**The ANC has turned South Africa into a Nation in Disaster**

**Issued by Siviwe Gwarube MP – Chief Whip of the Official Opposition**

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Note to Editors: The following SONA Debate Speech was delivered by the Chief Whip of the Official Opposition, Siviwe Gwarube, in Parliament today.

Speaker and the Chairperson of the NCOP,

It would be amiss of me to not express deep disappointment following the events of Thursday night in this Chamber.

We could never justify the disruption of the business of Parliament to the point where the Sargent- at -arms is called to wrestle MPs off the stage.

Equally, and perhaps more crucially, we cannot have presiding officers who fail to keep the House in order -despite being empowered to do so by the rules.

And their failure resulting in armed security forces on the floor of Parliament.

This Chamber is a separate arm of state with its own security personnel who do not report to the executive.

Armed guards are barred from this House unless there is a threat to life.

The case the DA brought before the Constitutional Court, confirms this crucial principle of the separation of powers.

The scenes we saw on Thursday night should never be repeated; that violence and chaos has absolutely no place in a Constitutional democracy.

We cannot allow Parliament to degenerate in that manner.

This is more so when the people of South Africa are looking to their public representatives for solutions to the crisis they face daily.

There has never been a time since the dawn of democracy that our country needed to hear from the President about the issues that are the perpetual albatrosses around their necks.

Instead, the President delivered to us a State of Disaster.

It is the disaster that has come to underscore his term in office;

The disaster that is his cabinet;

And the disaster that is the ANC Caucus of the 6th Parliament.

Speaker, allow me to direct this to the President.

I fear the trappings of power and the cushion of executive office has left us with a head of state that is completely out of touch with the real issues that South Africans face.

Sir, people are faced to make choices that are beyond your grasp:

The choice between:

A meal or a taxi fare;

Umbane okanye ukukhwelisa umntana aye esikolweni;

Ukulinda de kuse xa umntu kumele ayofumana uncedo esibhedlele kuba akukho kwalo ambulance izayo;

Abafazi nabantwana abaninzi baphela bengayi kwakulo police station xa behlukunyeziwe, bedlwenguliwe kuba akukho ncedo lizakuvela.

Imihla nezolo kukho abantu abalala bengatyanga; nokuncinane abanako kuyonakala kuba ukukho mbane iintsuku ziqengqeleka;

Young people are without work. They have no hope. All they have is a life of indignity because of joblessness.

Umbutho we ANC uzifungele ukuba ngohlohl’ esabo.

Umbutho okwaziyo ukuba imali eyayibekelwe ukunceda abantu ngexesha lika bhubhane we COVID19.

Ama- Comrade etshintshiselana, ekuphisana ngokutya imali yabantu.

uPremier Dube- Ncube ebezingomba esifuba apha kodwa abantu baseThekwini badada enyunywini, sithetha nje.

Akukho ziinkonzo eziya abantwini.

Njengomntu omtsha, okhokela kudala noko nisilwa amadabi, ndiye ndizibuze ba nina nonelisekile na yimeko yabantu baseMzantsi Afrika.

Nitsho qho ukuba nanilwelwa inkululeko yesisizwe, kodwa ngokuqinisekileyo seningabacinezeli babantu abamnyama abangathintweni.

Abazali bethu bathemba iingcuka ezombethe ifele legusha ngani.

I have no doubt in my mind the founders of this organisation; who are towering figures in our history books can no longer recognize their party under this current crop of leaders.

You have brought this country to its knees.

You have nailed the coffin; and created a nation in disaster.

Listening to the speakers in this debate, it is no wonder we find ourselves in this state of paralysis.

Minister Gungubele levelled an attack on the best run metro in the country, an accolade that could never be attributed to his party.

Perhaps, if I should give you insight into why the City of Cape Town is the ‘Golden Goose’ as Honourable Manamela termed it:

The DA wrestled this City from the ANC, ran a multi-party coalition, subsequently won with a majority, cleaned out the rot of corruption and began the hard, long process of building a world class city.

As we speak, this is the only metro that spends the largest portion of its budget on the poor;

The only city that has the lowest unemployment rate as against the national average;

And now one of the DA governments that seek to free its citizens from Eskom.

Akutsho mna. This is confirmed by every independent service delivery barometer in the country.

Where we have governed with a majority we are doing the same.

We attempted the same model in the City of Johannesburg, before the cheque-book politics of the ANC kicked into full gear to steal the City.

In Tshwane, we inherited a 16-year legacy of disastrous ANC governance, where the likes of Sputla were using the City as an ATM.

The process of uncovering and cleaning out the rot meant that service delivery suffered and the true state of the City’s financial troubles came to bare.

However, we do not hold ourselves to the same standard as the ANC.

Our standards are higher.

Where we are voted out of Johannesburg because we refuse to hand over the safe keys at the expense of the residents, we have gone back to the opposition benches to hold government to account.

Where service delivery and financial management is not at the standard we expect in Tshwane, we take action against our own.

I can understand why the concept of accountability and transparency is foreign to the ANC.

President Ramaphosa, would rather add another minister to deal with the energy crisis than fire Ministers Mantashe and Gordhan who have dragged us into a state of disaster.

I must say it cruel, even for inkalanzinzi like Minister Mantashe, to hear of his demotion during the SONA like the rest of us. A quick whatapp message could have eased the pain, Mr President.

To add insult to injury, it is reported that the former Mayor of Tshwane who presided over the decay and destruction of the city, Sputla Ramokgopa, is likely to be appointed as this Minister of Electricity.

In the ANC, ineptitude and corruption are rewarded with executive office, judging by the majority of the President’s current cabinet.

If we are to start rescuing South Africa from the ANC’s disastrous years in government, we must start with ensuring that Parliament works.

When Parliament works, South Africa will work.

A working Parliament would have never nominated and elected a Speaker who has a questionable record in government and views Parliament as an extension of the Executive.

A working Parliament would have grabbed the opportunity to self-correct with both hands; following the Zondo Commission Report into state capture.

Instead, under this Speaker, there’s a deliberate delay to strengthen the rules of Parliament; to make sure we never have State Capture again.

A working Parliament would have never shamelessly shielded a sitting President from accountability following the multiple crimes which took place on his Phala Phala farm.

It would have voted to investigate whether or not the President violated the Constitution and his oath office;

Indeed, if ours was a functioning Parliament, we would have long established a portfolio committee that would exercise oversight over the Super Presidency.

To the people at home, whose lives have been plunged into darkness, I urge you to be angry.

Our resilience as a nation should not be taken as license for abuse.

We do not have to tolerate corruption, poor service delivery and the state of disaster we have been shackled with.

Let us take our anger to the polls; and elect a different government.

A government that will bring to life the promise of 1994 – which comes with an equal society, one that offers us all dignity and safety.

One that does not include the disaster that is the African National Congress.

Noko kwanele ngoku.