**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
Thursday , 12 MAY 2022**
***MINI PLENARIES (VIRTUAL)***
**14:00 – 16:15**

 **(2) Vote 11, 7 & 12**

**BUDGET VOTE 11, 7 & 12: Public Service and Administration, National School of Government and Public Service Commission**

**Hon. MM Hlengwa, MP (on behalf of Hon. RN Cebekhulu , MP)**

Hon. Speaker/ Chairperson,

I wish to preface my contribution today by highlighting the fact that the Department of Public Service and Administration has one of the toughest - if not the toughest - mandates in government. I refer specifically to the mandate to improve the professionalisation of the public service, which does not only act as the face of our government, but comprises a significant portion of the country’s workforce.

Over the last few years, we have seen unprecedented economic struggles and a severe spike in unemployment due to, largely, the global Covid-19 pandemic but in all honesty, our economy and employment rate have been in decline for several years.

South Africa suffers from an ethical bankruptcy, which is pervasive and deeply entrenched in the ruling party. Corruption has become synonymous with South Africa. It is part of the country’s brand.

The importance of the role of the Public Service Commission in overseeing, monitoring, evaluating and investigating public administration practices, as well as creating a capable, ethical and developmental public service also needs to be highlighted.

After the pillaging of the Covid-19 relief funds for personal protective equipment, and the many, many corruption scandals, one shudders to think how we could restore faith in a government that declares war on the poor at every possible opportunity.

The recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape saw many lives lost, leaving heartbreaking scenes and many people destitute – and the first thing people were worried about was the mismanagement of relief funds allocated towards mitigating the devastation.

Lest we forget the devastating riots last July - the cost of which is still being counted - where no meaningful arrests have been made, even after the President of the country told us ‘We know who they are’.

Recent reports stated that more than 100 000 public servants/government employees have been implicated in a graft scheme, where they unduly and unlawfully benefited from social grants intended for the poor of South Africa. This included staff in the offices of the President, the Chief Justice, the National Treasury and law enforcement agencies. All to the detriment of the poor.

Unfortunately for the poor in South Africa this suffering is not temporary, it is relentless and accumulated. The heartbreak manifests itself in their everyday struggles, while those who already have plenty, get more.

Therefore, the National Anti-Corruption Hotline needs to be highlighted and the crucial role of whistle-blowers needs to be prioritised by this Department.

As the IFP, we therefore echo the recommendation of the Committee that the Department needs to fast-track the amendments of all legislation due earlier than 2023, to give Parliament ample time to finalise such legislation within its term. The government - as an employer - and Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council should swiftly finalise wage negotiations for the 2022/23 financial year. This will avoid delays to the process, which impact the morale of public servants, as well as uniformity and a timeframe with the Financial Disclosure Framework on lifestyle audits.

We further wish to make mention of the importance of the synchronisation of all three levels of administration in order to achieve anti-corruption objectives.

As the IFP, we support the Budget Vote and we will continue to work alongside the Department to ensure that the principles of Batho Pele, as well as the vision of the NDP, is truly fulfilled.

The IFP supports the Budget Vote.

I thank you.