# Minister Mondli Gungubele: State of the Nation Address Debate

14 Feb 2022

### Address by Mondli Gungubele, MP, Minister in the Presidency; on the occasion of State of the Nation Address Debate; Cape Town, 14 February 2022

The State at the Centre with the People: A Broad Social Compact to Implement South Africa’s Transformation Agenda

Thank you, Madam Speaker, Hon. Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula,
President of the Republic, His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa
His Excellency, Deputy President David Mabuza,
Colleagues in the Executive and Members of Parliament,
Distinguished Guests,
Fellow South Africans,

Introduction

I greet you on this Valentine’s Day, hoping that those amongst us who celebrate this day also carry with them the spirit of love for the beautiful people of this our resilient nation. Let us take inspiration from those who dedicate their lives to a just world and humanity dignity for all and Dr Che Guevara’s assertion that “a true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality.”

Guided by this love for your people, Mr President, when you addressed South Africa on Thursday, you unequivocally spoke to their frustrations, dejections and vulnerability, demonstrating to the nation that you are alive to the underlying factors responsible for their desperation as it emanates from the state of inequality, poverty, unemployment and security. You have captured the imagination of our people as you went on to ignite their hope to heal their aspirations.

Your undertakings to intervene in areas of security infrastructure, cost of doing business, water scarcity, network industries, myriad of youth programs, gender equality etc. including progress reviews demonstrated that you know it is not enough to acknowledge problems when nothing is done about them.

We support the President’s assertion that unprecedented steps must be taken to strengthen and reaffirm ‘our commitment to a Constitution that protects us all as we oblige to its mandate to redress the inequities of the past and ensure the progressive realization of a shared prosperity.

Mr President, your comprehensive and responsive address was a rallying call to all people of South Africa to join hands in building a better life for all. By calling for a new social compact to implement South Africa’s transformation agenda, you are affirming our constitutional directive that national unity in pursuit of human prosperity is a timeless phenomenon. You are alerting our minds to two fundamental revolutionary goals that correcting the ills of the past and building a new South Africa which is inclusive, purely on the basis of humanity are two sides of the same coin which is nation building. I want to submit Mr president that when these two are separated, a dream of a new South Africa is a dream deferred.

The State of the Nation Address affirmed that to secure the pride and conviction of the people behind the historic mission of their country, is derived from the participation of all. Therefore, we appreciate that for all South Africans to unleash their energies for the success of project South Africa, they want a government which is consistent, coherent and predictable because predictability is paramount for long term planning.

Honorable Speaker,

In fostering this new consensus, we seek involvement of compatriots whose interests is a shared prosperity of the people of South Africa from all sectors of society. On 25 January 2022, President Ramaphosa inducted the third National Planning Commission (NPC), which is an independent think-tank that provides advice to government. This body will lead the development of a strategy for post-Covid-19 social and economic recovery; assist in establishing social compacts with various stakeholders and support the realisation of the objectives of the NDP Vision 2030.

Mr President, your State of the Nation Address made a clarion call of implementation to all the revolutionaries of conscience. Your undertakings have created conditions to complete the National Annual Strategic Plan (NASP) and to ensure that the departmental annual performance plans (APPs) are responsive to the priorities you have committed government to achieve. As I am talking to you, teams are at work in this regard.

As the teams incorporate the SONA priorities outlined, our state of readiness for 2022/2023 financial year will sharply focus on high ranking results based on monitoring of progress and engaging departments on remedial actions on a monthly, quarterly and bi-annual periods.

As part of our commitment to taking the people of South Africa along in our journey to reconstruction and recovery post the COVID—19 Pandemic, we will in the next coming weeks, through the Department of Government Communication Information System (GCIS) table a communications and stakeholder engagement plan to engage society broadly through Izimbizo on the new social compact beyond the confines of organised formations. We want all South Africans to have a voice in the direction the country must take as we re-course together towards Vision 2030.

Mr President, you have in the interest of transparency and the restoration of public trust, laid bare the report of the State Capture Report, the SIU Report on PPE and the Expert Panel Report on the July 2021 Civil Unrest which are all pointing to one thing, namely, that the State Capture project had successfully weakened the capability of government and a number of public institutions, including, SARS, DENEL, Eskom, National Prosecuting Authority, State Security Agency, among others. It is no surprise that you call for rebuilding of public institutions in defence of our democratic gains.

You have also sent a devastating message to criminals. In other words, you have laid the platform on the basis of which your leadership should be scrutinized and you have done that without equivocation.

You said that you will table the implementation plan of the State Capture report no later than June 2022. I want to assure you Mr President that your directive will be complied with. Work is currently underway on the volumes of the report which are already at our disposal.

In building the capability of the state, the Presidency is setting up a system for coordinating the implementation of all SIU recommendations across the multiple departments, spheres and agencies responsible for implementation.

This will overcome gaps in accountability and allow us to monitor and detect where there is inadequate progress in implementation.

Honorable speaker, we want Parliament to note that we will be tabling this implementation plan to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) at the end of February.

While this initiative is a work in progress, it does not stop us from immediately pursuing implementation of recommendations the SIU has made in respect of various investigations.

As part of our commitment to revamp our country’s security services, we are in the process of putting together a plan which will through the National Security Cluster Secretariat (NSC) be concluded and tabled before the NSC for adoption.

As per your speech, we are already filling a series of vacancies within the State Security Agency, the NPA Investigating Directorate and Crime Intelligence among others to ensure that the state is adequately capacitated to respond to attempts to derail our democratic gains.

Regarding the so-called concentration of power in the Office of the President, it is our view that interventions of a given time will always determine the re-organisation of the Presidency to assist the President in his leadership of the country at all material times. Honorable members, the time for diagnosis is over, ours is to implement. This is one area where our commitment to build the capacity of the state will be tested. There can be no better warning than those reports. All that is required is for us to demonstrate that we have been warned.

I also wish to add to the President’s gratitude to whistle-blowers and the media for their bravery in exposing state capture, and the commitment and directive by the President to law enforcement agencies to take immediate steps to protect whistle blowers.

The President has assured members of this august parliament that he would engage them in public participation programmes to ensure that the Executive remain accountable to Parliament in its activities.

Honourable Members,

The President spoke at length about the importance of building a capable, ethical and developmental state and the progress that we have made in professionalising the civil service. Linked to this is our continuous campaign to combat and eliminate corruption within the public service.

Building a capable, ethical and developmental state also entails our ability to coordinate across departments and the three spheres of government. Hence our resolve to institutionalise and integrate government planning systems, and other interventions which include the implementation of the Cabinet Cluster System, the District Development Model, Evidence Based Monitoring and Evaluation and the National Annual Performance Plan (NASP), among others.

Fellow South Africans, the Census 2022 that is underway is crucial to ensure better understanding of demographic and development trends to enable evidence-based planning in our country. I call on everyone to welcome the enumerators into their homes and get counted. For the first time we have modernized the process and included a digital system for on-line participation. This is one of the many silver linings to embrace from the difficult times the country is confronting.

Fellow compatriots, the President’s statement outlined the progress we have made together since taking office and the resilience of the nation against Corruption, Covid19, Economic Slump and Unrests.

Whilst the Presidential Stimulus Package continues to cushion vulnerable citizens against hunger and protects companies and job shedding, there are institutions that are making a turnaround such as SARS in restoring the nation’s pride in meritocracy. A lot has been done but much more national solidarity and joint effort is necessary going ahead.

The President has called upon all of us to contribute towards making ours a better society. In this regard, whilst unity is fundamental, without a clear plan to ensure its underlying conditions, it is unity pursued in futility. It is against that background that this country must be enthusiastic about how you have decisively intervened.

Mr President your SONA 2022 has given us umkhombandlela- a hope for unity and renewal.

Inspired by this venue we use today at this joint sitting of Parliament where Nelson Mandela made his first address to the nation on his release from Prison after 27 years, I wish to paraphrase his wise counsel in 2005 when he said -

“When the history of our times is written, we must strive to be remembered as a generation that did not turn its back in a moment of global and national crisis – it must be recorded that we did the right thing.”

I support the State of the Nation Address as presented by the President in this house.

Thank you.