its entities. Such as the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, ICASA, the Film and Publication Board, the Government Communication and Information System, GCIS, and the ANC government’s greatest embarrassment, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, SABC.

Minister, you referred to the Electronic Communications Act, but since it was passed into law, 17 years ago nothing has happened, nothing! A good piece of legislation but nothing has happened, niks [nothing]. The progress on essential projects such as the switch from analogue to digital broadcasting which has been ten years in the making and for which the deadline was set to be 2011, is still not completed. It is now estimated to be completed by 2020, but most probably that is also just a dream.

We are lagging behind our neighbours, Namibia and Botswana in this regard. This delay has cost the country more than

R10 billion.

The poorest of the poor are excluded from affordable digital connectivity. Why? Is it deliberate or is it just incompetence? Because currently only elite few benefits. The economy is suffering due to the various delays to implement the Electronic Communications Act.

Let’s get to the SABC in particular, Hlaudi Motsoeneng was appointed by the ANC, he was appointed by your predecessor Minister. The ANC protected him amidst his destruction of the public broadcaster, amidst his corruption, when he stole and was part of stealing R631 million from the Department of Human Settlement in the Orange Free State. Houses could have built for the poor-he stole, but ANC chose to protect him year after year and then what did he do? He started his own political party- learn from that.

The hon President’s pipe dream of a smart city will never be realised amidst the mismanagement and corruption, which contribute to South Africa lacking behind the world in terms digital communication. We cannot talk about the fourth industrial revolution whilst we do not even have a nearly, almost functioning post office, not even a post office. We do not even have a functioning public broadcaster, but then we hear in every speech the fourth industrial revolution, we are far from that. Let’s get what we have, working, let’s implement what we have. Let’ stop the corruption, let’s make appointments based on merits. Learn from the Hlaudi Motsoeneng incident, listen to opposition parties; listen what is said, and listen when people within the entities tell you that there is a problem with a certain individual. Do not just ignore them.

The whole SABC destruction could have been prevented or limited if the Minister at that stage and ANC listened, but they chose to protect their cadre and now he is the ACM cadre. Stop your cadre deployment, if this is not done, the President’s dream and actually a fairy tale of a smart city will remain a fairy tale

and the only place where the hon Minister will feature is as a fictional princess within that fairy tale. I thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (Ms P S Kekana): Hon

Chairperson, let me recognize the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Ms Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, other Ministers and Deputy Ministers here present, the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, hon Hope Papo, members of the portfolio committee, director-generals of respective departments, commissioners of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, captains of industry, distinguished guests, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen, let me start out by apologizing to the House for the regrettable incident that took place at last week’s portfolio committee session. This was not out of disrespect to the portfolio committee and all South Africans; it was the effects of taking new flu medication and bearing the consequences thereof. I unconditionally apologise. [Interjections.]

With eight days left to Mandela Day, we as the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies are guided by the words

of our former President, Nelson Mandela, when he said and I quote: “The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear”. With many challenges to face and the many unknowns that come with the advancement of technology, like Madiba said, we have to be brave and conquer those fears. As we head into the Fourth Industrial Revolution, our drive needs to be underpinned by strong institutions, especially the state- owned enterprises, agencies and regulators.

Significant strides have been made to transform the SABC from being the mouthpiece of the apartheid government into a true public broadcaster. The uninterrupted coverage of the 2019 national and provincial elections enabled South Africans from all walks of life the opportunity to receive pertinent information about the elections, therefore facilitating a participatory democracy. This once again positioned the national broadcaster as an important pillar of our democracy and is probably best summed up by the analysis of Media Monitoring Africa - an independent media monitoring group, which concluded the following and I quote:

The SABC’s coverage of the 2019 general elections are to be strongly commended, not just because they were overwhelmingly fair, but because there was a clear shift to offer more citizens voices; political parties were equitably covered; the SABC stood up for their editorial independence; provincial coverage was in line with general population spread and to the best of our knowledge, no formal complaints about the SABC’s failure to run party adverts or messages were lodged.

This proves, hon Mokoena, how the SABC is depoliticised.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Chairperson, can I just ask a question? [Interjections.] Why is the ANC not clapping about the equitable coverage.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V Siwela): Hon Van Damme! Hon Van Damme, I did not allow you to do that. Hon Deputy Minister, can you proceed.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (Ms P S Kekana): Thank you.

The ANC is aware, so we are trying to educate you. [Interjections.] And this happened at a time when the SABC was faced with unprecedented financial challenges which were mainly the result of mismanagement, corruption and an outdated funding model.

Government understands these challenges and commits itself to finding lasting solution – and of course our Minister has come up with those, which includes working with the SABC and other stakeholders.

In this respect, the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies has commissioned the Government Technical Advisory Centre, Gtac, at National Treasury to assist with the development of the corporate strategy of the SABC to ensure that it is sustainable and forward looking. It is within this context that the Minister of Finance has charged his Director-General, Mr Dondo Mogajane, to determine how the SABC can be assisted from within Treasury’s contingency reserves as indicated in the Minister of Finance’s February 2019 Budget Speech. We are truly indebted to the board, management and staff of the SABC who have continued to steer the ship through stormy seas which were not

of their own doing. We will be working studiously and speedily with Gtac, the SABC current lender, and National Treasury – as the Minister has outlined, to ensure that the SABC gets the assistance it desperately needs in the interim whilst parliamentary processes are being finalised.

The department has also identified policies that need to be amended to create an enabling environment for the turnaround and complete recovery of the SABC, taking into account the changing market and technological advances. This will entail amendments to the Broadcasting Act and the Electronic Communications Act, amongst others.

We call upon all government departments and state-owned entities to use the SABC as a platform to educate, inform and entertain about specific areas of work, cutting across various sectors such as health, sport, transport, etc. This will enable us to position the SABC as your home, within the homes of South Africans. This can and should happen, if we get all government departments and its entities to understand that the SABC is a fundamental platform for public content. I have no doubt that we

can build a public broadcaster which makes the paying of TV licences worthy. I expect all members to really lead by example. [Applause.]

A good and viable broadcaster is central to the development and growth of the audiovisual content and creative industries. The creative industry was identified by World Economic Forum as a high priority industry, and our current discussions on the renewed industrial policy has affirmed it as one of the future economic growth sectors for South Africa. In this regard, the department will prioritise the development of an audiovisual and digital content strategy. Engagements with the creative industry are ongoing and the department has already committed funds to support this initiative.

In support of the development of more local content, as required by section 38 of the Broadcasting Act, the Ministry will appoint members of the public and industry to serve on the SA Broadcast Production Advisory Body which will advise on strategies and plans towards the creation of a South African local content industry. This will take into account efforts towards

positioning South Africa as a significant player in the global digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Financial inclusion is an important pillar of any economy. Over the years government has positioned the Postbank to become a trusted bank for many in our country, especially those who cannot access current banks. Currently, the Postbank has about 5,8 million clients with R5,3 billion in deposits, excluding SA Social Security Agency, Sassa, which amounts to 7,8 million grant recipients. Our competitive edge remains rooted in decades of building trust in communities, and in supporting South Africans who would not normally have access to banking by giving them a form of economic emancipation. So, I hear that the EFF is aligning with the ANC in this regard.

A significant number of South Africans started their banking with the Postbank and still do ...

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V Siwela): Hon Deputy Minister, there is a point of order. Hon Mokoena, what is your point of order?

Mr L G MOKOENA: Sorry, Chair, it is point of correction. We are not aligning; it is part of our pillars. It is one of our main pillars to have a state-owned ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (Ms P S Kekana): You are

learning from the best. Thank you.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms V Siwela): That is not a point of order; sit down. Hon Deputy Minister, can you proceed.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (Ms P S Kekana): So, you

are learning form the best. The payments of social grants through the postal network has brought convenience and even dignity to many of our people because of the extensive network of the Post Office, across more than 1000 outlets. As we speak, Postbank is developing its strategy – so, the strategy exist, which will be unveiled in the next few months. This will enable it to compete in the market while focusing on its immediate responsibilities to ensure financial inclusivity. We are getting there; “ukukhawuleza” [speeding up] is our approach now.

The Banks Act did not previously allow state-owned entities to hold bank licences. This has since been amended, and paved the way for the licensing of the Postbank. During the current financial year, we will amend the Postbank Act to align it with the Banks Act. The department has already delinked the assets of the Postbank from those of the SA Post Office.

It is safe to say we are in the process of concluding the regulatory framework for the first state-owned bank in the democratic dispensation. [Interjections.]

*IsiZulu*:

Kuya sheshwa la.

*English*:

The corporatisation model of the Postbank will ensure that we progress to q state-owned bank which will fulfil both economic and social transformation mandates, serve the unbanked and underbanked, offering accessible, simple, and affordable banking solutions to our people. So, hon Mokoena, we have a roadmap.

*IsiXhosa*:

Siyakhawuleza manje.

*English*:

The postal market is undergoing critical changes impacted by the rapid pace of technological advancements. Throughout the world the traditional mail volumes are in severe decline, which necessitate a complete rethink of the role of the Post Office.

In South Africa, the National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper already recognises the strategic role of the Post Office in the changed market and ever-changing technological environment. In this regard, the Post Office will launch on e-commerce platform which is being implemented jointly with the Universal Postal Union, UPU, a United Nation agency for postal services. Last year we committed to partner with the UPU to make Sapo one of the three hubs in Africa.

I am pleased to report the increased co-operation with regional operators to enable trade and logistics solutions in the region and internationally. In addition to e-commerce, the department will work with the Post Office to redefine its mandate in the

roll-out of e-government as set out in the White Paper. The diversificafion of the mandate of the Post Office follows on government’s financial investment in the Post Office over the last three years. This will also enable the Post Office to digitise its network by connecting all post offices to high- speed internet.

As we continue to focus on the digitisation of the postal network, Sapo will continue to roll out addresses to assist government to comply with what is called the Tlokwe ruling of the Constitutional Court. In the past two years the department has supported the Post Office with funds to roll out addresses and about 4.9 million new addresses have been introduced, far exceeding the original target of 3.5 million.

This assisted the IEC, greatly, in preparations for the 2021 local government elections. As the ANC, we are ready for local government elections. The roll-out of these new addresses will enable the recipient communities and households to participate in the economy, and over and above that, it gives our people a sense of belonging.

To sustain the postal network, government has reinstated the Universal Service Obligation Fund and dedicated Rl,5 billion over a three-year period. This is important considering the huge cost of sustaining a postal network. Due to the successful implementation of this project of R50 million funding from the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, and an additional R35 million grant was approved to support the development of the national address database envisaged in the national ICT policy. The focus is for the coming year to obtain approval on an amendment to our legislation that approves the data custodianship for addresses. The socioeconomic conditions that are faced by women, youth, and people with disabilities, remain at the centre of our programmes and policy framework - rightfully so.

In the 2Ol8-l9 Budget Vote speech, the department committed to host and implement programmes targeting women, children, people with disabilities, and our SMMEs. We hosted the National ICT Accessibility Symposium in Mafikeng where over 225 persons with disabilities were in attendance, and where the outcome of the symposium was a heightened awareness amongst the attendees of

what is available to them in the ICT sector. And I am glad that Mme Masingita Masunga is also in our mist and she will be carrying our message through. It also provided an opportunity for the sector to showcase what innovations and technologies are available in South Africa to support persons with disabilities. We are passionate about the use of innovation and technologies that support and empower persons with disabilities.

As with anything, there is a negative side to technology. As such, the protection of children is a key priority for the department. We hosted the Child Online Protection Programme, providing support to the Web Rangers programme, which is a national digital literacy initiative to equip young people between the ages of l2 and l7 to empower themselves and their peers to be safe online. The programme reached just under

1 500 young people across the country, equipping them to be web rangers in their respective schools, with the idea to catalyse the awareness and behaviours of safe online activity. The schools social media policy, which previously only focused on the restriction of cellphone usage in schools, has now been

expanded with a priority on policy changes, to include aspects of cyberbullying, sexting and sexual grooming.

The department has implemented the e-parenting programme across all nine provinces, with just under 500 parents to date. We are calling on all political parties to also join hands with government in some of these programmes because it is important for our parents to understand all these things.

The department will be implementing the digital inclusion awareness programme in 2019-20, on the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution for four components of society, namely women, youth, children and people with disabilities. This will include the Young Women and ICT Dialogue in August 2019, with a focus on the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution – all of you on my left are invited.

South Africa is currently a member of various international organisations such as the International Telecommunications Union, World Intellectual Property Organization, as well as regional and continental formations dealing with the sector. Our

strategic focus is mainly around the creation of a fair and equitable global communications environment, harnessing the value of strategic resources such as the radio frequency spectrum, as the Minister has spoken to, and universal standards.

As I conclude, I would like to say that all these initiatives constitute elements of a dream of the South Africa we want, and the actions we are going to take to make those dreams a reality. I started out my speech today by quoting Nelson Mandela, and I want to close with a famous Madiba quote on this Mandela Month: “A winner is a dreamer who never gives up.” “Malibongwe!” [Let it be praised!]. “Siyaqhuba!” [We are advancing!]. [Applause.] [Interjections.]

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Thank you very much, House Chair,...

*IsiXhosa*:

... niqhuba nibuya umva okanye kwi...

*English*:

... traffic circle. South has already missed the International Telecommunication Union, ITU, committed deadline, Minister as you are aware. The question is: How do you intend to fast track this process? Another very critical issue to ask is that, South Africa has fallen behind the rest of the world regarding the assignment of the 5G spectrum as the Ministry has decided to assign the 4G spectrum before it assigns the 5G spectrum. The question that we want to ask you Minister which I think is pertinent, should the Minister not consider simultaneous assignment of both 4G and 5G spectrum. Another very critical question for you to answer Minister: Is foreign owned OMEs such as Huwaei, Erricson, ZTE and Nokia are increasing their value chain participation by providing full tacky services. This results to the exclusion and marginalisation of black SMMEs.

What processes has the department put in place to monitor and ensure that big telecoms players such as MTN, Vodacom and Telkom remain accountable especially towards meeting their BEE participation in the industry value.

Another important question for you and an issue to consider Minister is that, phase one of SA Connect promised to provide

broadband services to over 6000 government facilities especially rural schools and clinics. What is the status of this project?

When should we expect its completion?

I now want to come to the SABC, and to say in particular that...

*IsiXhosa*:

... uMphathiswa weSebe lezeziMali uyayithanda injezu, unesigqezu [Kwahlekwa].

*English:*

I want to quote the report of the Committee on Communications, which says, the report of the committee commends the SABC board and management for: “savings of R1 billion on the basis of a strategy implemented by the board to, firstly, increase revenue. Secondly, contain costs. Thirdly, resolve internal inefficiencies. The same report says, it commends the SABC a balanced coverage of the elections which has already been cited here and it goes further and says, for the improvement in TV licence collections fees. Is that not a turn around strategy. It

gives an indication that the institution is turning around and that is exactly what we discussed last year.

*IsiXhosa:*

Nithetha ukuthini ke ngoku xa nisithi akukho...

*English*:

... turn around strategy.

*IsiXhosa*:

Sanukudlala ipolitiki apha, la masela.

*English*:

The other issue which I think is of critical importance is that, what appears to be a political tug of war between the departmental government and the SABC is creating uncertainty for staff members at the SABC.

*IsiXhosa*:

Hayi nantso, nitsho.

*English*:

All of the issues that we have highlighted here I quoted them from the report of the Committee of Parliament and are issues that we certainly discussed in the portfolio committee last year. The management and the board committed to doing this issues, they have done them ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... bayaqhuba kancinci, anifuni ukubanika imali kuba nineengxaki zenu. Siyanixhasa, kodwa khawuzame sisi, siza kububuya.

Mr L E MOLALA: Hon Chair, fellow committee members Minister, and Deputy Minister, boards executives and staff from related state owned corporations and entities, the media and hon guests.

Following the Departments of Communications, and Telecommunications and Postal Services 2019 Annual Performance Plan presentation on O3 July 2019, and our consideration of the budgets and the committee reports on O9 July 2019, I am convinced, agree and rise to support this progressive budget.

The debate comes in the immediate aftermath of the President’s

state of the nation address on the Sixth Parliament, the first South African Digital Economy Summit, held last week in Johannesburg.

In many ways, this is a sector of many firsts and the new departments will be a pioneered. We have the great fortune of being pathfinders for our nation in these unchartered waters. The President has made commitments that government will, open the doors of learning for all and this is a skills revolution. The President also made a commitment that will lower the cost of communications young people call it, data must fall. Extend free Wi-Fi access to more sites in the country, particularly the most vulnerable. As a cadre from the rural province of North West, I have been grappling with these complex concepts in the past few weeks since the ANC deployed me to this Committee. Cleary the future we have always dreamed about is here. As Dr Martin Luther King Jr said,

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now, urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum life of history, there

“is” such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.

Our people are not interested in the drama which some political parties have brought to Parliament. The critics of the Fourth Industrial Revolution will be asking this question: What will be the future of work in the in the current revolution? How will work be defined?

Their prediction is that 5 million jobs will be lost by 2020 to technology, in construction, manufacturing, public health and many other sectors. But for us as the ANC this is not the main question, but the main question is, what would be the new forms of education and training that our people need because the world now is open to learning. How do we take advantage of this phenomenon? The principle regarding automation is that anything that a repetitive task, a machine can do better in their view, cheaper and without having to take any vacation or sick leave.

Our task as the ANC-led government is to interface this human, nature and technology collaboration. What we need in this

interface is to first identify all the things that the machine cannot do. For instance, the machine cannot produce itself, therefore we need human creativity. A machine cannot regularly service itself, maintain and operate itself. Therefore more technicians are needed. I am just giving you these few examples.

This shows that the Fourth Industrial Revolution has more opportunities for human participation. This path cannot lead us to a digital apartheid, a society where there are massive disparities between those who have access and those who are excluded. For the ANC, this digital revolution must be characterized by inclusive, shared growth and development. Our values and principles of striving for social and economic justice must remain our guiding light. This budget has responded to the clarion call of growing South Africa together including the opposition.

Hon members, as the ANC we are convinced that this Ministry has focused on the seven priorities announced by then President. May I remind you of those that are specific to our portfolio: Economic transformation and job creation, education, skills and

health, social cohesion, safe communities as well as building a capable ethical and developmental state. A better Africa, and a better world. Focusing on the above we will, indeed, go a long way in the transforming the South African society in building of a better life for all.

Hon Chair, we are comforted by the fact that you have correctly translated the ANC Manifesto into an electoral mandate, programmes into actions and concrete five-year programme for implementation. Above all, we are encouraged and totally agree with you when you say broadband mobile data price will fall. As you finalise the policy directives on the allocation and licensing process of the high demand spectrum; we would like to ask and call on the mobile and fixed operations to make and do good on their promises that they will drastically reduce the prices and also ensure that the rural and semi-urban signal coverage and poor nature of service is addressed.

Minister and Deputy Minister, we would like your department to continuously brief and update Parliament as you are going to play a collaborative role in the finalisation of social compacts

for digital economy, creative sector, Information and Communications Technology, ICT, implementation plan, for the rollout of 100 digital hubs over three years. Finalisation and implementation plan to address outcomes of competition market enquiry into data prices and engage stakeholders on a possible agreement on data prices. The African Union has acknowledged that the creative and cultural industry in Africa hold great promise in the development of the continent, as they contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of our people. The above requires co-ordination to succeed.

We agree that more value is created when private and public sectors collaborate, having recognised the value of high-tech sectors and the creative industry in meeting some of the many challenges we are facing as the Fourth Industrial Revolution unfolds. We therefore, request your support and collaboration with the upstarts within the e-sports and gaming space. This will go a long way in creating sustainable jobs for youth, unemployed persons, women and people living with disabilities. The collaboration with Huawei, in the establishment of targeted innovative young entrepreneur’s programmes, within the e-sports

and e-gaming, will go a long way in building a culture of youth entrepreneurship and job creation. We are confident that your collaboration with provincial governments, as you have done in the Free State Provincial Government and are about to do with the North West, where I come from, especially the local and district government level, is a good step towards the creation of youth digital industrial digital hubs. This is a practical and meaningful response to the President’s call.

Hon members, this is a good budget plan and programmes relevant and fit for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Therefore, the ANC supports this vote [Applause].

Mr C H M SIBISI: Hon House Chairperson, hon Minister, Deputy Ministers and hon members, I greet you all. The NFP welcomes and supports the Budget Vote for Telecommunications and Postal Services tabled here today. The department is under major pressure with the fast evolving technological advances. Digital advancement continues to reshape our world in ways that encourage people to form new habits and find new ways to work together through effective and timeous communication methods.

The NFP believes that if the department remains committed in these key mandates to meeting strategic goals and objectives, we can keep up with the fast growing digital world; effective and efficient strategic leadership, governance and administration; a responsive communications policy regulatory environment and improved country branding; and a transformed communications sector.

We note and welcome the R64,9 million allocated for administration, the R16,4 million allocated for communication policy and R47,4 million allocate for management of enterprise development, broadcasting digital migration, industry research and analysis.

The access to information and content is indeed easy and with this luxury the need for regulatory policies are needed to protect our children. We are unable to thoroughly monitor the information and content consumed by minors but it is our duty to implement policies that can protect them as best as we can.

The suggested course on digital media in partnership with the private sector and nongovernmental organisations, NGOs, will educate communities on how they can create and make use of opportunities through digital media. We note that most South Africans do not benefit from the information communications technology, ICT, infrastructure, but we must focus on improving the promotion, growth and sustainability of small, medium and macro enterprises, SMMEs, through facilitating the implementation of the ICT SMME development strategy. We thank you.

Mr M W MADISHA: Hon House Chairperson and all members here present, permit me to start at the end – the last two paragraphs

– and indicate that COPE calls on Parliament to instruct government to urgently address problems faced by the schedule two public entity of the Public Finance Management Act, PFMA, namely the South African Broadcasting Corporation,SABC. We must emphasise that it is in crisis.

South Africans, particularly the working class and the poor, cannot survive without the SABC. We call on government to give

SABC a bailout of not less that R3,2 billion that they have requested. For SABC to survive it needs quality and content. For this to be attained there must be staff. Some amongst us have and continue to campaign for the staff reduction. That campaign is wrong as it both ignores labour relations – that is section

189 as well as skills development including the quality and content that is required.

Furthermore, it has problems of buildings. Those of us who have gone to SABC, not only where their head office is in Johannesburg but all over the country, we have seen the buildings that are collapsing and that has to be addressed. I must emphasise that some of us have been to see one worker who has been in the ICU over the past two months as a result of a building that collapsed and that is a major problem.

There are other very serious problems there as well: They cannot even pay for the electricity and the toilets are blocked and all that. We need to do something. I must say to the Minister, through you House Chairperson, that there needs to be correction because when she gave the committee the report she painted a

picture that she and the Minister of Finance were agreeing in so far as their route to dealing with the SABC problems was concerned.

That which has gone out through the public media ... and I believe and hope that ... [Time expired.]

Mr M G E HENDRICKS: Hon Chairperson, the Fourth Industrial Revolution creates a sense of excitement and hon Minister, you have captured the nation’s imagination. But we must also have on the raider cyber cities in deep rural areas to get corporates to relocate in their droves to make money there.

All this must be done in preparation of the cyber civilisations with South Africa as a member of this civilisation. If you achieve this, hon Minister, you will be part of royalty and the envy of the Official Opposition.

Hon Minister, the nation is waiting for the finalisation of policy directors on the spectrums so the country can catch up on progress like we see in developed countries. The President, in

his state of the nation address, identified the need to strengthen the capacity of the state. The Independent Communications Authority of South, Icasa, strengthens the capacity of the private sector by giving them spectrum space. More of this space must be given to state departments like Home Affairs and the Police.

The 5G spectrum streams must be allocated to them to capacitate them and save them money rather than paying exorbitant future prices. Having said that, we want to acknowledge that Icasa continues to be an independent and credible regulator. While its broadband service like 5G must be free, and Icasa must be creative to make this possible, uptake of 5G systems must be speeded up and monopolies must be avoided.

The interim relief for the SABC is welcome; we must support the public broadcaster now that it is free and no longer captured. The digital economy in South Africa is in young hands which gives us hope and Al Jama-ah, with a sense of excitement, wishes you, hon Minister, all the success. [Applause.]

Mr C MACKENZIE: House Chairperson, it’s delightful to stand in a single Chamber today that is as it should be where all the old split-up departments of Communications and Telecommunications and Postal Services are here under one roof, debating as one.

Even President Ramaphosa didn’t wait for any sunrise, any new dawn or old before quickly joining the two departments back together again - if only in name and under a single Minister in the Fifth Parliament. We wish the same Minister success in the term ahead.

I’m also delighted to see the committee’s positive recommendation of this departmental unification, albeit after the fact. Is there anyone in this House who thought splitting the two departments in the first place was a good idea? Put up your hands! Anyone? No? Not one? There we go! Because, what a monumental waste of effort, money and time that was - fruitless and wasteful indeed.

South Africa’s telecommunications environment is arguably the most liberalised sector in the country. Yet, this sector which should be the freest isn’t free. It should be creating thousands

more jobs, up-skilling more youngsters, growing technical careers, developing small business and contributing massively to the coffers of the state. Instead, it finds itself completely constrained by lack of spectrum. You can’t see it, touch it or feel it, but spectrum is all around us. It’s infinite and indescribably valuable —- billions upon billions of rands worth.

Now, there are companies that want to pay for and use this spectrum for mobile network development and rollout. Government is the custodian of this spectrum on behalf of the people of South Africa and are supposed to use the spectrum for the benefit of the people of South Africa. Yet, you have dragged your heels for more than five years in releasing the spectrum for term sale or lease.

Effectively, government imprisoned spectrum for purely political ends and I am sure that make spectrum a political prisoner. In fact, so determined was this government to keep this prisoner locked up that it took Icasa to court to ensure that it stayed that way.

Minister, if you are holding a sector to ransom by delaying the release of high demand spectrum, be fair and tell them what the ransom is. At least then they can consider buying their freedom. Let Icasa hold an auction now, pitch it high and use the revenue raised for other government priorities. But you can’t continue to do nothing. It is like owning a house that you can rent out to generate revenue but then you don’t and you leave billions uncollected year after year that could have been spent on health, education or housing for those who desperately need it. Please don’t spend it on the SABC.

Let’s be honest; you only have to look at who’s sniffing around the formation of the Wireless Open Access Network, WOAN, to know much of the delay in allocating spectrum lay in connecting a few rent seekers to spectrum through the WOAN. Yes, rent seekers, we see you, and that delay is very expensive indeed.

If that spectrum had been allocated to Telkom, where government has a share; Vodacom, where government has a warehoused share; or any other South African tax-paying company with the capital to deploy networks, Treasury and global ratings agencies would

be a lot happier with our nation’s finances because those billions in revenue and taxes would have flowed into our coffers in the last five years. And we could sure use the extra money to keep the lights on, Minister, because if there’s no power then there’s no point in ICT, is there?

For South Africa’s sake, Minister, take note of the committee’s recommendation and release the spectrum without delay. It is a national infinite resource; set it free. Don’t bog the spectrum auction down with onerous conditions; make it simple and clear. The benefits of allocating spectrum quickly far outweigh the disadvantages of backbreaking auction conditions because this will merely hold us back even more. We don’t have the luxury of time to waste.

Let Icasa make the spectrum available now and to those companies with the massive capital outlay needed to immediately deploy high quality, reliable and ubiquitous networks, including 5G that we need to take full advantage of, and yes, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, because if we don’t have the networks we don’t have the revolution.

As W E B Du Bois admittedly of his American south, but it might as well be us, and I quote: “Here is the magnificent climate; here is the fruitful earth under the beauty of the southern sun; and here, if anywhere on earth, is the need for the thinker, the worker, and the dreamer."

After state of nation address there’s no doubt who the dreamer is with bullet trains and connected cities; that’s government led by the President. For innovative thinkers and actual workers though, you need look no further than the Western Cape, where this DA-led government has done more to connect its public infrastructure and rollout universal access than any other province in the country. [Applause.]

But it is the rest of the country that I worry about. Is the President’s bullet train just a bullet? Is the new dawn simply the train’s light at the end of the tunnel? An example from State Information Technology Agency, SITA, Annual Performance Plan might hold an answer.

One of their strategic objectives is, and I quote, “A 100% of South Africa connect sites connected at bandwidths of 10 Megabytes per second as per government order”. So, yes, the Minister can stand at this podium and talk confidently about 300 new sites that will be connected to the internet. Of course the devil is the details. What she didn’t say was that government’s highest standard for our people is that 10 Megabytes per second. While she is connecting at 10 MBPS, Vodacom is set to rollout 5G networks at speeds of up to 20 Gigabytes! 10 Megabytes per second and 20GB!

I have seen what the private sector can do; I hold it in my hands. I use its networks. Africa’s first live 5G session on a commercially ready 5G mobile phone and network was displayed at this year’s elite Durban July. Perhaps hon Malema experienced it during his fun full day at the races. His outfit was better than your state of the nation address, one hon Minister.

So, do you reward excellence? Do you say go and do more and here is the spectrum to make it cheaper for to you to rollout and deploy more networks? No you don’t, because while the government

dithers the private sector delivers and it is them we have to thank for state of our networks we have in this country. Nothing the government did can take credit for it.

South Africa is nowhere near for the digital age because in these prison-guard uniforms you are holding the future captive. You are still talking the Fourth Industrial Revolution; you are still holding commissions; you are still conducting more talk shops; and you are still imprisoning spectrum while the entire world is quickly moving ahead. Even Lesotho has a 5G network. On the subject of 5G, please ask “president dreamy” to stop talking patent nonsense about 5G and Huawei.

Holograms not withstanding, Minister, tell him, Huawei is not the only supplier of 5G technology or networks. Nokia is a world leader in 5G and the USA is a leading supplier of 5G networks.

When the hologram knows more than the original Houston we have a problem. [Applause.] It takes more than slogan-hearing and pretty gold braided uniform to start a revolution, Minister. If that was all it took then more than enough Gucci revolutionaries

with pseudo military titles are already sitting around us to start a small war.

Hon Wessels gave us some great advice on telecommunications, although I’m not sure where he got his insights, I have never ever seen the Freedom Front Plus in the committee – ever! Not even in the last term. That is it; I do like the idea of freedom if not front. [Applause.]

Frankly, Minister, it is time to stop talking and release the spectrum to mobile operators that can use it. Get the sector moving again because if we get left behind, you will never catch up. At 10 Megabytes per second we are going backwards. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: The hon House Chairperson, fellow committee members and MPs, Minister, Deputy Minister and officials of the two departments, boards, executives and staff from related

state-owned corporations and entities, guests and members of the public, the ANC government is offering a vision and far-sighted leadership through these Budget Votes. It is a Budget that deals

with the reality of our country and the challenges we are facing on the one hand; while laying the foundation to position South Africa to be among the early takers in the digital revolution.

This is a kind of the leadership of the ANC incapable of providing. As we will be commemorating the birth of our icon, uTata Nelson Mandela a week from now, we recall the words he spoke at the ITU Telekom World in Geneva in 2009:

Communication technologies have transformed the way people live and the manner in which countries develop. They have the potential to enable us to solve many of the critical problems confronting us. If this potential is to be realised, then we must find ways of turning these technologies into a resource for all people despite the challenges they face within their communities.

If we reflect on the history of industrial revolutions, we note that the First Industrial Revolution brought us the steam engine and our colonial masters imported trains and other technologies from England. The Second Industrial Revolution brought to the

world the internal combustion engine and the motor car. More than a hundred years later, as Africans we have not invented our own car. The Third Industrial Revolution was the age of the personal computer and the internet, both invented in the United States of America.

President Ramaphosa and the African leaders have committed that this time around, we will not be late takers to digital technologies. We will be producers. [Applause.]

As producers of technology, we will be able to own our intellectual property. That is why we are encouraged that this Budget focuses on supporting the creation of digital innovation hubs. China has shown us that a developing country can lead the way in new technologies, much to the displeasure of developed countries.

The onslaught in the West against Chinese tech giants - Huawei and ZTE - is a sign that the Western colonial mentality remains alive and well. While the United States has been mired in wars

in at least seven different countries, China has been quietly and peacefully developing its industries. [Applause.]

South Africa and Africa must seize the opportunity of leapfrog the West in digital technologies, if we are to emerge out of the trap of being sellers of the raw materials and buyers of finished products. But there are the likes of the DA, who would like to hold the development of Africans back.

If you asked an ordinary South African a question, what is Ms Phumzile van Damme famous for? They would probably tell you three things: Firstly, she shares a surname with a famous action movie star. [Laughter.][Applause.] Secondly, she assaulted the racist DA voter at the V and A Waterfront as she was shocked ...

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION: Point of order!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member, would you just take your seat, please. Why are you rising, hon member?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION: House Chairperson, the hon member is aware that she wants to bring improper conduct for allegations about a member of this House; it must however be a substantive motion. That’s out of order and she must withdraw.

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: Secondly, she assaulted a racist DA voter.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member, now you are moving into the terrain of Rule 85. That Rule says, if you want to bring that type of attention to the House, you must do so in terms of Rule 85(1)(2). I thus requested you to withdraw that remark and continue with the rest of your speech, please.

HON MEMBERS: Point of order, Chair.

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: I withdraw, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): I am dealing with ... Thank you.

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: Thirdly, Ms van Damme apparently fantasise about being Minister of communications and digital technologies. She has been trying her best to project herself to the media and her Twitter followers as a hero. She is desperately trying to imitate her famous movie star cousin by attacking the Minister. Unfortunately, hon van Damme, for now you will remain just a shadow of our beautiful young Minister. Like a shadow, you will be ignored and forgotten. [Laughter.] [Applause.]

Let me take this opportunity to affirm the position of our portfolio committee. Having considered the Annual Performance Plans, APPs, and the reports of the department and its entities, including the SABC; our portfolio committee was unanimous in asking the Minister, the SABC Board and National Treasury to engage and resolve the financial challenges faced by our Public Broadcaster. We have not appointed Ms van Damme as our spokesperson on the SABC matter. [applause.] We have a Chairperson who speaks on behalf of the committee.

Ms P T VAN DAMME: Point of order, Chair.

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: We want to assure ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon Khubheka, would you just take your seat. Why are you rising, hon member?

Ms P T VAN DAMME: The hon member is misrepresenting my role. I am not here on the ANC’s ticket. I am here representing the DA. She must be clear. I don’t represent the ANC.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): No, hon member, that’s not a point of order. Please, take your seat. Take your seat; it’s not a point of order. Continue hon member.

Ms N J KHUBHEKA: We want to assure the board and the staff members at the SABC that our parliamentary portfolio committee cares for them and the institution they serve. We believe that the Minister and the government of the ANC will never take reckless decisions with respect to the SABC or any other entity of the state.

We fully understand the strategic role played by the SABC in our democracy and we will never allow it to fall into a state of disrepair. We would like to see jobs saved at the SABC and also commend the good work the board has done. The management and board must have confidence in the real government of South Africa, not a shadow, because a shadow is not enduring; a shadow is not reliable.

The SA Post Office is a great example of the determination within the ANC government to do everything in our power preserves the irreplaceable entities such as the SABC in the hands of the state.

We know that our colleagues from the EFF are still caught in 1950s slogan of the PAC of Azania, I quote: “Land first, all else shall follow". Well, as the ANC we have always argued with the PAC that ownership of land alone does not drive the economy. Their argument is that even trade and commerce happens on land and in their logic, the one who owns the land, owns the economy. Maybe we need to take this opportunity to stretch the brains of our EFF brothers and sisters a little bit.

I want to ask the fighters to think about all the wealth that has been created in the world in the past three decades.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member, would you take your seat, please. Why are you rising, hon member?

Mr L G MOKOENA: I am just checking why this member is speaking about land. We are speaking about Telecommunications here.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): That’s not a point of order, hon member.

Mr L G MOKOENA: What is the land all about?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): No, hon member, that’s not a point of order. Continue hon Kubheka.

Mr L G MOKOENA: Yes, it is not a point of order. It’s a question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): No!

*IsiZulu:*

Nk N J KHUBHEKA: Uzoyibamba phambili siyaqhuba ngokuhlanganisa.

*English*:

How much of it has been created by farmers or land owners? How much has been created by bankers, innovators and owners of intellectual properties? Fighters, we want to assure you that as the ANC, we are fighting for land and agrarian transformation.

But we also want all South Africans to participate in the high value economic activities — manufacturing, finance and insurance, innovation, and digital technologies. But unlike the neoliberal DA, we believe that the state has a major role to play in development of the industries of the future.

The government creates an enabling environment for the provision of communication services to all Africans in an inclusive manner that promotes socioeconomic development and investment. For us, inclusion means programmes to ensure that millions of young people are absorbed into sectors where demand for jobs is growing.

These sectors include global business processing services, agricultural value chains, technical installation, repair and maintenance and new opportunities provided through the digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

As announced by the President in the state of the nation address, we are looking forward to the Minister issuing the policy directive to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, Icasa, to commence the spectrum licensing process. This process must include measures to promote competition, transformation, inclusive growth of the sector and universal access, as part of bringing down the costs of data, which is essential both for economic development and for unleashing opportunities for young people.

We believe that people of South Africa trust the ANC government to manage the funds based on the department’s track record of good governance and accountability. The Department of Communications and GCIS both received clean audits in previous financial years. Hon member, this department ...

*IsiZulu:*

... iyashesha ngempela.

This department's APPs have injected a sense of urgency in the programmes of the Fourth Industrial Revolution environment. The electoral mandate and manifesto programmes are all within the apex priorities identified and translated into the Medium-Term Strategic Framework of the department.

Minister, your programmes are responding to the ANC call on all South Africans to rededicate themselves to the task of ensuring that government must empower all South Africans especially unemployed persons, youth and women, and enhance their capacity to unleash their economic and social potential.

Last, but not least, Minister, I would like you to continue marching on, regardless of the distractions that are emerging. As you continue with the review of policies and legislation for the Fourth Industrial Revolution purposes, do not be discouraged by attention seekers, particularly the DA.

Hon Minister, there are many men, and few women and youth on the boards of your entities. We encourage you to transform the boards and to focus on gender and youth balance. [Applause.]

We support your approach on shareholder oversight, especially in line with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, PFMA. We respect the independence of entities in terms of the Constitution and legislation. But we also expect financial accountability for the use of public funds. That is why as the ANC we call on your Ministry, boards of entities that are struggling to engage with the National Treasury to find a lasting solution.

As the ANC, we are fully supported this Budget Vote that we are talking about today.

*IsiZulu:*

Manje uma sisho njalo ke bese ngithi kuwe Bab’uFana lalela ngoba usujwayele laphaya ku-*Generation* uma uhluphana no-Karabo.

*English*:

With due respect, hon member, acting in a drama on SABC does not make you an expert on SABC and broadcasting matters. [Time expired.][Applause.]

*IsiZulu*:

Ngifuze wena.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS: Hon House Chairperson, firstly...

*IsiXhosa*:

... mandibulise apha emhlabeni wamaMpondo kulo kaFaku njengenkosazana yamaMpondo.

*English*:

Hon Mackenzie you missed it; I did talk to the issue of the spectrum and the policy directive that will be allocated. It is very important as hon members that we listen carefully and not just to listen to respond. I said in seven days we will issue the policy directive in line with what the president has said. Secondly, - no you do not get into the details; you must

understand the responsibility of the policy maker. I cannot determine the method the regulator must use. Read the Acts that you are producing hon member. The second matter that you spoke about hon Mackenzie again in line with the speed that we are providing in relation to the broad banding services that we are providing, I did and I was specifically quoted on this one. You must listen when a Mpondokazi speak.

*IsiXhosa*:

Xa iMpondo lithetha, nceda umamele mhlonitshwa. Ndithe apha ...

*English*:

... during the medium term, we will review the download speed to be in line with international best practice. This will form part of the work we are currently doing with the Development Bank of South Africa, DBSA, which will be concluded by the end of the financial year. Review of the speed to meet international standard from 10 megabytes to 100 megabytes, hon Mackenzie. [Interjections.] There is nothing that I can do and you just decided to be like that. [Interjections.]

Hon members, present today here are our young e-gamers and e- sport enthusiasts from TA or Term Gaming. This is one of the fastest growing sectors enabled by the Fourth Industrial Revolution that presents an opportunity for young township entrepreneurs to enter into this multi-billion industry that refuses to transform.

*IsiXhosa*:

Huawei has partnered with these young entrepreneurs to ensure that young people in townships and rural communities are exposed to and capacitated to compete in its sports. The department is also working with Small Enterprise Development Agency, Seda to assist term gaming to offer training in township and rural areas. Listen carefully now as we talk about growing the economy and building on small, micro and medium enterprises, SMMEs.

One hundred SMMEs and individuals will be trained on fibre and wifi deployment skills in partnership with the Wireless Access Providers Association so that every term we put a billion in the infrastructure our people get to benefit. SMMEs of about 180

will be capacitated on cellphone repairs and other key business management skills.

*IsiXhosa*:

Singazi apha sifike sithi...

*English*:

... our people continue to consume. We have got to give them skills if we cannot produce for now the devices that must be used. [Applause.] The programme will be implemented in partnership with the Technology Innovation Agency, Namisa and Seda. Our entities and all of them under the portfolio of communications and digital technologies will spend 40% of their budgets in terms of procurement services in youth-owned SMMEs. That is a non-negotiable. [Applause.]

Let me thank the portfolio committee members for their ongoing support and robust engagements. Let me thank my beautiful sister, the Deputy Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies. Let me also thank the department as led by two directors-general for continuously making sure that they

compromise and sacrifice their lives with their partners and children making sure that the people of this country get the best they can get. [Applause.]

Let me thank again the people of South Africa who continue to pray for this country and pay their TV licenses without fail. We need it; if you love SABC, it starts there by paying your TV license. [Applause.] Of course, I have got to thank my dear husband who continues to support me through all times even though he gets to be alone most of the time. Allow me to conclude by making a clarion call under theme of “Khawuleza” which must define our work now and in future. As Mama Winnie Mandela said, “Singayisusa sithanda.”

The youth of our country cannot wait anymore. The good thing about belonging to a governing party is that you cannot be removed by an opposition. Of course in dreamland they can continue as shadows, continue to wish that they can remove you. The youth of our country cannot wait anymore; we must never test their patience. Let us all khawuleza to build the South Africa we want.

*IsiXhosa:*

Ukwenza nje malungu ahloniphekileyo, iyabulela inkosazana yamaMpondo, enguthandiwe wamaZulu. Ndiyabulela Sihlalo weNdlu.

The mini-plenary session rose at 18:54.