Hon. Speaker,

On Thursday night we saw the President’s Damascene moment, transitioning from Saul to Paul when he finally came to terms with the truth and reality of development, in that government does not create jobs but a creates a conducive environment for business to create jobs. This acknowledgement is the right step in the right direction.

But as is typical of a broad-church organisation, the back-tracking could not have come sooner when speaker after speaker yesterday sought to incoherently back-track on the President’s clear statement.

The non-election contesting elements in the ANC, in the form of COSATU and the SACP are again having a case of déjà vu; they sneeze and we all catch the flu.

These elements derailed GEAR, ASGISA and the NDP; and now they stand ready to derail a fundamental policy shift as announced by the President.

Mr President, this moment in history will define your leadership legacy. Will you stand with the interests of the People and see through your Damascene moment, or will you buckle to the pressure of the free-loaders in the ANC who don’t contest elections.

Mr President, you were elected to lead; therefore, do exactly that: LEAD.

Policy uncertainty is contrary to the conducive environment you speak of.

The dire daily lived conditions of our people require things to be done differently, and decisively, and therefore, Mr President, some urgent action is required:

* Noting that all development is local, empower municipalities through increased budget allocations to meet the demands of development.
* Scrap the burdensome FUEL Levies.
* Stop bailing out failing SOEs, especially where critical reforms have not been effected.
* Reinstate the SCORPIONS to strengthen the fight against corruption.
* Introduce an Internship Transition Management System, to facilitate interns into permanent employment.

The high rate of unemployed South Africans in comparison to the high representation of foreign nationals employed particularly in the in the unskilled occupational level is of serious concern.

In this regard, the IFP has finalised a Bill for introduction to Parliament, which amends the Employment Services Act of 2014 to, amongst others:

* Regulate the recruitment of foreign nationals in certain economic sectors;
* Strengthen the current regulatory framework regarding recruitment of foreign nationals;
* Require employers to first confirm whether there is no suitable South African citizen or permanent resident that can be employed in a position before recruiting a foreign national; and
* Require the Minister of Employment and Labour to set numerical targets for identified sectors on the basis of what would constitute equitable representation of South African citizens and permanent residents.

Martin Luther King Jr reminds us that “the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

The question, therefore, Mr President, is where will you stand during this difficult moment of national crisis: with the Country or the ANC?

Mr President, Country First!

Thank you