

Political narrative on the debate of Basic Education Budget Vote, Honourable Alvin Botes, 9 May

2018

Honourable Chairperson and Presiding Officer

Leadership of Basic Education, led by the Minister Motshekga and Deputy Minister Sury

In historical terms 9 May has different interpretations and meaning for the South African people. For the ANC and our people, we remember that revolution transcended race with the incarnation and imprisonment of Bram Fischer, who was sentenced 52 years back to life for believing that 'South Africa belongs to All who lives in it, Black and White'. His conduct was regarded as an anti-thesis to what was regarded as White normative, and expected conduct. The election of Nelson Mandela exactly 24 years ago on 9 May 1994, in this very parliament undermine concretely and substantively the narrative of White supremacy, and Black inferiority.

Education is the incubator-centre for the production of a future of less joblessness, and rendering poverty poorer. It used to applied as an instrument used as a Roadblock to Social Justice.

Rosa Luxenburg were instructive that we must 'always loudly proclaim what is happening'. We spend more than three times as much as a country like Kenya per child, which is almost 20% of our total state expenditure. We spend more on basic education than we do on any other government function. We spend more per child, than just about every country in Africa, our fixation and obsession with the plight of the youth is unparalleled.

The education of our youth does not allow for mistakes. Unlike with building a house, it cannot be broken down and repaired. Therefore we must continue to have a best minister, a best administration and a best teacher within the education sphere.

Tackling the pitfalls in education will require national and international action on two fronts: Government need to get children into school - and they need to ensure that children get something meaningful from their time in the classroom. Put differently, they need to close the twin deficit in access and learning.

Greater teacher content knowledge and better pedagogical practices are highly correlated with improved higher student learning.

Household income and access to education

The availability and quality of physical (such as desks and textbooks) and human (such as educators and support staff) resources affects learners' experience of their schooling, and may impact on learning outcomes. We need to continue to ensure that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspires learners to want to come to school and learn, and teachers to teach.

The issue of infrastructure has haunted South Africa since the dawn of its democracy. This is an apartheid legacy that the ANC led government has worked tirelessly to resolve. We have worked on the eradication of asbestos and mud schools, to ensuring the dignity of learners through making water and sanitation a top priority. One of our biggest milestones is that of building SMART schools and aiming to create paper free classrooms.

The school infrastructure backlog grant is mandated to eradicate infrastructure backlogs. This includes replacing school buildings constructed from inappropriate materials such as mud and providing water and sanitation to schools that do not have these facilities.

The Schools Infrastructure Backlog Grant (SIBG) also funds the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery

Initiative (ASIDI) portfolio. These schools exceed the minimum norms and standards for educational facilities in South Africa. This is a significant development in rural and other economically depressed areas. These schools have high ICT infrastructure which include learners being given tablets, teachers with laptop, WiFi and SMART boards. Schools Infrastructure Backlog Grant seeks to contribute to improved teaching and learning through improving and upgrading infrastructure by 2018/19, by building 50 schools to replace unsafe structures, providing water to 325 schools and providing sanitation to 286 schools.

The Education Infrastructure Grant (EIG) seeks to help accelerate construction, maintenance, upgrading and rehabilitation of new and existing infrastructure in education including district and circuit accommodation. In the 2016/17 service delivery performance helped build 3237 teaching spaces, 1214 administrative spaces, 3533 maintenance or upgrading projects. It completed 368 water, 521 sanitation, 130 electricity and 843 fencing infrastructure projects.

To date, 203 new schools have been built through the ASIDI programme, 681 schools have been provided with water, 468 with sanitation facilities and 372 schools have been electrified.

There are plans to complete a further 50 new schools in the current financial year through the programme and to provide 571 schools with water and 524 with sanitation facilities.

Honourable Minister

The ANC is committed to providing safe drinking water, sufficient sanitation and electricity, and for all inappropriate structures to be eradicated over this five-year period. This aligns with the NDP's objective that all schools meet minimum infrastructure standards for sanitation, classrooms and libraries.

We need to encourage our educational practitioners to be more radical. We cannot advance radical socio-economic transformation, when we are lethargic. We need to be fixated, with an obsession to deepen, at an accelerated level infrastructure delivery. That is the mirror-image of what our people expect from a caring peoples' government.

While some South African schools have excellent infrastructure, others lack basic services such as water and sanitation.

Minister, let's get this balance sheet right. The poor and working class must be the primary recipient of a pro-poor peoples' government. We rather erred on the side of the poor, than be over cautious on unfounded fears and anxiety of the rich.

Emphasis on improving quality should be in the areas of most need, among the poor, where ironically current poor performance and disruptions in South Africa conspire to reproduce poverty and marginalisation. This should be combined with vocational guidance and improvement of the formal and informal networks (social capital) that are critical to accessing opportunities. This will help break the cycle in which the poor experience lower, late and uncertain returns to educational attainment.

The School Realities 2016 report confirmed that 'change moves in spirals, not in circles' and found that South Africa has more than 12 million learners, trained by over 418 000 educators, in 25 000 schools.

Nationally, 65% of learners attend no-fee paying schools (Quintile 1,2 and 3 schools) in 2014 (StatsSA, 2014); with 82% of learners in the EC attending no-fee schools in 2014 (compared to 41% of learners in the Western Cape and 45% of learners in Gauteng). It therefore holds that the ANC's electoral promises were not in vain; the truth is not binary (does not involve two things)- government has made a commitment to the poor and followed it through to 'make education free'.

In 2013/14 the National Schools' Nutrition Programme fed 9,1 million out of 11,9 million children, which amplified our responsibility as the 'ANC as the carrier of the burden of history'.

South Africa has made excellent progress with access to schooling since 1994 and today 98% of learners between the ages of 7 and 17 are enrolled in school.

We need to stress, underlined and emphasise the links between education, opportunities and employment, with particular emphasis on the notion of building capabilities (NPC, 2012, p. 17). The capability-approach, developed by Amartya Sen, states that people should be afforded the freedom to achieve well-being and develop their capabilities, that is, 'their real opportunities to do and be what they have reason to value' (Robeyns, 2011). It is now part of the received wisdom in all of the developmental social sciences that economic and social development is not possible without increased access to education, and an improvement in the quality thereof.

Overturning Verwoerd's legacy: is this generation better-educated than their parents? The majority of young people aged 20-34 in South Africa have a higher level of education than their parents.

Education has been a highly contentious issue since the implementation of Bantu Education Act in 1953. More than 65 years later, the impact of this Act is still evident as South Africa struggles to find equality in the education it provides to all its learners.

However, differences in intergenerational mobility have remained significant across population groups. The same families tend to constitute the most educated group from one generation to the next. Economists refer to this as the under-education trap, as some families remain unskilled from one generation to the next.

Consequently, until human capital convergence occurs, the under-education trap would persist. A fair education system would provide a path to upward mobility for the poor families. The South African education system is neither completely closed nor completely open to the poor, but the results in this report show that past structural inequality is still at play in educational mobility.

Honourable Minister

Two hundred years ago the birth of Karl Marx were instructive, that "men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please, they do it under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past"

You have broken ranks with subservient conduct and has proven that there is 'no elevator to political success...you have to take the stairs!'

END

Basic Education Budget Vote Speech By Honorable NR Mokoto, (ANC) MP in the National Assembly 09 May 2018

Skills Development and Provision of Quality Education – Equipping Learners for the World of Work

House Chair

Minister of Basic Education

Ministers Present

Honorable Members

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

House Chair I want to put it on record that the ANC support the budget vote.

House Chair; allow me to reflect on these wise words by our forebear Nelson Mandela in the backdrop of the 100 year anniversary of his life fa ane a buwa are" maatlamagolo a thuto a lekanyediwa go feta tlhabololo le kago, re tlhoka gape tswelelopele ya ikonomi. Thuto e kgon a go lere kago setshaba le itshwarelano"

Modulasetulo Thuto ya puso ya apartheid ene e eteleditse kwa pele dikgaogano le dipharologano mme se sene sa tlisa bosula le ditlamorago tse di sa itumediseng mo ma Aforika Borweng.

House chair

Since 1994 far reaching reforms have taken place with the aim of breaking down the structures of apartheid and eradicating educational inequalities and setbacks.

Through sweat and blood the ANC led government has facilitated sustained and consistent move from a brutal, racialised, and divided Bantu education system, to a transformative, inclusive and developmental system of education. An educational system which values all children as equal citizens deserving of equal opportunities and rights for growth and self actualisation.

In 2009 the ANC led government further reassured its mandate to make education an apex priority in the country. Throughout this period we have seen a radical shift and a huge increases in budget allocations for education and education related expenditure in government.

Today, Chairperson, as we move forward through the difficult journey of transformation of our education system, we do so with confidence knowing that the ANC led government has opened many doors of learning and access to education for our young and some with special needs.

Unlike before, more learners are now in schools receiving an education which is responsive and inclusive to their needs and that of the country. The adoption of the South African schools Act in 2006 which practically makes it compulsory for the children younger than 16yrs to attend school as passed by parliament, has further reinforced the ANC agenda of promoting universal access to education by all children.

Today more learners with disabilities are in attending special schools, and are receiving appropriate education based on adapted curriculum based on their identified needs, requisite support and resources are allocated in the same way as in mainstream schools. We commend the Department for achieving this specific milestone in our education system especially the introduction of a financial grant to specially cater for profoundly disabled and intellectually impaired learners. As ANC led government when we took power boldly expressed the end to the days marked by injustice, inequality and humiliation we saw during apartheid education where disabled learners were treated like non-entities, chained and hidden in the darkest room in the house.

Hon Chairperson, having interacted with the department on various occasions as a portfolio committee, allow me to express our confidence on the fact that the Department of Basic Education has strategically positioned itself to equip learners for the world of work, and for positions in areas of scarce skills.

At the core of this programme is the issue of eradicating youth unemployment and creating sustainable jobs and building the economy.

We have to highlight that immeasurable preparatory work in this regard has been done to ensure that this programme goes well as planned. However it is our belief that whilst DBE is key player to this programme, there is a strong need for collective effort from different role players to further ignite this work.

Hon Chairperson, we must admit that many schools especially in rural areas still lack behind in terms of the implementation of this beautiful plans because of lack of integration and support, skilled and competent educators and poor funding. It is our firm believe that any underinvestment in this area particularly at primary and secondary levels can have undesirable outcomes for the country and the world.

Honorable Chair

The task of producing learners who can fearlessly face challenges and compete with peers from around the world requires our institutions of higher to provide a responsive curriculum that matches current demands for teaching and learning

Having noted that some rural remote school remain deeply affected by this shortage of skilled and competent teachers. We are grateful for the amount of progress being made by the government key players to resolve and prioritise this urgent matter.

In 2011, the department of Basic Education with other role players (SACE, ELRC, EDJP, SETA, DHE Labour and Education Development Fund produced an integrated strategic framework for teacher education and development which looked into specific interventions that needed to happen to enhance teaching. We call on the DBE to facilitate a process that will fully realise the objectives and recommendations that emerged from that interaction.

We are also mindful of the strides made by DBE in spreading the footprint for teacher development and support across the country . The establishment of teacher development centers in various district cannot go unnoticed whilst we understand the many challenges faced by district with regard to properly equipped and resourcing these centres .

The impact that these teacher centres make in improving content knowledge and access to electronic teaching resources and regular workshop and training is measurable. Having visited some teacher centres we know that there is a good and impressive ones and those that still require more attention. DBE should consider developing a minimum standards for the teacher centers that can apply to all centres/districts. We appreciate work done by Vodacom Foundation and other telecoms network operators in terms of improving these important facilities. The introduction of (BELA) Basic Education laws amendment bill now tabled in the ATC is also hopefully expected to attend to these very critical issues affecting teacher education development and support.

The introduction of Fundza Lushaka bursary to attract more young people to join the teaching profession and for them also register for scarce course like maths, Science and ICT is one way of dealing with this shortage. Through Fundza Lushaka we have more skilled teachers being deployed to underserviced school as a result in the matric results for 2015, we have more rural schools improved in performance in particular number of matric with bachelors and also subject improvement in scarce subject. Vhembe is one particular district to note.

Our own National Development Plan, in its vision 2030, instructs us, to ensure that the various parts of the education system, should work together, allowing learners to take different directions that provide superior quality learning advantages.

One of the main objects set, is that the Department of Higher Education and Training delivers 30 000 graduates in Artisanship per year by 2030.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) considers itself as having an important contribution in achieving the visions set out in SDG4 and the NDP.

It is in light of this role that the Department of Basic Education has introduced the Three Stream Curriculum Model, to provide learners with opportunities to choose career pathways that are in keeping with their individual interests, aptitudes and abilities.

The new model caters for three streams of education, namely, academic, vocational and occupational streams.

The academic pathway is largely a theoretical programme, which mainly prepares learners for higher education studies at the end of year 12 of schooling.

The vocational pathway is a programme made up of subjects, with at least a 50% practical component, mainly for artisanship and professions.

The occupational pathway is a programme made up of subjects consisting of at least a 75% practical component, and mainly prepares learners for the world of work.

The basic education system will provide learners with unprecedented skill-sets, competencies, and personality traits, emphasizing soft skills, providing a transition between the school and the world of work, creating technology-enabled platforms, and new forms of collaboration to keep pace with innovations and a combination of technologies.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution comes with disruptive digital technologies and trends that will change the way we live and work. Globally, countries are challenged on how to respond to the opportunities and risks presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Advanced Technologies, such as automation, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, nanotechnology, 3D printing, and autonomous vehicles will demand non-routine, interpersonal skills and analytical skills, social skills, such as persuasion, emotional and social intelligence and will demand creativity, agility, adaptability. Furthermore, creative and critical thinking, communication, media literacy, and ethics, will be demanded.

Emerging unprecedented skill-sets, which will be met through meta-learning, creative problem solving, collaboration, learning to apply knowledge in new and different ways have to be provided to our learners.

The alignment of content and teaching methodology to real life situations in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, are therefore imperative.

On the science and technology in education front, Government has already finalized detailed plans with key stakeholders, using the Operation Phakisa methodology, to enable the successful use of ICTs in education.

This includes the provision of core connectivity to schools, the development of learner materials, the more effective use of ICTs in the administration and evidence-based improvement of the education system, and the preparation of teachers for an education system more strongly underpinned by ICTs.

The Department is therefore preparing learners for the Fourth Industrial Revolution through a three-pronged approach, which consists of the revisions to school curriculum design, including Computer Application Technology, Information Technology, and the Three-Stream Curriculum Model; the provision of ICT resources to schools, including connectivity and devices through Operation Phakisa; and the integration of technology in teaching and learning (e-Learning) through Operation Phakisa.

Since the launch of Operation Phakisa, the Department has made some great strides, including much better collaboration and harmonization, horizontally and vertically, through the basic education sector, and across government.

The details on sector alignment include collaboration with strategic partners; the digitization of textbooks and workbooks; the provisioning of ICT devices; teacher and professional development using ICTs.

Critical is the integration of ICTs into all the levels of the education and training system in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, by digitally transforming the basic education sector. All stakeholders are aligning and delivering a consistent solution to all schools, to ensure that no school is left behind, because of its geopolitical location.

Our Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) founded our democratic state and common citizenship on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms (Section 1a). These values summon all of us to take up the responsibility and challenge of building a humane and caring society, not for the few, however, for all South Africans.

In establishing an education and training system for the 21st century, we carry a special responsibility to implement these values and to ensure that all learners, with and without disabilities, pursue their learning potential to the fullest.

The introduction of South African Sign Language (SASL) as a Home language is a milestone in the South African History.

We are amongst the first countries, to introduce SASL as a Home language.

House Chair let me conclude by emphasizing the need to improve the quality of learning and teaching outcomes across our education system. This remains critical, if we have to tackle the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment; and stimulate our economic growth and development.

I thank you