EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR BUDGET VOTE DEBATE

1. The EFF rejects budget vote [] of employment and labour.
2. We can all agree that the renaming of the department was nothing but a useless and meaningless PR exercise.
3. When Mr Cyril Ramaphosa was elected to be President by the National Assembly in February 2018, unemployment was at 27.2%. Today, the unemployment rate has increased to 30.1%.
4. When Mr Cyril Ramaphosa became a President in 2018, the number of unemployed people and people who have given up hope of finding work was 8,6 million. Today, the number of unemployed people and people who have given up finding work has increased to 10 million.
5. And this has nothing to do with COVID-19, these are figures reported well before COVID-19 and restrictions of lockdown.
6. Mr Ramaphosa loved and cherished by captains of industries, has presided over the highest unemployment rate ever in the new democracy.
7. This is after money was wasted in investments and job summits that are nothing more than meet and greet for Mr Ramaphosa and the people who have made him be what he is today – a billionaire who cannot lead the country into industrialization or create jobs.
8. The so-called social partners' agreement to create jobs that came from the Jobs Summit in October 2018 is gimmicks while our people are desperate for jobs.
9. Companies like Adcock Ingram, Anglogold Ashanti, Clientele, Coca Cola, Edcon, First Rand, Lixil, Mondi, Nandos, Nestle, AB InBev, Sasol and Standard Bank are some of the companies that paraded big pledges of investments and job guarantees at the Jobs Summit.
10. But the very same companies were the first to go and start retrenchments. Some like Edcon collapsed because of incompetence, mismanagement and failing to appreciate basic economics logic – if you don’t create jobs and pay decent salaries, people are not going to buy your goods tomorrow. Machines do not buy t-shirts, jeans, jackets or tekkies, it’s people who are employed and paid well who will go to Edgars and buy, not unemployed people.
11. There were no jobs before COVID-19, and there are not going to any jobs during or after COVID-19.
12. The Department of Employment and Labour failed to build the internal capacity of labour inspectors despite our call for the last 6 since here in Parliament. Employers are doing as they please and our people are suffering.
13. Majority of workers who have gone back to work under level 3 are doing so in very difficult conditions.
14. This is not only happening in mines, it is happening in hotels, retails, manufacturing and government buildings.
15. Workers are going to work without PPE and workplace that do not have safety protocols in places. Our people are doing because they are getting infected by COVID-19 at work. After all, there are not enough inspectors.
16. Workers are retrenched without following proper procedures.
17. Workers are not receiving UIF benefits and COVID-19 relief benefits, but in the system, the claim was approved and paid. There are hundreds of workers sitting at home with a way to feed their families but monies were paid out.
18. As the EFF, we have taken matters into our own hands and opened a Labour Desk. Since we took this decisive and practical step, hundreds of cases have landed in our desks and we are trying to resolve as many of these cases as possible.
19. We have to take such a drastic step because we could not continue to turn our people back and say they must go to the government when the government has collapsed.
20. Despite all these challenges, the proposed budget aims to reduce the department’s allocation. To support this budget vote is to support the celebrate the failure by government to protect workers.
21. The EFF rejects the adjusted budget vote 31 of Employment and Labour.