



FROM LEFT: Mr Kgalema Motlanthe President of South Africa, Ms Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde, Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Mzinwa Mahlangu, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, Deputy President and Ms Peggy Hollander, Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces

Excerpts from President Kgalema Motlanthe's speech

"Our democracy is healthy. It is steadily growing stronger, underpinned by a Constitution hardly equalled in the world.

"Indeed, the robustness of our political engagement during this season of electoral contest – which we all agree should be dignified and peaceful – is the surest guarantee of the continued survival and deepening of our democracy.

"It is South Africa's people who have ensured its progress; and it is they who shall secure our democracy in the years to come.

"At the level of the national and provincial legislatures, indications are that the nation will this year surpass the 32% women representation level achieved in 2004 and hopefully, even

the 40% achieved in the 2006 local government elections."

"We hope that all political parties will, as they finalise their electoral lists, make their contribution to this noble endeavour!"

"As part of the contribution to the income of the poor, the target for 1-million work opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programme was attained in 2008, a year earlier than envisaged in the 2004 electoral mandate."

"...we are all too aware that, because we are strongly integrated into the world economy, demand for our exports has declined; access to finance and inflows of capital have turned for the worse; lower demand has precipitated a scaling down

of production; the creation of jobs is negatively affected and in some sectors retrenchment has become a reality."

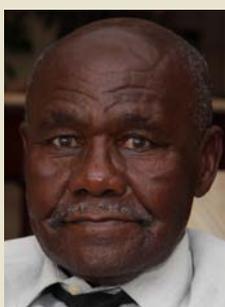
In this regard, Honourable Members, I am happy to report that in the interactions between The Presidency and leaders of various social partners, we agreed jointly to devise interventions that would minimise the impact of this crisis on our society. The task team dealing with these matters is still hard at work..."



Ms Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde, Speaker of the National Assembly and the Yabonga Group

Doing it **together**

South Africans who have made outstanding contributions to socio-economic developments through working with communities were invited guests at the 2009 State of the Nation Address. We talked to some of them.



Reverend Benjamin Mzamo of Gauteng

I must say that I am overwhelmed to be invited to attend an occasion such as the State of the Nation Address. I

have never imagined myself being part of the joint sitting of the democratic Parliament. It's a historic day. There are many selfless people in Gauteng who made and continue to make remarkable contributions in building the South African nation, so to be chosen to represent them at the 2009 State of the Nation Address is unbelievable and can't be expressed in words. I am very delighted

This day deepens my commitment to the people beyond Gauteng's boundaries. I did not realise that what I have been doing for the people has been recognised to that extent. Certainly I am going to do more.



Mr Godfrey Motshwane (73) of North West

I am very excited to be in the national Parliament and sit among great leaders of South Africa and

dignitaries from other countries. It is a great day for me and the people I am representing here today. The day means that I should mobilize others to be part of the community and make our lives together, and fight crime together.

I feel humbled to be invited to be here at the State of the Nation Address I am going to continue to be part of the community and make our lives together, better lives



Mrs Esther Mabuza - Mpumalanga

I am very excited to be in Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. I feel that I am part of the South African nation.

It commits me to doing more for my country. For the first time I had an opportunity to hear the president addressing the nation, not listening to the radio. I am clear about the achievements of our government and the challenges that still lie ahead, and I am going to increase my contributions in pushing back the frontiers of poverty.



Mr Ralegae 'Coosta' Kitsa of Free State

I have been looking forward to this day because I knew that one day I would mingle with great leaders in this

Parliament, because this is a democratic people's Parliament. I am happy that that dream has come true. Being part of very

important people who are here today, raises my spirit. I am going out to my province and will ensure that I tell others to contribute more than I have done, so that they too get the opportunity to attend the next State of the Nation Address or other important national events.

It has convinced me to remain in the revolution!



Jameson Njnesane from Musina, Limpopo.

I am here to represent my province and the city of Musina. I am very passionate about farming and have

been in this field since 1952. I am delighted that my farming work has been recognised and wish that my colleagues in farming, especially the developing farmers, could also have this kind of opportunity.

I am more interested in the State of the Nation from the agricultural point of view. So, I think that Parliament should strengthen its ties with developing farmers, and particularly those in deep rural communities.

Eminent South Africans at Parliament today were (FROM LEFT) Ms. Magretha Macdonald, Ms. Sarah Coangae, Mr Godfrey Motshwane, Ms Ester Mabuza, Mr Ntuseneni Njnesana, Dr Farooq Meer, Rev. Benjamin Mzamo, Mr Kitsa Ralegae, Ms Nondumiso Mantanga



Live and in person at Parliament



Competition winners: BACK: Tshepang Lesole, Ayanda Sono, Precious Marase, Bulelwa Mfinyezi, Sphelele Dlamini
MIDDLE: Jawe Keanole, Lesego Kantani FRONT: Calvin Ratladi, Mpho James Madiba

The winners of the National schools competition "Why I want to visit Parliament" were delighted to attend the State of the Nation Address:

Calvin Ratladi (18), Zicheus Malaza Secondary School, Mpumalanga

"I was looking forward to hearing about the progress that has been made in the past five years. I am very happy that I can experience being in Parliament at this time. It was my first time in Cape Town and it was a great pleasure that they considered me for this.

"As disabled persons we are usually degraded and opportunities like this are not given to us. But I am happy."

Mpho Madiba (17), Mmadikana Secondary School, Limpopo

"I am happy I finally got to see the President and people that I usually get to see only on television.

"This is the first competition that I have won, I thought that I had bad luck. I am very happy and I using this opportunity to learn as much as I possibly can."

Precious Marase (16), Madiba Comprehensive School, Gauteng

"I feel honoured and I am very proud. I'm so inspired, this was a good opportunity for me. I hope what the President said will change people's mindset about crime and that things that are currently happening in the country will be corrected.

"I wish I was given an opportunity to speak so that I can raise my concerns

about education, correctional services and health, as they affect many people."

Lesego Kantani (17), Kimberley Girls High, Northern Cape

"Being here was an honour and great privilege. I was very excited about this day and finally getting to see people that I usually see on TV.

"I am happy that I got this opportunity to see this ceremony live, I did not only see it happen, I was part of it. I missed previous events as this ceremony is usually held while I am at school."

Bulelwa Mfinyezi (24), Pakamani Senior Secondary School, Ngcobo

"I was very happy to finally get an opportunity to see President Kgalema Motlanthe. I knew of him but I would not point him out if asked to, the only person I can point out is Jacob Zuma. I am a little disappointed though as I was hoping to be given a chance to recite a poem for him before he addressed the masses."

Tshepang Lesole (17), St Josephs Christian Brothers College, Free State

"From watching the media and the hype created about this event, I wanted to get here sooner.

"To me this day meant getting an opportunity to see the Members of Parliament and to experience being in their midst. I wanted to experience different elements of Parliament."

Sphelele Dlamini (16), Umlazi Comprehensive Technical College, KwaZulu-Natal

"I am happy and most honoured to have

been part of people ruling our land. I wish they can do more to develop townships and improve people's lives. I was hoping to get a chance to speak to people about the plight of school children. What I would have told them has to do with the improvement of security at schools. Pupils get stabbed at school and this happens regularly in township schools. I think the solution to this would be to bring police in to provide safety."

Ayanda Sono (17), Deaconhill High School, Western Cape

"I am happy I was part of this day as I was looking forward to seeing the President and just being inside Parliament.

"I wish we were also given an opportunity to speak. Things I would have spoken about include asking for more help for people working in community organisations. For instance, we have a community group in Khayelitsha which does drama, dance, music and community work but we have no place to do our rehearsals or any equipment."

Jawe Keanole, 17, Ramotshere High School, North West

"I am very proud that I was part of the proceedings. I was looking forward to hearing what the president had to say about education, health, crime and unemployment.

"Another issue that is important to me is equality for all, as I believe women are still getting a raw deal. We need to talk more about stopping gender discrimination."

'Honoured to be your Guard, Sir!'

The Junior Guard of Honour looked spick and span as they stood to attention for President Motlanthe. We got in a quick word with four of them...



Saabirah Achmat (12), Grade 7, St Paul's Primary School

"I feel very honoured to have been part of the Junior Guard of Honour, because it was once in a

life-time opportunity. I was also excited because I have never been to Parliament before, so it was an opportunity to see Parliament, and experience first hand

what it's all about. I also saw face-to-face the President of the country for the first time.

"Before coming to Parliament, I went to the Library and read about Parliament. Parliament makes all the rules that rule our country."



Asisipho Skweyiya (18), Grade 12, The Settlers High School

"It's a privilege to most of us be chosen as the Junior Guards because we

never thought we would get the chance to personally see the President, as well as the people in Parliament. This opportunity will most probably never come again.

"Lately there has been a lot of negativity about the country, and the State of the Nation was an opportunity for the President to tell us that all is well, and

also tell us about our standards of living."



Siphelo Ndabeni (13), Grade 7, Masiphumelele Primary School

"This was my first time in Parliament. The State of the Nation is where the President

deals with people's concerns. It was very exhilarating to see the President, telling us how the country has done in the past years."



Lucia Gwele (12), Grade 7, Kuyasa Primary School

"I never ever dreamt that I would get this opportunity. I wish that my parents could see me here, because

they would be very excited because they only get to see Parliament on television."

Junior Guard of Honour





Ms Madlala-Routledge, Nozizwe Charlotte, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly



Ms Hollander, Peggy Maud, Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces

All eyes on Parliament

Hon Ms Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, MP

DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The State of the Nation Address is a very important annual event when we have the whole nation focusing on this institution. We are actually very honoured that there has been so much interest shown by a cross-section of our population.

We are aware that all the people that came here today were actually keen to hear what the president was going to say and thereafter evaluate for themselves. As parliament we are just so pleased that it is all happening at our institution.

We have also been highly encouraged by the level of participation and involvement of the general public in today's event. This shows that our democracy has indeed deepened in line with Parliament's theme for this year.

This is also a culmination of weeks of earnest preparation that was jointly overseen by the Office of the Secretary together with Presiding Officers of Parliament. It is indeed heartwarming to see all

the hard work bearing such fruit as we have seen today.

While fun was a significant element of today's programme, we have not lost sight of the fact that this is an important reminder to us as elected representatives that people are actually expecting Parliament to deliver on the promise of a better life for all.

Our message to all our guests today and the rest of the South African public is that they should continue to support our Parliament and to make our democracy a living democracy, that exists for the sole purpose of improving the lives of the people.

Hon Ms Peggy Hollander, MP

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES,

This is one of the most important days in the history of South Africa and of Parliament and I must say that staff and the Presiding Officers have worked very closely with each other, and very hard, to make this day a big success.

Luckily the State President also delivered a generally very good message.

For me the best part of the day, which is undoubtedly my favourite, was when I accompanied the President and esteemed guests inside Parliament.

We wish every one of our guests today "all of the best".

Ms Mbete, Baleka, Deputy President and Ms Madlala-Routledge, Nozizwe Charlotte, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly



Message from National Assembly a

We welcome all of our guests to this highly significant occasion of the 2009 State of the Nation Address.

This year's address is significant for us in the following ways:

- It comes during the last few days of the term of our country's third Parliament
- It is also one of the two State of the Nation Addresses to be hosted by Parliament in the same year. The other one is expected to be delivered by a new President following the elections.

For me personally, it is the first State of the Nation address in my term as Speaker of this prestigious institution. It is also President Motlanthe's first experience as leader of the executive.

Therefore, I reflect on the work of this current term of Parliament with both a sense of pride as well as with the wisdom of hindsight. Amongst the highly successful programmes undertaken by Parliament in the last five years, we can proudly mention:

- The successful implementation of a new travel system for Members of Parliament and their dependants [2005-2006]
- The establishment of a Parliamentary Group on International Relations in 2006
- Parliament's participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism process, starting in 2006
- The review of the Chapter 9 and associated institutions by an ad hoc committee of the National Assembly [2006-2007]
- The setting up of Parliamentary Democracy Offices in three provinces [2008]
- The adoption of a new Governance Model for Parliament [2007]
- Graduation of Members from various learning opportunities, including the passing of a French language course by two members of Parliament (Ms Joan Fubbs and Ms Carol Johnson)
- Hosting sectoral parliaments (People's Assembly, Women's Parliament and

President Kgalema Motlanthe flanked by the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mr Mninwa Mahlangu (Left) and the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde (Right).



- Youth Parliament) annually
- The Ten Year Review Publication celebrating Parliament's achievements and challenges since 1994 which was launched in 2007 (Institutional memory)
- Hosting the 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in April 2008
- Parliament's ongoing participation in international parliamentary structures (including the Pan-African Parliament and the SADC-PF)
- The production of a Report on the Legislative Process in Parliament by the Joint Task Team on the Legislative Process in Parliament (for consideration by the Fourth Parliament) [2008]
- The adoption by the Joint Rules Committee of the Oversight and Accountability Model produced by the Task Team on Oversight and Accountability [2008]
- The adoption by both Houses of rules for the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence [2008]
- The processing of legislation (three bills) to end floor-crossing [2008]
- The processing of the Financial Administration of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Bill and the Financial Management of Parliament Bill [2008], and
- The establishment of the Multiparty Women's Caucus [2008].

It was also during this third Parliament that we were able to remove the symbols of the past as we successfully unveiled a new logo, and therefore, a new identity for Parliament.

y and National Council of Provinces



The State of the Nation Address is an important occasion for the nation of South Africa.

The President has indicated what his government has been able to achieve over the past five years, and so we also reflect on the accomplishments of the current third Parliament, which will soon come to an end.

Our theme for this year is Parliament Entrenching People-Centred Democracy in Achieving Development Goals.

In other words, just as the President has reported on the work of the executive, Parliament has been engaged during the past five years in its own task of overseeing the work of the executive.

So we are quite aware while we address our theme that we want Members of Parliament to be even more active and more vigilant in the future, in the joint quest to improve the lives of all, even the poorest of the poor: the very people who elected us to be their voice in Parliament.

As we make laws, approved budgets and oversee programmes and policies, we will make sure these improve the lives of South Africans, especially the poor. That is critical for Parliament.

Another key issue for us is that the State of the Nation Address becomes a presentation not only to the people, but also by the people. Hence you have seen a lot of participation by

ordinary citizens in this event, which shows that we are serious about the issue of public participation in the programmes and processes of Parliament.

You have seen both the junior and civil guard of honour as a testimony to public participation. This year we had a Mooki, a Setswana Imbongi (Praise singer), the army band and other cultural performers as well as learners from schools across our land, all making important contributions to the programme. The involvement of the selected group of eminent people is another example of how we encourage members of the public to take part in the activities of Parliament.

In our midst on this important day are the Chapter Nine institutions, to further add weight to the occasion.

The inclusion of all these categories of people in our society tells us that becoming a Member of Parliament should not be the only way people can participate in matters that shape their country.

My message is that the government of South Africa, the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and the judiciary with all its institutions, have all done sterling work in the past 15 years.

We have seen enormous progress which has been covered by all these stakeholders. I have not heard of any other developing country which has moved so fast in terms of service delivery, institution building, infrastructural development and economic growth in merely 14 years.

I want to assure the people of South Africa that we are addressing those areas where we admit that we are running behind. I want to encourage the people of South Africa to keep supporting these initiatives in order for us to become even stronger in the future.



Produced by the Parliamentary Communication Services
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