**Address by Comrade James Tyotyo, MP (ANC) during the Debate on Debate on Budget Vote 11: Public Service and Administration**

Chairperson and Honourable Members

The National Development Plan charges us with the responsibility to work towards building a developmental state that seeks to effect economic transformation, reduce inequality, deracialize the economy, ensure state participation in strategic sectors and partnership with the private sectors, and the advance of the employment particularly women and the youth.

The ANC is deeply committed in the vision for a capable and developmental state which is characterized by a capable, autonomous meritocracy; political leadership oriented towards development; a close, often mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship between some state agencies and market forces; and successful policy interventions that promote growth.

Transforming South Africa into a Developmental State will require building critical and necessary capabilities to foster an environment, which mobilises government and non-government contributions to realise changes in the socio-economic structures and the culture of society. Furthermore, we must ensure that the political-administrative interface is managed effectively, combat fraud and corruption in the public and private sectors, and provide a clear rational for the public service governance system.

We remain committed to the implementation of the steps that were identified in the NDP to promote the values and principles of public administration as enshrined in the Constitution. Furthermore, the NDP highlights the need for a well-run and effectively coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and capable of delivering consistently high-quality services, while prioritising the nation’s development objectives.

Building human capital, through the development and retention of a qualified and capable public service, is important for the developmental state because it allows it to pursue its developmental objectives in order to foster sustainable and more inclusive growth. A capable public service also has the ability to be innovative and resolve modern day challenges in a manner that saves time, energy, and resources. This means that we can foster a culture of specialization and focus on maximizing areas where the public service has a competitive edge. With a capable public service, the limited resources of government will be channelled towards better service delivery and the pursuit of developmental objectives.

**Building an efficient and effective public service**

Honourable members, unevenness in capacity tends to leads to uneven performance in the Public Service. This unevenness is caused by a complex set of factors, including tensions in the political-administrative interface, instability of administrative leadership, skills deficits, insufficient attention to the role of the State in reproducing the skills it needs, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organisational design and low staff morale. Steps are needed to strengthen skills, enhance morale, clarify lines of accountability and build an ethos of public service. These steps are guided by the need for long-term policy stability as well as awareness of potentially adverse effects of over-regulation.

In 2016, the Department developed the Public Administration Management Regulations on Conducting Business with the State, the Disclosure of Financial Interests and setting up the Ethics, Integrity and Discipline Technical Assistance Unit as well as the Office of Standards and Compliance Regulations, in terms of Section 18 of the PAMA. We must commend the department for the new and improved Z83 form which came into effect this year, this new system limits those who are doing business with the state from being in the public service.

There is also a need for an e-Enabled system for self-diagnostics and compliance audits through the measurement instruments of the Office of Standards and Compliance. The Organisational Functionality Assessment Tool is being consolidated to measure institutional governance, as well as organizational administration.

With the global digitslization clearly indicating that the public administration is mostly affected by 4IR trends owing to the old and often outdated ways of thinking, work and policies, the Department will be leading digital transformation of the public service.  Some of the key interventions in this regard will include developing the required prescripts to enable and support the digital transformation of the public administration. This will ensure that government is a key economic enabler and player that positively benefits from digitalization.

**Professionalization of the public service**

Improvement in service delivery also requires adherence to the Batho Pele policy and the Public Service Charter, and strict monitoring thereof. In addressing the gaps and weaknesses, the Department will over the MTEF period, institutionalise a number of integrated interventions which include, amongst others, the strengthening of the implementation of the Operations Management Framework and Service Delivery Improvement Plans as well as a revised Programme to strengthen the implementation of the Batho Pele Programme.

Honourable Members, the development and retention of skills should be an apex priority if we want to build an efficient and effective public service, this has been a challenge in our case. There is a need to improve on the monitoring and evaluation capacity to ensure that state institutions are well run and effectively coordinated, they must be managed by professionals who are committed to the goals of the developmental state and are capable of delivering services consistently and reliably in high quality.

Accordingly, the strategic focus of the department for 2021/22 includes, among other things:

* Developing regulations to enable the full implementation of the Public Administration Management Act (PAMA, 2014).
* Reviewing the Public Service Act and related policies, where required, which will be done concurrently with the development of the Single Public Administration Bill.
* Improving the implementation of the Batho Pele principles by ensuring that there are measurable standards in place.
* Fighting corruption by inculcating a culture of accountability, ethical and professional standards of all civil servants, as well as strengthening discipline management within the Public Service.

The implantation of these strategic priorities will improve service delivery, and Parliament oversight can ensure that these priorities are implemented.

**The budget**

Honourable Members, this budget comes against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic in which not only the lives and health of our people is placed at risk but also our economic situation has worsened globally. This has called and created a need for a responsive government which is able to address the various demands for services at all levels of the public service. This budget in our view is appreciative of the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and attempts to respond to that.

As the ANC we are deeply concerned about the economic situation mooted by the realities of Covid-19 in which Statistics South Africa reported that in the second quarter of 2020 about 2.2 million people lost their jobs, the ultimate impact of this is that it will shrink the resources in government and we will have to resort to other alternatives such as budget cuts and borrowing from the capital markets in order to stay afloat and we will struggle maintaining the public service.

It is in that context that we welcome this budget. The Department’s overall budget allocation for 2021/22 is R526.2 million, compared to the adjusted allocation of R468.9 million after the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. We are heartened by the fact that the main cost drivers of the Department are Administration (R237.3 million); followed by Government Service Access and Improvement (R104.8 million) and Negotiations, Labour Relations and Remuneration Management (R99.1 million).

This will significantly increase capacity in the public service and bring about stability, the increase in allocation towards programme 3 which is given R99.1 million, increased from a previous allocation of R69.0 million in June 2020/21. This increase by R30.1 million is a good sign that there’s a commitment to addressing the contradictions in the wage negotiations.

**Wage negotiations**

Honourable members, it is the position of the ANC that government should honour the multi-year agreement with organized labour and then negotiate for any other deal linked to the country’s economic outlook going forward. To manoeuvre circumspectly in this area, Government needs to keep its word regarding the agreement already in place so that organised labour would be flexible in their approach concerning future collective bargaining.

Early Retirement in the Public Service should be decentralised as depicted in the Public Service Act. This will ensure pertinent challenges arising from the applications are addressed by individual departments with understanding of the situations of staff. This will enhance compliance and performance at the local level.

The ANC moves in supports of budget Vote 11 of Public Service and Administration.

I Thank You!