

The DA is the only party to provide economically viable circumstances for small business

By **Jan de Villiers MP** – DA Shadow Minister of Small Business Development

Thank you, chairperson.

At the beginning of this year, we all sat down and once again listened to President Ramaphosa talk about the importance of accelerating our economic recovery, implementing economic reforms, creating sustainable jobs and driving inclusive growth. The President talks about Small Business Development as an important trigger of economic regeneration, but the persistent budget cuts to the Department of Small Business tells a different tale.

The President talks about the R513 million that has been provided for small business support, but the reality is that of the 14 800 small business owners that applied for business aid, only 1 497 were successful. That's a little over 10% of applicants. Chairperson, this means that only 61% of the funds that were allocated towards helping small business, were actually spent.

So, while the ANC talks about helping small business, they just don't get things done. Small business cannot help grow the economy and create new jobs if government cannot create the climate for them to thrive in. Small business, above all else, need the State to work. They need stable electricity. They need safe neighborhoods. They need an investment friendly economic climate. They need professional government employees who are fit for purpose, qualified and motivated to get the State working and not unqualified cadres sent to loot State coffers.

Chairperson, when the State doesn't get these basic things done, small business struggles to get business done.

It's no coincidence that the expanded unemployment rate now sits at over 42%. It's because while the ANC talks about jobs, they don't get anything done, and when they talk about keeping the lights on, it just keeps on getting darker. When the ANC talks about fighting gender-based violence and keeping South Africans safe, they'd rather focus on writing laws that would take guns out of the hands of law-abiding South Africans and whose last line of defence is owning their own weapons.

Chairperson, while the President talks about the importance of small business development, the Department is not even important enough to have its own Minister, as Minister Ntshaveni is not only Minister of Small Business Development, but also of the Presidency. How important can Small Business Development really be if we don't even have a dedicated Minister? The ANC talks about getting things done, but we all know, they never do. They don't get things done.

Chairperson, can you guess who runs the top five municipalities in South Africa? It's the DA of course, because where we govern, we get things done.

The DA understands that what small business needs to develop, is services that work. In DA-run governments, our small businesses can drive on roads without potholes, depend on streetlights and traffic robots that work, have access to reliable drinking water from taps, receive regular refuse removal and pay rates and taxes to municipalities who don't steal their money, but rather use it develop and

maintain their town or city. The DA understands, that when we get things done, small business can get things done.

And you have to look no further than the DA-run City of Cape Town to see what happens when a government gets things done. Cape Town is home to many successful startups, such as Aerobotics, Sweepsouth and Yoco, and was named the third most ambitious city in the world by the Global Ambition index.

The Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative has supported over 3 000 entrepreneurs over two decades. Just in 2020, Cape Town recorded R1.2 billion worth of venture capital investment into the tech sector, spanning over 46 deals. Cape Town has over 500 operating tech firms that employ more than 40 000 people in the development industry and hosts 38% of the total number of developers in the country.

Together with the Department of Enterprise and Investment, in 2020 the city of Cape Town facilitated R11.27 billion worth of investments, creating more than 7 500 jobs and training over 1 300 people. This is not a coincidence. It's not something in the Cape Town water, but rather how the Cape Town water is run, and the reliable roads, and the reliable municipal services. Because Cape Town proves that the DA understands that for small businesses to get things done, we need to get things done.

In October millions of voters will again be going to voting stations. They have three simple choices. Waste their vote on a governing party who for 27 years have not been able to get things done. Vote for a smaller party who have never done anything or vote for a party who has an established track record of getting things done.

This year, if voters want to live in a municipality that gets things done, they must vote DA, because when we get things done, small business get things done. And when small business gets things done, the economy starts working, and when the economy starts working, people get jobs. Chairperson, on 27 October, if voters want to get things done, they need to vote for the only party that gets things done, the DA.