**African Christian Democratic Party**

**17 May 2023

ACDP Parliament
Debate on Budget Vote 40: Transport**

**Speech by ACDP Deputy President, Wayne Thring MP**

**ACDP says Department of Transport is failing to value, protect, and maintain key transport modes**

“Honourable House Chaiperson,

As we consider this Budget Vote, with an allocation of some R69.1 billion, the ACDP is keenly aware of the importance of our transport modalities, be it rail, road, civil aviation, maritime, or public transport.

From time immemorial, empires and nations have understood the importance of the different transport modalities, be it the Silk Road, Spice routes, the Trans-Saharan Trade route, or the Biblical Kings Highway. These routes were valued, protected, and maintained because of the comprehension that they were the business and financial lifelines, necessary for the growth of the economies of the nation or empires of those times.

Regrettably, the same cannot be said of this Department, because in the view of the ACDP, it has failed to value, protect and maintain, the key transport modes, entrusted to it. Both PRASA and Transnet have become an embarrassment to our citizens and business community. Across the country, train services are suspended on several major lines that take people to and from work, due to poor management capacity, corruption, inadequate security, which in turn leads to theft, vandalism and the neglect of infrastructure.

Mr Njombo Lekula, an MD at PPC, laments that Transport Freight Rail, the backbone in the movement of materials in South Africa, is beset by many problems, rendering it incapable of carrying out its mandate of shifting the movement of bulk goods from road to rail. Mr Lekula further states that it is embarrassing that Botswana Railways is performing better than Transnet Freight Rail, where our rail network should be operating as first class or on par with some developed countries.

Instead, what we have is the collapse of our railway network, with the resultant increased usage of trucks and damage to our national/provincial and municipal roads. This has caused gridlocks at border posts such as Lebombo, adding to time and cost inefficiencies. Additionally, the cost of lost export opportunities owing to Transnet inefficiencies is said to be over R50 billion in 2022.

The ACDP would like to give some free advice to the ruling party, as a solution to our failing SOE’s. The Singapore success formula MPH.

Meritocracy: Appointments, procurements must be based on merit.

Pragmatism: Stick to what works. Failed ideologies must go.

Honesty: Where honesty is prevalent and valued, corruption is defeated.

MPH is what this Department and the ruling party needs, and you will find MPH in the ACDP.”

**-ENDS-**