



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES, HON S. LUCA, ON THE
OCCASION OF COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

03 -04 September 2019

*CLARIFYING POLITICAL PRIORITIES FOR THE NCOP IN THE 6TH
PARLIAMENT AND THE YEAR AHEAD*

House Chairperson of the NCOP

Chief Whip of the NCOP

Permanent Delegates of the NCOP

As we are gathered here today, we have all taken part in the Election drive with diverse manifestos. We all need a space to survey our journey so far, and to absorb the view. And though we come from diverse starting points, our future destiny is together. As we pause for breath and consult the map, our challenge is to find the common path ahead. And we must start by agreeing on our destination.

Proverbs 29:18 in the Old Testament warns us: Where there is no vision the people perish; And we are further advised by the prophets, in Habakuk 2:2 “Write the vision and make it plain, that they who read it may run...the reckless will lack an assured future.

In our discussions today we must ensure that our actions over the coming Months or years we are going to spend in this Parliament, however well intentioned, will not be reckless, and through adopting a common vision we must do our utmost to assure our peoples future.

In our discussion we must try not to fall into the temptation to ignore the real situation and to play about with imaginary concepts and ideas because it will lead to failure.

Strategy and Tactics of the ANC of 1969 reminds us that “the revolutionary sounding phrase does not always reflect revolutionary policy, and revolutionary sounding policy is not always the spring-board for revolutionary advance.

Indeed, what appears to be militant and revolutionary can often be counter-revolutionary. It is surely a question of whether, in the given concrete situation, the course or policy advocated will aid or impede the prospects of conquest of power”.

Honourable Members

What we do for the next two days should not be informed by the pressure of the need to secure electoral victories. Rather, it must be driven by common desire to ensure the permanent entrenchment of a system of governance founded on the fundamental concepts that, as South Africans, we share a common destiny and that the people shall govern.

We must bear in mind that the National Council of Provinces as a creature of the Constitution, is required to represent provinces to ensure that provincial interests are taken into consideration in the national sphere of government. In the course of representing provinces, the National Council of Provinces must serve as a national forum for public consideration of issues affecting provinces.

What needs to be done to represent Provinces effectively?

- Our Select Committees must derive their areas of focus from the broad areas determined by the NCOP. The Select Committees are responsible for ensuring that the Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans and budgets are in line with the priorities outlined during the State of the Nation Address and subsequent policy debates of government departments.
- House Chair Committee Hon Nyambi, should try and facilitate twice per year briefing workshops with Financial and Fiscal Commission and Parliamentary Budget office to ensure that Chairpersons of Committees are equipped to oversee the budget and to ensure that provincial and municipal interests are properly accommodated in the budget and that the division is equitable.

To do this the house will have to review past divisions of revenue, consider recommendations of the Financial and Fiscal Commission and draw on the experience and expertise of the Budget Office. This therefore calls for the Budget Office to be properly staffed.

- Gender-based violence (GBV) is a profound and widespread problem in South Africa, impacting on almost every aspect of life. GBV (which disproportionately affects women and girls) is systemic, and deeply entrenched in institutions, cultures and traditions in South Africa.

South Africa is a signatory to a number of international treaties to protect women's rights, and has a strong legislative framework in place which includes the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) (1998), the Sexual Offences Act (2007) and the Prevention and Combatting of

Trafficking in Human Persons (2013) Act. Despite the treaties, policies and legislative instruments in place, GBV has cumulatively and significantly escalated over the years.

Mounting concerns relating to the alarming levels of GBV in South Africa, culminated in the hosting of the 2018 National GBV and femicide Summit, with the President of the Republic in attendance, alongside civil society formations and organizations. The summit which was held in November 2018, took place in response to marches across the country under the banner of #Total Shutdown.

Since the GBV summit took place in 2018, Parliament has not yet responded to the resolutions adopted and the key issues raised at the summit. While the summit created a national platform to deliberate on the severity and devastating impact of GBV on the lives of women and girls in South Africa, various civil society formations and faith based organizations continue to call on the state to develop a comprehensive response programme to address the scourge of GBV.

In order to strengthen response programmes, the legislative sector, as a key component of the state machinery has a significant role to play in aligning its oversight process across all spheres and localities, in a manner that signifies decisive action by the legislative sector to end GBV. To achieve this objective, the effective functioning of the National Gender Machinery will play a significant enabling role, in the advance to reduce the pervasive levels of GBV across provinces and localities. We call our Committees to plan around this issue.

- A discussion must be held on Programming of the business of the House. We must determine the frequency with which the house may have its seating. Is it not time to implement 60/ 40 rule. Where we prioritize 60 % doing Oversight and 40 % having Plenaries?

In Conclusion

How do we live up to the imperative of cooperative governance across narrow party lines? Are we capable of crossing our parochial boundaries and thus agree on the issue which would address the needs of our country and people and would constitute the substance of the matters which the institutions of co-operative governance would address? During the State of the Nation Address the President outlined the following government priorities:

- Economic transformation and job creation
- Education, skills and health
- Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services
- Spatial integration, human settlements and local government
- Social cohesion and safe communities
- A capable, ethical and developmental state and
- A better Africa and the World

It is upon us to ensure that we develop practical strategic plans to assist our President achieve the outlined priorities.

In clarifying our political priorities for the NCOP in the 6th Parliament and the year ahead, I urge you to prioritize Oversight and Accountability.

Thank you

