

# IN SESSION



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

"YOUR SEAT IN PARLIAMENT"

Vol. 9 ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2009



## Heritage Month

South Africa looks back, and ahead

FEATURE

## NCOP's

Provincial week

**SPECIAL REPORT:** Parliament Library in SA heritage



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Black Rod** of National Council of Provinces



## Vision Statement

To build an effective people's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of the people and that is driven by the ideal of realising a better quality of life for all the people of South Africa.

## Mission Statement

As the freely elected representatives of the people of South Africa, our Mission is to represent, and to act as a voice of the people, in fulfilling our Constitutional functions of passing laws and overseeing executive action.

## Strategic Objectives

1. Increasing oversight
2. Increasing public participation
3. Building an efficient, effective institution

**Mace** of National Assembly



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*Our cover, courtesy of GCIS:* Tsonga dance at Limpopo Heritage Day celebrations (more pictures, pages 16,17).



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**OUR IDEALS****VISION**

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**MISSION**

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**VALUES**

Our values guide the management of Parliament. Our values are formed by that which we treasure and hold dear. It forms the foundation that will give rise to policies, which provide guidance in the implementation of everyday services and projects. The values of Parliament are derived from the role that Parliament plays in the context of our democracy. Therefore our values are formed by the people of South Africa, the Constitution, our cooperation with other arms of government, and our will to act with professionalism and good institutional governance.

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- Observe debates from the public galleries in the National Assembly or National Council of Provinces
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**crossword puzzle  
and sudoku  
Solutions for August page 31**

# editor's note

Parliament consists of the National Assembly (NA) which represents the people, and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), which represents the interests of provinces at the nation level and has a responsibility to promote co-operative government. Both Houses participate in the legislative process as set out in the Constitution.

The two Houses have an obligation of overseeing executive action. They have a further obligation of providing a national forum for public consideration of issues. The NCOP has a specific role of providing a national forum for the public consideration of issues affecting provinces, and ensuring that provincial interests are taken into account, when national policies and laws are drafted. It is in this role that the NCOP embarked on week-long provincial visits to all nine provinces from 7 to 11 September. The NCOP Provincial Week involved all provincial delegates returning to their provinces, under the leadership of Provincial Whips. The annual Provincial Week Programme is being refined as a tool for strengthening provincial representation in the NCOP, and in this issue the Chief Whip of the NCOP, Ms Nosipho Ntwanambi, outlines the programme for us.

Skills shortages, boundary disputes and inadequate revenue to deal with growing populations in urban areas are some of the major contributors to poor service delivery by municipalities. This has emerged in the National Assembly during a parliamentary debate on the state of municipal governance. It is also an area of responsibility and interest for the NCOP, and we canvass the views of the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Cooperative Governance, Mr Matome Mokgobi.

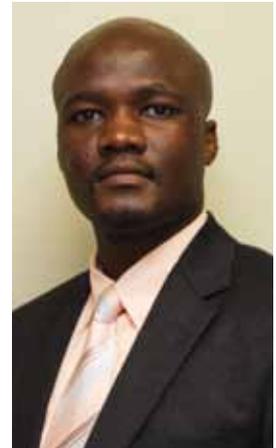
In our guest column the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA), Mr Themba Godi, talks about the 11th Annual Conference Association of Public Accounts Committees of South Africa (APAC). For our Interview, we speak to the NCOP House Chairperson: Committees, Ms Nosilivere Magadla, on her new role and the programme of action for NCOP Committees.

The focus of this month's issue is heritage. September is Heritage Month, when we as South Africans celebrate our heritage. The country has diverse and vibrant cultures, rich in history and tradition. In 1999, legislation was promulgated to protect this heritage. Through the Heritage Resources Act, South Africa aims to enable and encourage communities to nurture and preserve our legacy and bequeath it to future generations. To get a perspective on the progress so far, Heritage debates were held in the two Houses, and we were there.

Parliament has a rich history, waiting to be narrated. Both good and bad, our political heritage is embedded in Parliament. A tour of Parliament takes one through this political heritage and it vividly illustrates how far we have come, and where we are headed. We learn from the organisers and tour guides of the Visitors to Parliament Programme that an electronic tour of Parliament is in the pipeline. Parliament's buildings and site are also rich in history and political heritage. The very site upon which Parliament and its adjacent buildings are situated marked the genesis of colonialism, and it has served as the seat of conquest in Southern Africa. It is interesting to see how these buildings, including Parliament, have been transformed into our beacon of hope and democracy.

The Parliamentary Millennium Project (PMP) launched the second "Amazwi Abesifazane" (*Voices of Women*) national quilting campaign. The launch included screening of a documentary called "Sivelaphi Siyaphi" (*Where we come from, where we are going*), produced in partnership with the Eastern Cape Legislature. Women from the province recount their journey to the Union Buildings during the 1956 Women's March, while young women talk of the modern day struggle. Enjoy the read.

**Momelezi Kula**  
editor





Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Max Sisulu

## MESSAGE FROM THE national assembly



### Home straight looms for 4th Parliament

The fourth Parliament has entered the last part of its first Session, which ends in December 2009. The first part of the year was basically about laying the foundation of the fourth Parliament through, amongst other things, setting up systems and appointing personnel to a number of positions in order to carry forward Parliament's constitutional mandate. Some of the highlights of the first term were swearing in the new Members of Parliament (MPs), President Jacob Zuma's first State of the Nation Address, the Budget Vote of the President (Vote 1), Parliament's Budget Vote (Vote 2), and the passing of the Appropriation Bill.

I would like to examine some of the operational aspects of Parliament, including the allocation of responsibilities to Presiding Officers, budget matters and international trips. The allocation of duties and responsibilities to the Presiding Officers within the National Assembly has been concluded. A review of certain past practices was conducted to create a seamless administration, by trying to close the gap between the administrative and political components of the institution.

To the duties assigned to the Deputy Speaker, in terms of relevant legislation and Rules, have been added some additional responsibilities, namely: State Institutions Supporting Constitutional Democracy; Members Facilities and Training; Implementation of Parliament's language policy; Institutional Human Resources; the medical aid scheme PARMED; and responsibility for the Parliamentary villages. Others may follow as the need arises.

To enhance **oversight**, we have also made changes to the line function of the Portfolio Committees. On budget matters, I was joined by the House Chairpersons in delivering the 2009/2010 National Assembly budget to the plenary. This was the occasion to air, in the correct context, the peculiar challenges faced by Parliament in carrying out its oversight mandate.

While our total budget constitutes less than 1% of the annual national budget, Parliament is expected to cover a great deal of ground in ensuring that the government effectively and efficiently delivers services to the nation. By comparison, the allocations to national departments range from 0.3% to 48.4% of the national budget. If Parliament is to succeed in its mission this obviously calls for a review of the budget processes and allocation. In an effort to fast-track government service delivery, President Zuma has created certain Ministries, and funding had to be secured for the additional Portfolio Committees that



## “We are on the dividing line that sets the 4<sup>th</sup> Parliament apart from its predecessors”

correspond to those Ministries. An Appropriation Bill is being put in place to allow for internal budget readjustments, and this will help secure more funding for the needs of Parliament.

A few international trips were undertaken as part of the core functions of Parliament. In June, a delegation of MPs attended the 25th Plenary Assembly of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) in Swakopmund, Namibia. The main objective of this gathering was to deliberate on the SADC-PF Budget for 2009/10, the appointment of a new Secretary-General for the body, and the role of (regional) Parliaments in addressing the current global economic crisis.

I attended the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Third World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, in Geneva, Switzerland. The purpose of the meeting was, among others, to prepare for the 2010 Third World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and finalise the date, venue and agenda. A second preparatory meeting will take place from 16 to 17 November 2009, at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The final leg of the year will focus on substantive issues facing the fourth Parliament, including legacy issues inherited from the third Parliament, eg the report of the ad hoc Committee on the Review of Chapter 9 and Associated Institutions, the report of the Independent Panel Assessment of Parliament and the new Oversight Model. Through this substantive work the fourth Parliament will set its own agenda, for which it must take responsibility. In effect, we are on the dividing line that makes this fourth Parliament distinct from its predecessors.

The second term was also marked by August, Women’s Month, during which we recalled the bravery of thousands of the nation’s gallant heroines against colonial and apartheid tyrannies. Now, we must ensure that our work and programmes in Parliament are relevant to the continuation of those struggles, which are far from over.



**Max Sisulu**

SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



SA athlete Ms Caster Semenya, flanked by President Jacob Zuma

## Legislative amendments, please

September 4

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprise, Ms Vytjie Mentor, has submitted a petition to Athletics South Africa (ASA) to demand compensation from the International Athletics Association Federation (IAAF), on behalf of South African 800m athlete, Ms Caster Semenya. Ms Semenya was subjected to "suffering and humiliation", said Ms Mentor. She submitted two Private Members' legislative proposals to amend the Commission on Gender Equality Act of 1996 and the Human Rights Commission Act of 1994. The proposals follow "abuse meted out by the IAAF, to the South African athlete" during the world championships in Germany in August. The IAAF subjected Ms Semenya to gender tests. The proposed amendments are aimed at empowering the Commission on Gender Equality and the Human Rights Commission to champion the gender and human rights of all South Africans, whether they are at home or abroad.

## Wanted: Strategy for skills

September 16

*The Chairperson of Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training, Mr Marius Fransman, has called on Higher Education Minister Dr Blade Nzimande to develop a long-term*

# parliament in-brief

## A selection of online news

*strategy to help young South Africans acquire employable skills. Dr Nzimande will return in November to table a draft policy statement on his vision for the next five years. He will then present the policy document to the Portfolio Committee and tackle a public awareness campaign.*

*"The Committee has raised various concerns about fragmented skills training in our country. Young people do not know where to go for skills-training opportunities and need more information. About 2.5 million young people are unemployed, and their lack of relevant skills effectively leaves them marooned," said Mr Fransman.*

*From November, the Department of Education splits into Basic Education, and Higher Education and Training, and the respective Ministers become legally responsible for them. Dr Nzimande said there is a high responsibility on the universities as public institutions to account publicly for their policies. Perceptions must also change to allow for a bigger role for Further Education and Training Colleges in the post-school system.*

## Hail to Homeless World Cup Team

September 16

South Africa's Homeless World Cup Team arrived in Parliament in style. Waving the City of Milan Cup, the team's first ever trophy,

they drove down Plein Street in a stretch limousine to the cheers of fans. The Homeless World Cup Team met Parliament's Presiding Officers before attending a sitting of the National Assembly.

## Committee wants answers on Houses

September 9

*Parliament's Standing Committee on Public Accounts was shocked to learn that defects in the houses built for the Western Cape N2 Gateway Housing Project had not been fixed, as reported by the Department of Human Settlements. The Committee discovered this during its visit to Langa Township, Cape Town, which was undertaken to check if the defects reported by the Auditor-General had indeed been attended to. The list included cracked walls and floors, peeling paint, doors that were not fitted properly, loose fittings, uncovered drain pipes and blocked drains.*

*Earlier, the Department of Human Settlements indicated that the defects identified by the Auditor General had in fact been fixed. SCOPA members found this to be inaccurate, because the defects had not been attended to: "What we've been told by the officials during the meeting has not happened, the Committee has been misinformed," said Committee Chairperson Mr Themba Godi. The Committee will finalise its report and recommendations and submit it to the Speaker of the National Assembly.*



Themba Godi on vital oversight conference

# guest column

## Riding a tiger

### Global economic crisis in spotlight

The conference of the Association of Public Accounts Committees (APAC) in Cape Town has been followed with keen interest. The conference, from 28 to 30 September, took place amid a major global financial crisis that is crippling the world economy. The crisis, which began when the US housing bubble popped in late 2007, has affected every country, including South Africa. People are losing jobs and houses, and government revenue is shrinking.

Because of the severity of the crisis, people look to their governments to make ends meet. Even the private sector can no longer fly solo: governments are spending huge amounts of money trying to keep companies afloat, and to preserve jobs. Although governments are helping citizens and companies alike, it does not follow that they have the independent means to do so. They are also experiencing a sharp decline in revenue and economic growth. This situation calls for everyone to use resources wisely.

Residents of some South African municipalities have been protesting against poor service delivery. Along with the protests, allegations of corruption and financial mismanagement have been levelled at public officials. A recent report by the Auditor General pinned government officials who own or have stakes in companies that do business with the departments they work for, a situation that has been roundly criticised. Many South Africans were keen to hear what

the APAC conference could say about these issues.

The Association, which comprises all the provincial Public Accounts Committees and Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, came to being in 1997. It is based on the Canadian and Australian models. The Public Accounts Committees ensure that public sector institutions account for any failures to remain within their budget limits, that they spend according to the purposes determined by government, legislatures and Parliament, and that they are held accountable if they do not comply with relevant laws and regulations.

The aim of this conference was to raise awareness among stakeholders of the importance of effective oversight, to facilitate an exchange of information and "best practices" and to discuss issues of mutual concern. In the light of the above, the organisers of the conference selected an apt theme this year: *Parliament as a key institution in monitoring service delivery for all citizens through Public Accounts Committees*. Under this theme, conference discussions centred on:

- Measures to improve public sector governance
- Successful oversight, through effective follow up
- Improved service delivery, through increased performance and value for money
- The need for Public Accounts Committees at Municipalities.

APAC also reviewed the past year and assessed the implementation of resolutions taken during last year's conference in Gauteng. At that conference, APAC resolved, among other things, to develop a framework that would help with the formation of Municipal Public Accounts Committees, to ensure that the Public Accounts Committees should be in a position to investigate any matter within their mandate and to encourage co-operation between Public Accounts Committees and other committees. It also resolved to undertake the training of members of Public Accounts Committees. In taking forward some of these resolutions to the National Parliament, the Chairpersons of Public Accounts Committees, Portfolio and Select committees recently had a discussion with the Auditor General's office on how Committees could sharpen their oversight of government.

Traditionally, audit reports have been used mainly by Public Accounts Committees, but the aim of the discussion with the Auditor General was to encourage other Committees to tap into these reports more regularly, in order to achieve closer scrutiny of government programmes. The meeting was also attended by Committee Whips, National Council of Provinces Whips, House Chairpersons and political Whips. As with previous conferences, it was hoped that this year's conference would come up to the expectations of the South African public, in scrutinizing issues of oversight and service delivery. 🌟

**Themba Godi is the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

# Vision 2009

## Service Delivery

Provinces, local bodies to the fore

Reports by Jackie Adriaans, Sakhile Mokoena, Kanyisa Ndyondya and staff



CRACKING THE WHIP: NCOP Chief Whip Ms Nosipho Ntwanambi

**T**he National Council of Provinces (NCOP) has placed service delivery in the centre of its Provincial Week, and linked it directly to the State of the Nation Address by President Jacob Zuma. Vision 2009, which acknowledges that provinces and municipalities are at the core of service delivery in South Africa, has helped to revitalise Provincial Week in September.

Permanent delegates from each province engaged with structures within the nine provinces to assess the progress of government service delivery. One of the means employed by the NCOP to guide its oversight exercise was the theme “Working together to ensure the delivery of quality services to communities”.

The Chief Whip of the NCOP, Ms Nosipho Ntwanambi, who took charge of the programme, said it was part of the NCOP’s mandate to ensure that it worked in collaboration with the two spheres of government, namely provincial and local government: “This is the way to ensure that issues at those levels are properly understood and raised by the NCOP in Parliament and in turn brought to government’s attention,” she said.

Provincial Week enables delegates to interact with the provinces and report back on their activities in the NCOP, in order to renew their mandates on issues that must be placed on the national agenda. There was more “buy-in” from

the provinces after a conscious effort by the NCOP to consult more closely with their provincial counterparts and put together an agreed programme for the Provincial Week. Provinces dispatched their provincial Standing Committees and Chairpersons to accompany the NCOP delegations. During the visit NCOP delegates interacted with Provincial Legislatures, municipalities and stakeholders such as the South African Local Government Association, on how the three spheres of government could work together to deliver quality services to all.

To get to grips with challenges around service delivery, delegates conducted on-site visits for first-hand information. Ms Ntwanambi explained that it was a joint decision to visit particular areas within provinces. The Western Cape delegation, of which she was part, focused its attention on the Southern Cape and West Coast regions: “Knysna, which falls within the Southern Cape, is the centre of the region, which is why it was chosen,” she said. The delegation visited the Bitou and George Municipalities as well as the Eden District Municipality of Plettenberg Bay. Issues such as local economic development, fishing, farming, housing and healthcare came under the spotlight in Saldanha Bay and Ebenaesar, on the West Coast.

Ms Ntwanambi said there were other municipalities in the same region that the NCOP would like to visit, including Oudtshoorn and those in the Boland

and Overberg region. As part of its engagement with the province, NCOP delegates met with leaders of the Western Cape government, including the Premier, Members of the Executive Council and government officials. Premier Helen Zille briefed delegates about the provincial government’s strategic priorities and its plans to address challenges. One key issue highlighted by the Premier as a block to effective service delivery was excessive red tape. To this end, a major review of legislation was needed. A list of the delays to delivery caused by legislation was being prepared for a national Cabinet Lekgotla, and once completed, the list would be shared with the NCOP and national government.

Education is a critical area for the province, especially in terms of the amount of resources allocated to it. Not all is rosy in the Western Cape: substance abuse is ravaging communities, and 80% of crime in the province is linked to it. The problem has profound medium and long term implications, and workable interventions are needed. The provincial government is reportedly drafting a strategic response that involves co-ordination between multiple provincial government departments. The big challenge faced by the province, and one of the most complex, is housing. This includes the availability of suitable land, and red tape associated with its acquisition.

# Provinces want more oversight

‘Some departments show scant respect’

**T**he provinces can monitor their own departments, but they are not able to keep an eye on what national departments are doing in the provinces, and this can cause problems. That’s what the Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Mr Jackson Mthembu, told a delegation of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) during Provincial Week: “Some provincial leaders of these departments have very little respect for provincial legislatures,” Mr Mthembu told Mpumalanga’s permanent delegates to the NCOP, during their home visit.

NCOP delegate Mr Jomo Nyambi said provinces could use their delegates to oversee national departments which rendered services in the provinces, while a plan was sorted out to monitor national departments in the provinces. The NCOP and the legislature formed an ad hoc

committee to plan how the province would monitor the work of national departments in Mpumalanga. The Departments of Home Affairs, Mineral Resources, Energy, Labour, and Water Affairs and Forestry are among the national departments that do not account to the provinces.

“Provinces can forward questions to the NCOP and we will put them to the relevant ministers on behalf of the provinces. It’s our duty because we represent the provinces in Parliament,” said Mr Nyambi. The inability of any provincial legislature to oversee the work of a national department could impact on local economic development.

An NCOP member, Mr Pat Sibande, said it was cause for concern that Mpumalanga has energy problems even though it is the country’s powerhouse.

“Mpumalanga has a lot of power stations, so why is electricity supply a problem” said Mr Sibande.

Another problem is that local businesses do not have enough opportunities to participate in mining activities in the provinces, because licensing and mining rights are dispensed at national level. “Are local people benefiting enough from mining activities in this province, we need to address such matters,” said a permanent delegate from Mpumalanga, Ms Priscilla Themba.

The legislators and the NCOP delegates agreed that Members of the Executive Committee in provinces should attend more debates in the NCOP, especially budget debates. Mr Nyambi proposed amending legislation to clearly outline the role of NCOP delegates in provincial legislatures. 

Shape up: MPs check service delivery in Mpumalanga



# WANTED:

## Education baseline for Limpopo

Schools need libraries, laboratories and toilets

**P**ermanent delegates in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) have called on Limpopo's Department of Education to abide by national norms and standards and ensure that all schools have the necessary infrastructure. The national Department of Education's minimum norms and standards for the infrastructure of all schools provides for classification of schools, guidelines on what constitutes a functional and effective school, as well as minimum and optimum packages.

Classification of school types involves the capacity of a school, space norm per learner, classroom

size, school site size and location, accommodation space required for a particular type of school, and includes norms and standards for basic services and sports facilities.

The call to stick to the basic guidelines came as Limpopo's permanent delegates conducted an oversight visit to schools during the NCOP's Provincial Week. When they visited schools such as Mphuzulu High School near Moutse, delegates were shocked to learn that most rural schools in the province did not have proper laboratories, libraries or toilets. The principal of Mphuzulu High school pleaded for help to get the education department to erect

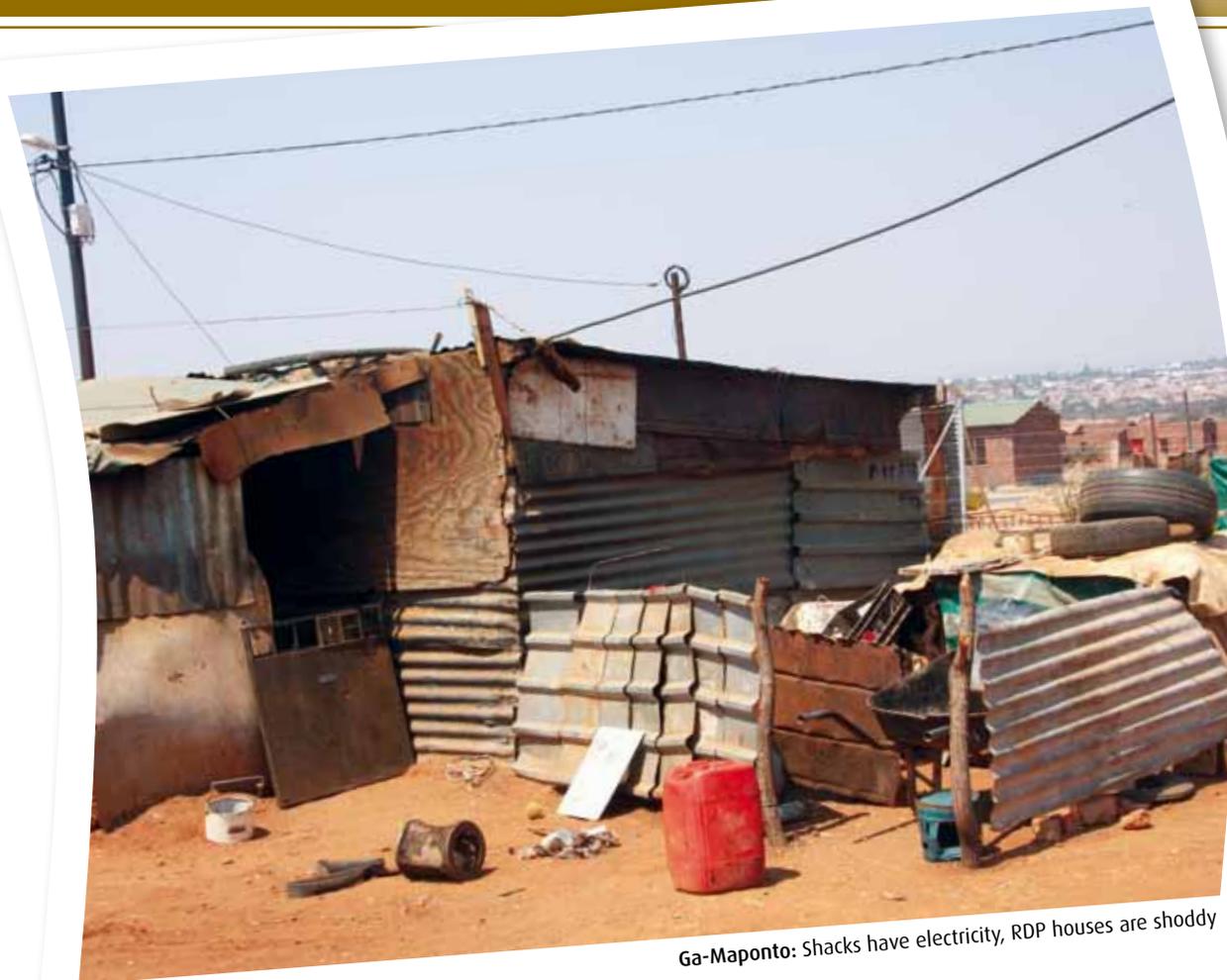
proper toilets at the school. Mr Mafemane Makhubele, an MP from Limpopo, stressed the urgency of the matter: "You can't get schools to function without the basic necessities and still expect them to deliver favourable results," he said.

NCOP Chairperson Mr Mninwa Mahlangu said schools such as Zama Zama High School needed to be prioritized in terms of the allocation of resources and teachers. The governing body of the school, which has been going for more than ten years, arranged for shanty toilets to be built for its learners. Mr Mahlangu said there had been a significant improvement with regards to the infrastructure of Mphuzulu High School, since his last visit to the school in 2007. He referred to the erection of a fence at the school and the filling of vacant posts. "What worries me though is that your pass rate has dropped over the years," he told the principal, urging him to rectify this as soon as possible.

At both schools visited by the delegation there was a shortage of teachers, which led to teachers being overburdened, and classes with more than 30 learners. This critical shortage of teachers left schools such as Zama-Zama High offering critical subjects such as Accounting, without having qualified experts to teach them.

Limpopo Premier Cassel Mathale (left) with NCOP Chairperson Mninwa Mahlangu





Ga-Maponto: Shacks have electricity, RDP houses are shoddy

# Limpopo homes in limbo

**t**he Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Mr Mzinwa Mahlangu, has urged the national Department of Human Settlements to ensure that housing contractors who abandoned Limpopo housing projects, or did not complete them as per their contractual agreements, were made to account for their actions.

NCOP permanent delegates on an oversight visit to the abandoned rural housing project in Ga-Maponto were shocked to see the mess left by a builder who had since disappeared. They saw a number of the houses with defects, the result of poor workmanship. The spokesperson for the delegation,

Mr Humphrey Mokgobi, said many of the dwellings had huge cracks, and bricks came tumbling down the doors were closed: "On rainy days the houses are easily flooded because of leaking roofs," Mr Mokgobi said. Houses were of such a poor quality that they were positively a danger to life and limb.

Local councillors told the NCOP delegates about the challenges involved in implementing the rural housing project. There was no waiting list, which meant that houses were allocated to people on an ad hoc basis. The councillors were thus unable to monitor the process or attend to complaints from beneficiaries. The NCOP

delegates recommended to the Human Settlements Department that councillors be involved in monitoring the housing projects in the province, so that if things went wrong, they could deal with people to whom houses had been allocated.

Mr Mahlangu suggested to the MEC for Housing and Local Government, Mr Soviet Lekganyane, that local contractors be used in housing projects as it would be easier to trace them should they not complete the projects. "You find that these contractors leave without finishing a project, and then resurface in another province under a different company name, and do the same thing. This merely exacerbates the problem," he said.



Welcome home: President Zuma delights Nene family

# Limpopo pilot project

Boosting hopes for rural recovery

**T**he Nene family's original home, a traditional hut, was destroyed in an exceptionally harsh storm in January 2008, leaving them homeless. They suffered a double blow the following month when the father died, leaving 11 dependants. The destitute family decided to appeal to the provincial government. They qualified for assistance, and together with the Independent Development Trust (IDT), the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform built a new house for the Nene family.

Less than two years since their tragedy, the family now have a six-roomed brick-and-mortar house, plans for an adjoining vegetable garden and a proposed orchard to help ensure that the household has access to food and can become self-sustainable. The current challenge is to get water to start the vegetable garden because water is only available in the rainy season, and high nitrate levels reduce the quality of the water. The region has been in the grip of a drought for some time and the community has been hit hard.

The Select Committee on Land and Environmental Affairs, which wants to establish to what extent service delivery has improved in rural areas, was invited in August by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to the launch of the pilot project of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, attended by President Jacob Zuma. This followed three months after Parliament requested a detailed account of how it was spending the R1,7 billion allocated for rural development during the 2008/9 financial year.

The Director General of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mr Thozzi Gwanya, said the Greater Giyani Local Municipality was selected for the pilot project because of high levels of poverty in the area. A specific site was identified within the municipality. The launch at the pilot site in Muyexe in the Greater Giyani District Municipality of Limpopo province also marked the start of the programme and was attended by Select Committee on Land and

Environmental Affairs members, Mr Gauta Mokolo and Mr Darryl Worth, and Ms Deshni Pillay, Content Advisor for the Select Committee on Land and Environmental Affairs.

The Greater Giyani District is classified as a rural municipality and its main challenge is access to water. The area is hot and dry and it lacks access to basics like safe drinking water, sanitation, health services and transportation. Since the selection of the site as a pilot for the Comprehensive Rural Development strategy, there has been an increase in economic activity, and more interest from developmental agencies. The IDT has been closely involved in several projects in Muyexe village, initiating construction projects and "thereby empowering the marginalised community," according to the report of the Committee.

Besides the Nene family house, other projects at this village include the Primary and Secondary Schools renovation project, Muyexe Hospital, Community Centre and Macena Community Farm.

# Blending Constitution, participation & people

**T**he fourth Parliament hopes to deliver a grassroots **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MODEL** that captures the national imagination. To achieve this it is introducing the key project, to generate public participation. **INSESSION** asks the Project Manager, **Luzuko Jacobs**, who also heads the Parliamentary Communication Services (PCS), how the development project of the Public Participation Model will work.

Creating the Public Participation Model is a deliberate attempt to develop a clear definition, and to understand the concept of a People's Parliament. The Project Manager says the proposed project seeks to deliver a model that will serve as an integral part of the strategy of Parliament: "We want to fulfill the constitutional mandate and simultaneously allow for a definition of the culture of the institution. Our model must ensure consistency in the application of the political strategy of Parliament, as well as differences in its evaluation," he said.

Among other objectives, the first few stages of development will delineate the scope, mobilise the required resources and outline the approach for the implementation of the project. Three streams are proposed to allow for optimum focus on specific key areas and to streamline the implementation of the project, Jacobs said. "The first key element is the Legal dimension. Given our Constitutional foundations and imperatives, the task will centre on developing a comprehensive understanding of the constitutional basis. It must explore the constitutional framework of public participation within the Parliamentary context. Amongst some of the approaches listed are the research and review of Parliament's public participation role and

responsibility, as well as exploring the legal and constitutional landscape of Parliament's public participation role.

"The second key area is the Strategy element. It will centre on the assessment and evaluation of Parliament's current public participation practices and make recommendations on future public participation activities. This means compiling a comprehensive source document of Parliament's existing practices, developing a tool to evaluate public participation practices, making recommendations on improving the performance of future practices, and listing additional mechanisms that are needed."

Jacobs says the vital third dimension is Collaboration, which is about stakeholder management to ensure that there is maximum participation from all sectors of society: "The engagement of stakeholders will be dealt with almost as a sub-project, but it is closely linked to the Strategy dimension of the project. Management of the entire project will be located in the PCS. It will centre on mobilising organised civil sectors, drawing input from and using society as a sounding board. This will be done inter alia by identifying and engaging with stakeholders to get their views and obtain information from various perspectives on Parliament's public

participation role and performance. We will compile a report on all findings, and provide detailed recommendations on how Parliament can enhance its current practices."

How the mechanism for this project will be implemented is not a simple task. Exactly how can this be accomplished? "We will employ a two-tier structure approach of Management and Support: the political management will drive the project and give strategic direction, and the support service see to its implementation," says Jacobs.

Political Management will take the form of a task team, comprising Members of Parliament drawn proportionately from all political parties in Parliament. It will be convened by the House Chairperson, Mr Obed Bapela and the House Chairperson for Oversight and Institutional Support in the National Council of Provinces, Mr Raseriti Tau, will share the chair. The task team will consist of key Members of Parliament who can drive the project, including Chief Whips of all parties, House Chairpersons of the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces and additional Members to help ensure full representation. The draft is expected to be finalised by September next year, and will be presented to an independent panel.

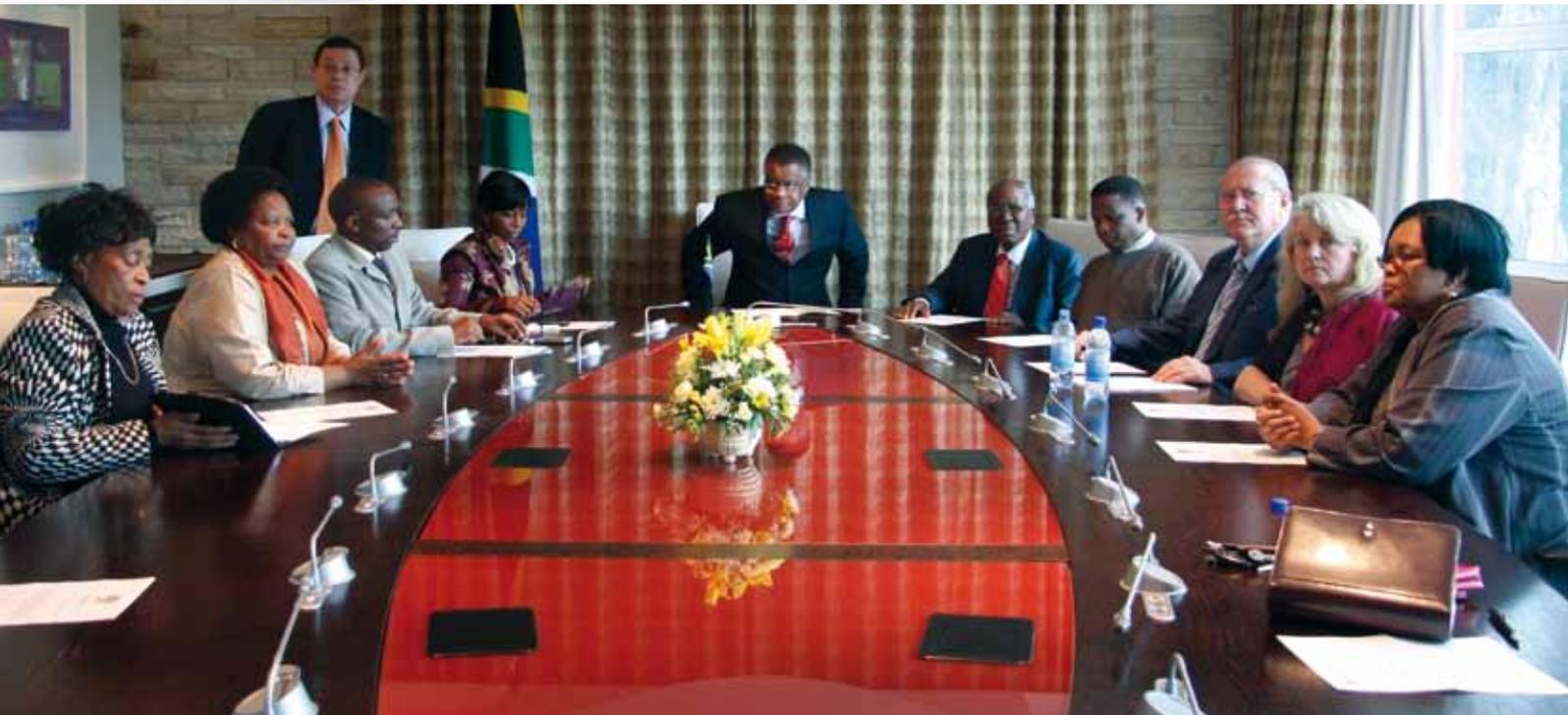
**Service delivery:** Visitors to North West *Taking Parliament to the People* queue for information





# Through the lens

EVENTS IN AND AROUND PARLIAMENT



**BE SEATED:** Ten new members of the Joint Committee on Ethics and Members' Interests are sworn in by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Max Sisulu (centre)

**BELOW:** Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe (centre), Minister of Arts and Culture, Ms Lulu Xingwana (right) and Limpopo Premier Cassel Mathale (left) take the salute at the Heritage Day celebration at Ntwampe sport ground, Moroke, in Limpopo





**TOP LEFT:** Angolan member of Parliament, Dr Angela Braganca, with House Chairperson Mr Ben Skosana

**TOP RIGHT:** Secretary-General of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Dr William Shija, on a courtesy visit to the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mr Mniwa Mahlangu (right)

**ABOVE RIGHT:** SCOPA's Mr Themba Godi and media on oversight visit to Langa housing project

**BELOW:** Dancers at Ntwampe sports ground celebrating 'South African craft, Our Heritage' in Limpopo



# Cash, work and unity

Parliament reflects on heritage 'spin-offs'

by Abel Mputing

**T**housands of small enterprises, providing work for tens of thousands of people and generating at least R2 billion a year: that's what the crafting industry is worth to South Africa, according to a delighted Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Paul Mashatile. Addressing the first session of the Heritage Month debate, in the chamber of the National Council of Provinces, on the theme "Celebrating South Africa's Craft, our Heritage," the Deputy Minister said there had been many recent advances in this sector. "The craft sector contributes about R2 billion to our South African annual Gross Domestic Product. In addition to that, the sector provides an income for approximately 38 000 people through an estimated 7 000 small enterprises," he said.

Speakers stressed that Heritage Month represented an opportunity to reaffirm once more: "that which unites us as a nation, far outweighs that which divides us." Ms Nomonde Rasmeni quoted from Nelson Mandela's 1997 Heritage Day address: "Afrikaners celebrated their heritage by infusing the history of their communities into artefacts, as the women of Hlabisa weave their stories into beer baskets."

The urge to claim protection and promotion of heritage resources is as old as the pursuit of freedom and justice in South Africa, according to Mr John Gunda. He said this pursuit could "find expression in the promotion of the country's indigenous languages and literature," backed up by the imperatives of the Constitution.

The potential of heritage crafts in revitalising rural economic development was also stressed in the National Assembly (NA) heritage debate, as one of the priorities featured in President Zuma's State of the Nation Address. The theme of the Heritage debate in the NA was "Celebrating our Tangible and

Intangible Cultural Heritage for Nation-Building and Social Cohesion." It was preceded by Dr Mathole Motshekga's address on the context of heritage, and its binding values: "Heritage Month offers us an opportunity to understand our origins, identity and the relationships between our spiritual and material existence. The founders of our democracy understood their spirituality and its relationship with the land; they waged protracted struggles to defend both."

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi said the case for freedom, the case for our constitutional principles and the case for heritage had to be made anew in each generation.

The celebration and protection of South Africa's heritage could also be traced back to the inception of the Freedom Charter in 1955, said Ms Muntu Nxumalo: "The Freedom Charter claims that the doors of learning and culture shall be open." Government had to discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life. "All the cultural treasures of man shall be open to all, by exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands," she said.

Ms Desiree van der Walt stressed the importance of heritage to the collective

aspirations and political well-being of the nation, and Mr Lance Greyling expressed a need to do away with "the zero sum game" in which one culture was promoted at the expense of others.

In her response, the Minister of Arts and Culture, Ms Lulu Xingwana, referred to Mapungubwe, a flourishing Iron Age metropolis on the Limpopo River ruled by an African king almost a thousand years ago. She said as one of the jewels of world heritage sites, Mapungubwe was a compelling illustration of Africa's contribution to human civilization: "This month offers us an opportunity to admire the cultural and economic wealth that came from the people of Mapungubwe whose architects built a royal residence and whose blacksmiths built tools and artworks out of iron and gold foil: a place where ancient rhinoceros, bowls, beads and jewellery were found."

The historical genesis of Heritage Day, according to Mr Swaphi Plaatjie, was that it marked the death of King Shaka in 1828: "Ever since, Zulu people have been celebrating it as King Shaka Day. It is right that we dip into history to understand how we became who we are, and learn to whom we owe gratitude, for giving us pride, freedom and dignity." 

Heritage Message: Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Paul Mashatile in NCOP



# Virtual visit to Parliament

Hi tech tour to go online

by Abel Mputing



Online: Checking out a 'hotspot' on virtual tour of Parliament

**a**n interactive 360-degree virtual tour of Parliament is being commissioned for distribution on DVD, CD and Internet. It will be targeted at educational institutions, exhibitions, conferences, and workshops.

Most people in South Africa would like to visit Parliament, but cannot afford to do so. The next best thing is to make Parliament available in electronic format. A new project to create audio-visual coverage of 15 important sites of Parliament will be able to reach even the remotest schools and villages. Apart from being available on Parliament's website, the interactive "tour" will be distributed to libraries, educational institutions and community centres in rural areas. In time, the Parliamentary Democracy Offices will also distribute the final product on order.

The manager of Parliament's Public Education Office, Mr Thaabit Albertus, says the virtual tour will provide access to Parliament as a public space by producing a user-friendly experience primarily for South African citizens but also for foreign web users. "The virtual tour will be used as an educational resource at schools and institutions to extend Parliament's reach. Outlying communities will have access to the virtual tour through their local centres, travelling libraries, schools, and the internet, among others," Mr Albertus said.

The daily tours of Parliament will continue to acquaint lucky

visitors with a history that spans generations. Parliament receives more than 25,000 visitors each year. The on-site gatekeepers of Parliament's oral history are the tour guides, Mr Kenneth Bange, and Mr Obert Plum: "In a nutshell, Parliament's tour centres around three Chambers: The Old Assembly, the National Council of Provinces and the National Assembly. But the tour starts officially at the multimedia centre, which has state-of-the-art media equipment, to explain the country's national symbols, emblems and the coat of arms," said Mr Plum. "The same facility can be turned into a public interface medium with Members of Parliament and can also show live committee meetings, as well as live debates of both houses," he said.

I accompanied a touring group, which first visited the Old Assembly Chamber, used by Members of Parliament from the formation of Union to the end of the apartheid era. Since 1994, the Old Assembly has been used for sectoral Parliaments such as the Women's Parliament and Youth Parliament. "It is in this very Chamber where oppressive legislation and laws were conceived, before being signed and sealed and brought into effect," Mr Plum said. One of the touring group members was surprised to learn that he was sitting where the chief architect of apartheid, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, was stabbed to death by a messenger, Dimitri Tsefandas. The attack took place right in front of the Prime Minister's bench, to the right of the

Speaker. The blood was apparently cleaned up immediately after the attack, but the carpet remained in place for many years and was only recently removed.

Next, our group trekked to the Chamber of the NCOP Chamber which was built as the Cape Colony Chamber. The complex dates back to 1875 and the building supplies, everything from the bricks and cement to the tiles and chandeliers, were imported from England. The building later housed the Senate. With the coming of the tri-cameral Parliament in 1985, the Senate Chamber became the seat of the House of Representatives. After 1994 it was again briefly known as the Senate, and in 1997 became the seat of the NCOP which it still is. Mr Plum explained the NCOP's unique role in provincial and local government.

Our tour was concluded at the National Assembly Chamber, where Mr Plum explained the constitutional mandate of setting and overseeing our country's national agenda, and the significance of occasions such as the State of the Nation Address, and visits by heads of State, when the NCOP and the National Assembly come together in Joint Sittings. It was in this Chamber that the unbanning of political parties of the liberation struggle and the imminent release of former President Nelson Mandela was announced. It was also where democratic South Africa adopted its new Constitution.

# Parliament's built heritage

by Abel Mputing

From early Colonial days to the present democracy, structures have been added to the parliament precinct in Cape Town. Over the years, the style has transformed and a mix of Oriental and African influences has been added. Everything seems to be steeped in history, down to the cobblestones of Parliament Street.

The real expansion began after the Cape Colony came under British rule in 1814, ending the rule of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) in South Africa. The Cape was now a Crown Colony, under a Governor. A new Constitution was adopted in 1834, and two councils were set up to oversee the Cape Colony, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council. The early legislators occupied the structure first built by the DEIC in 1679 as a slave lodge, and it has been used over the years as a seat of the Governor's Advisory Council, the Upper House of the first Parliament, the Cape Supreme Court, the first library, the first post office, and the Cultural History Museum.

In 1875 the foundation stone of the Cape Parliament was laid. Constructed in the popular style of architecture of the time, the building

was officially inaugurated in 1885. It was said to have the first electric light system in the Cape. With Union in 1910, Parliament's need for space increased considerably. An Assembly Chamber and offices were built for the Union Parliament, and its final addition, the "Poorthuis" (Gatehouse), is currently the main public entrance to Parliament.

It was in the dining hall of what is now called the Old Assembly that former British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan made his renowned "Wind of Change" speech, in 1960: "The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and whether we like it or not, growth of national consciousness is a political fact." The next year, the Prime Minister, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, led South Africa out of the Commonwealth to become a Republic, with apartheid as its official policy. The next amendment of the South African Constitution was in 1985, at the height of the political struggle against this policy. For the first time in decades Coloured voters were returned to the voting roll, and along with Indians could vote for the tri-cameral (three-Chamber) Parliament. White Members of Parliament met in what is now the Old Assembly Chamber,

Coloured Members of the House of Representatives gathered in what has been transformed into the National Council of Provinces and Indian Members of the House of Delegates were initially housed across the road in the Marks Building, and later in the main building. Later, plans were drawn up for a new National Assembly, the beginnings of a more Africanised Parliament.

The real wind of change came to South Africa in 1994, with the overwhelming election victory and inauguration of the first democratic President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela, and in 1996, the passage of one of the most advanced Constitutions in the world. Since then, the role of the National Assembly Chamber, with its sophisticated sound system for debates and Hansard, permanent TV cameras and electronic voting devices, has continually been redefined. Today, all stops are pulled out for it to be used for Joint Sittings of the two Houses of Parliament, the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces, for the President's State of the Nation Address, when Provincial delegations and diplomatic VIPs are invited, and for visits of international leaders.



Artistic impression of buildings of Parliament



# Parliamentary Millennium Programme launched with provinces

by Jackie Adriaans

As part of Parliament's celebrations during Women's Month, the Parliamentary Millennium Programme (PMP) launched two of its groundbreaking projects in August. The second report of the "Amazwi Abesifazane" (*Voices of Women*) National Quilting Campaign was made public at a well-attended breakfast event and guests included some of the women who took part in the *Voices of Women* workshops, and featured in a documentary to showcase it. The first public screening of the documentary, "Sivelaphi Siyaphi" (*Where we come from, where we are going*) was held to coincide with the launch of the report. To help with the narrative of the documentary, it featured an inter-generational encounter in the Eastern Cape.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities, Ms Barbara Thompson, welcomed the second report: "Projects like this enrich our work as public representatives charged with making laws and overseeing their implementation, by keeping us in touch with experiences of ordinary people."

The second *Voices of Women* report marked the culmination of workshops in Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the North West Provinces last year. Following a directive of the National Speakers Forum, the project was implemented in 2007 in partnership with provincial and local government structures. In provincial workshops, women use the art of quilting to tell their personal stories, and find expression in embroidered and beaded cloth. A critical component of this project is the recording and drafting of formal submissions presented to Parliament and the Provincial Legislatures. To date, workshops have been conducted in six of the nine provinces, with three to go in KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Gauteng later this year. For Mpumalanga participants, Ms Susan Molobela, Ms Gladness Mashego and Ms Rose Chiloane, opportunities like these can be



On show: *Voices of Women* project by rural women

life-changing and are not to be missed. Through the experience they were able to empower themselves, by learning new skills, which they in turn hope to pass on to other women.

The documentary, produced in partnership with the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature, was well received. Like the report, the documentary reflects on the impact of past experiences in shaping the present and future. Some of the pioneers who participated in the historic 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings relived their extraordinary journey and reflected on the significance of their contribution to the lives of young women today.

Participating in the march helped 1970s activists, Ms Nontsikelelo Mngandi and Ms Cikizwa "Smalley" Maqunga, realise that each sector, including women and youth, has to fight for their rights in each successive generation. They have left it up to the young men and women who are the leaders of tomorrow, to continue the struggle they started.

Ms Bongwiwe Kali, one of the young women who participated in the documentary explained the value of their contribution, "We must not take the opportunities we have now for granted. That is what our elders fought for. We should grab this opportunity with both hands and create a future for the youth and future generations. We must ensure that we empower young people by passing on the skills we acquire and mentoring their development."

Unfortunately one of the key figures in the making of the film, Mama Nompoti Njongwe, did not live long enough to see the film completed. Documentary Executive Producer, Mr Mandilakhe Mjekula (MJ Communications), paid special tribute to her: "As one of the original participants in the march, she played a pivotal role in keeping the memories of 1956 alive. I hope that this film will be a living testimony to her."

The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mr Mninwa Mahlangu, said: "We must ensure that the issues of women, including abuse, poverty, gender and inequality are addressed now. When this is accomplished, we will know where we are going."

PMP's Gender and Education Projects Co-ordinator, Ms Ilana-Loren van Louw said: "These projects create platforms for open and honest dialogue and are designed as vehicles that allow for the public consideration of issues. These projects ensure that the voices of ordinary South African women are heard on issues of policy and legislation designed to impact on their lives. It also creates awareness, especially for younger generations, of the significant sacrifices and contributions that ordinary women continue to make, to ensure a society based on sound democratic values."

**Copies of the DVD can be obtained from MJ Communications at email: [sheltah@mweb.co.za](mailto:sheltah@mweb.co.za) or office telephone number (043) 704 0305**

# Cellphone costs must drop

Decision after October public hearings



The cost of a peak time call on a mobile phone is expected to drop to 60 cents a minute from November 2009, with further cuts over the next three years. As a first step, public hearings are planned for October. This follows a parliamentary briefing by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), the Competition Commission and the Department of Communications, on measures that can be taken to reduce the high cost of cellphones in South Africa.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Communications, Mr Ismail Vadi, says the public hearings on the costing of mobile phones are: "the consequence of apparent historical collusion between dominant mobile operators in the country, which has placed profits and greed above people, and the incapacity of ICASA to effectively regulate this matter."

The Portfolio Committee on Communications was briefed in September on interconnection and call termination rates in South Africa. After hearing from the regulators, including ICASA, it concluded that the interconnection rates in South Africa, at R1.25 per minute during peak times, were "exorbitant and excessive, resulting in extremely high telecommunication prices."

Mr Vadi said the high costs of mobile and fixed line telecommunications had impacted adversely on the South African economy and negatively on citizens, particularly the poor and marginalized: "There is unanimity in industry, government, among other relevant stakeholders and the regulatory

authority that the present situation is socially indefensible and economically unjustifiable."

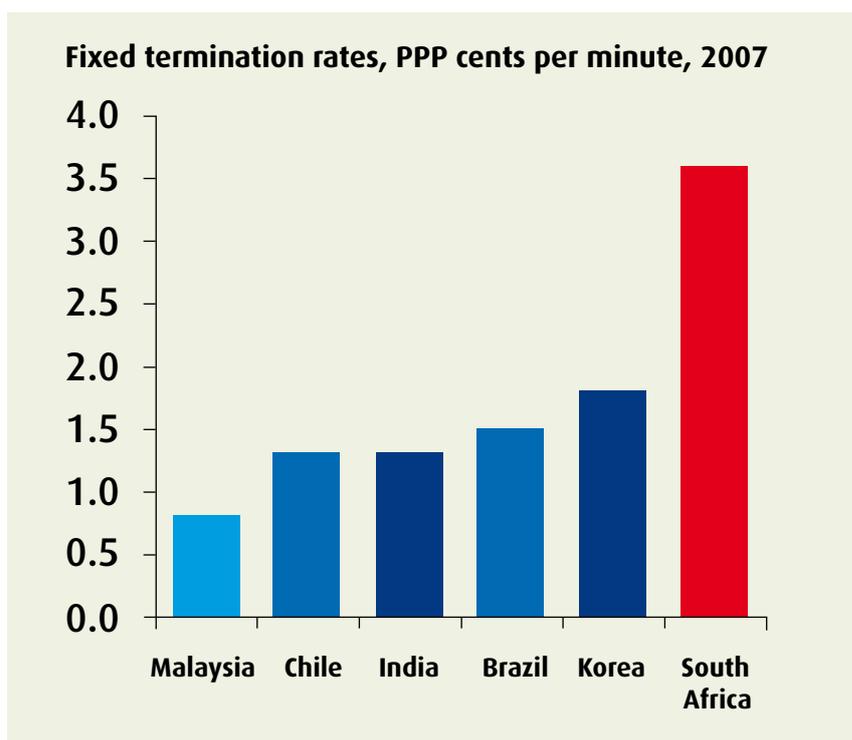
**The Portfolio Committee will hold public hearings on 13 and 14 October 2009, to discuss the following proposals:**

- That mobile and telecoms operators drop the interconnection rates with effect from 1 November 2009 to 60 cents per minute during peak times
- That interconnection rates be further reduced by 15 cents annually on the 1 November for each successive year until 2012
- That the progressive reductions in interconnection rates between 2009 and 2012 should yield

concomitant reductions in the actual consumer (retail) prices of telecommunications.

"It was further resolved that the Minister of Communications finalise the performance management system of ICASA Councillors as embodied in the ICASA Act (No 4 of 1999) and that the Department of Communications should report on the matter to the Portfolio Committee by the 30 November 2009.

"ICASA should act professionally, effectively and boldly to regulate interconnection rates in South Africa as a matter of urgency," said the news release. The Committee was willing to amend the Electronic Communications Act (No 36 of 2005) to enable ICASA to act swiftly.



Source: Department of Communications

# Q & A

## NCOP: 2009 to 2014

The National Council of Provinces House Chairperson for Committees, Ms Nosilivere Magadla, outlines the NCOP's five-year strategy



### What is your role in the National Council of Provinces?

The role of the House Chairperson is to provide political support to Committees, and ensure that they implement their programmes in line with the framework of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and Parliament's strategic plan. Other tasks include considering and approving programmes, and dealing with requests from Committees for travel, for purposes of oversight. The House Chairperson co-ordinates the activity programmes of the Select Committees, convenes and chairs the forum of Chairpersons of Committees, and must exchange information and perspectives on Committee business. He or she convenes and chairs the meetings of Chairpersons of Committees to deal with the business of Select Committees and provides reports to the Programme Committee meeting, regarding legislation and Committee activities.

### Once all Committees in the NCOP have adopted their programmes, what will be the main focus for the next five years?

Select Committees are still waiting for the NCOP's strategic framework planning to be considered and adopted by the House, and after that, Committees will be expected to convene strategic planning workshops to develop strategic plans and programmes that coincide with the strategic objectives of the NCOP framework plans. In

practical terms, the focus will be on promoting provincial interests, following up on the implementation of government priorities as identified for the three spheres of government, enhancing public participation programmes through educating the people, especially in rural villages, and creating forums for public consideration of issues affecting provinces. Our oversight priorities are agriculture, education, economic development, health and social development, human settlements, police, as well as rural development and land reform.

### In the recent Strategic Planning Workshop, it emerged that local municipalities and the South African Local Government Association (Salga) had not effectively participated in the NCOP. Are there plans to change that?

Yes, there are plans to enable Salga to participate in Committees so there can be a closer working relationship between the NCOP and local government, given the important role played by municipalities in providing quality services to the people. But the status quo will remain as per the Constitution with respect to the (mainly consultative) role of Salga in the proceedings of the NCOP.

### How does the South African Parliament compare to other Parliaments in terms of women representation and women in leadership positions?

Since the advent of democracy, women have been playing a critical role in political decision-making in South Africa and we are well on track to achieve the Southern African Development Community (SADC) target of 50% women in political decision-making roles by 2015. I am proud that our country is ranked 94th out of 157 countries on gender development. Women are well represented in the leadership of the NCOP.

### Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) require that all countries promote gender equality and empower women. United Nations members have made a commitment to eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education by no later than 2015. Are you confident South Africa will meet the MDGs deadline?

Firstly, gender equality is a human right and empowering women is an important tool for advancing development and reducing poverty. Section 10 of our Constitution is clear about human dignity and we will be guided by that section in responding to the United Nations deadline. As a country we will strive to close the gap in primary and secondary education through developing plans to provide free, compulsory and universal primary education for girls and boys by 2015. The country will also strive to achieve a 50 percent improvement in the levels of adult literacy by 2015, with a special focus on women.



# From Timbuktu to Cape Town

Ms Mariam Stuurman of Special Collections, Library of Parliament explodes the myth that Africa is only, or even mainly, about “song and dance”

**T**he ancient city of Timbuktu on the edge of the Sahara Desert was already a meeting place for African and early Eastern traders and scholars when Geoffrey Chaucer wrote the *Canterbury Tales* in England.

Timbuktu in Mali was a crossroad for trading between Africa, the Middle East and Europe which developed into a centre of learning and intellectual hub with a University, well before the mid-millennium journeys of European seafarers.

Manuscripts preserved by Muslim and other scholars have for centuries provided an African identity, a sense of purpose, of place and history. Certainly Africa has a rich oral history, but it is a myth that it had no indigenous literary or scholarly activity before the 16th century onwards.

The celebration of Heritage Day gives us an excellent opportunity to consider the central contribution of books and our special collections to South Africa's cultural heritage, and hopefully to spark new initiatives and ideas. Throughout history, books have had a powerful influence in the dissemination of knowledge and have been one of the most effective means of preserving it. Books serve to enlighten future generations and to develop a more complete collective awareness of cultural traditions around the world. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that we continue to preserve books and other historical documents as resources of knowledge, history and politics; together with their role in the fields of heritage, culture and science.

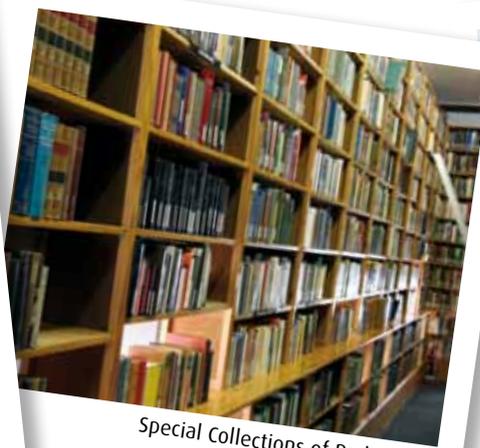
The Library of Parliament has long recognized the importance of historical

artefacts and the importance of protecting and preserving books and materials from factors that impact on them. It is imperative that we define the threats to our special collections, whether they be natural, chemical or physical, and put in place measures to protect them.

The Library is currently working on a digitization programme for the collections of Africana, artefacts, artworks, manuscripts and other rare and historically valuable material that grace its mahogany shelves. These will in time also become accessible to the public. Together with Parliament's intranet, known as Faranani, it is hoped that the Library of Parliament will be able to help preserve these materials for the future, safeguarding and adding to the splendid cultural heritage of South Africa and our continent.



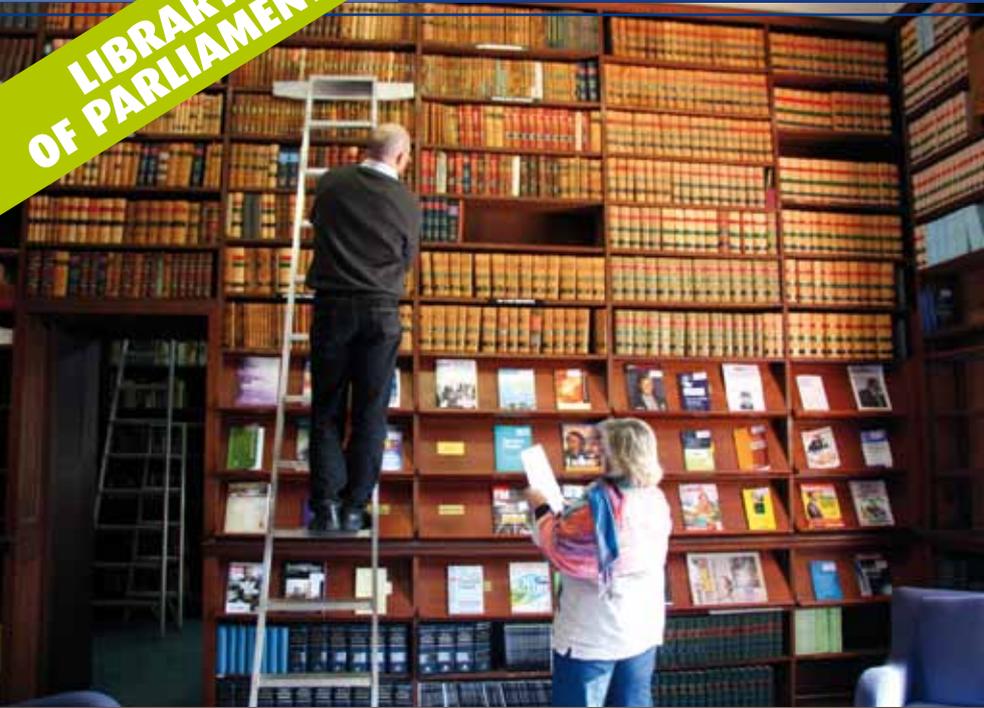
Gary George and Mariam Stuurman



Special Collections of Parliament



Financier and businessman, Sydney Mendelssohn



**RUNGS OF KNOWLEDGE:** Books neatly line mahogany shelves

## Rare works abound underground

*INSESSION* went underground to see Parliament's heritage collection, which is lovingly watched over by the Special Services sub-unit of the Library of Parliament.

A first glance into the Library of Parliament reveals bound volumes neatly stacked on solid mahogany shelving that stretches way up into the air. Friendly members of staff don't seem to mind climbing stairs to fetch a book so that users can check a reference or a quote. Sometimes they disappear into a door here or there, to return with a requested work. It is impressive that they seldom seem to be stumped even if the request is for a few rare words by a forgotten poet, required by an anxious Member of Parliament (MP) to round off a speech for the National Assembly, or the National Council of Provinces (NCOP).

Located beneath the Reference Library in the NCOP Building, it houses substantial collections of rare and valuable books, documents, manuscripts, paintings, artworks and Africana material. These collections represent a major asset of Parliament and are an important part of the library collection and of South Africa's heritage.

The Library of Parliament was built in 1857, assembled from book collections that served the old Cape Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of the Cape Colony. In 1910, when the four self-governing British colonies became the Union of South Africa, these collections formed the first Library of the Union Parliament. In 1919, Parliament extended the physical location and structure of the Library to house the rare books, photographs, maps and paintings that eventually became the Special Collections of the Library.



# “We must define threats to our special collections, and take steps to protect them”

Over more than 150 years there have been impressive additions to this core Library, none more so than the collection donated to the people of South Africa by a successful Kimberley diamond merchant, Sydney Mendelssohn. In 1917, he bequeathed his personal library consisting of over seven thousand items, a collection considered to be the most authoritative bibliography on Africana.

Parliament's collections are a valuable historic record of South Africa's past; representations of early Africa – its fauna, flora and landscapes. Consider that the first recorded voyage around the Cape by Bartholomew Diaz took place in 1487 (at about the same time as printing was being invented). Over four centuries later in 1910, the first comprehensive bibliographical record relating to Southern Africa

appeared in print. The map collection includes over one thousand maps, all interesting and some quite exquisite, dating back to the 17th century.

Today, the Special Services sub-unit's primary objectives are to provide information, maintain the collection, acquire and preserve materials, make the collections accessible to clients and preserve them for posterity. The sub-unit houses all the special collections as well as a more contemporary audio-visual collection and the Africa Centre, a virtual entity focusing on the African Union and regional blocs, parliamentary affairs and international law.

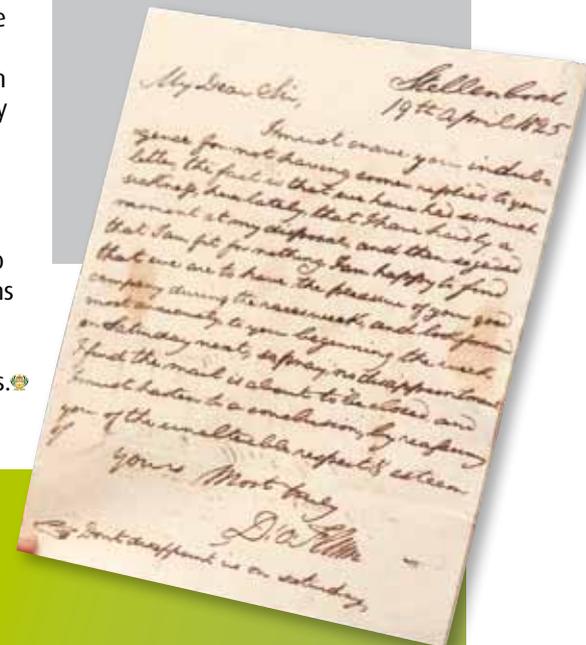
While members of the public need to arrange to make use of the collections beforehand, MPs and Parliamentary officials have free access to the collections and the sub-unit's services. 🗺️

Bona fide researchers have unrestricted access to collections.

**Library hours:**

**When Parliament is in session**  
Monday to Friday: 08h30-17h00 or until the last House adjourns

**During recess, Monday to Friday:**  
08h30-16h30  
Closed on weekends and public holidays.



## Mendelssohn's rich heritage

The most important figure connected with the history of the Manuscript Section of the Library of Parliament is Sydney Mendelssohn. After his death in 1917 his donation of 7031 books, maps, paintings and manuscripts was transported from England to South Africa. A special section was established in the Library of Parliament to house the collection. The Mendelssohn Section, in which all manuscripts are still kept, was opened in 1922.

Areas of specialization are Cape politics and parliamentary history, the Anglo-Boer War, early South African history, the freedom of the Press in South Africa, botany, Cape travel descriptions, biographies and Africana bibliographies.

**Core holdings:** Cape Politics and Parliamentary history: the Robert Godlonton and Afrikaner Bond collections; Freedom of the Press in SA: the Pringle-Fairbairn collection; Botany: the CH Wehdemann and EA Willmott collection; Early SA History: the HCV Leibbrandt, George Macartney and J McKay collections; Anglo-Boer War: the Christelijke Vereeniging and Jongelings Vereeniging collections; Cape Travel Descriptions: the Borchers and Bryant collections; Biographies: the RM Bowker, WH Schröder collections and Africana bibliographies: Sidney Mendelssohn.



# Casual Day

Parliament does its bit to support Casual Day for Persons with Disabilities

by Jackie Adriaans

Each year on the first Friday of September, South Africa responds to the call to support Casual Day in aid of persons with disabilities. This year Parliament joined the throng by supporting the event of the Tygerberg Association for Persons with Physical Disabilities.

Casual Day was filled with the laughter of 90 children from the Astra, Alta du Toit and Oasis Schools, and De Kuilen High School in Kuils River, who arrived at Belhar Indoor Sports Centre in Cape Town for a special Sports Day. Bubbling with enthusiasm, the children took part in disabled dancing, sitting volleyball, dancing and boccia (miniature bowls).

University of Stellenbosch social work students, Ms Kathryn Hart and Ms Toni Mould, working through the Tygerberg Association for Persons with Physical Disabilities, initiated the sports event as part of their community work project for this year. The Sports Day presented a wonderful opportunity for children from schools for learners with Special Education Needs, to interact with youngsters from mainstream schools in various indoor activities. Several Paralympic athletes also volunteered their time to support the event.

“We want to make able-bodied people aware of the different types of disabilities that exist,” said Ms Hart. “Just because they have a disability, persons with disabilities are not different. They should be treated as equals.”

Young Acklaine Marais, a pupil from Astra School, wants people to know that persons with disabilities can do anything they set their mind to. “We are just as competent as able-bodied people,” she said.

Parliament’s Public Relations Manager, Ms Lydia Radebe, explained: “Casual Day does more than just raise money; it raises awareness of the plight of persons with disabilities. The project is one of the platforms that Parliament uses to show that the institution belongs to the people, and will continue to support people, especially those in need.”

Parliament donated promotional t-shirts for the Casual Day event and a large number of volunteers participated in the Sports Day.

Proceeds from the sale of Casual Day stickers at R10 each went to the organisation responsible for managing the project, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities in South Africa.

“We are proud to be able to have involved Parliament so that you can see what we are doing. It makes us feel that all the hard work was worth it,” said Ms Hart.

***On Casual Day, organisations invite their employees to dress informally and wear Casual Day stickers. Buying and displaying the stickers signifies the support and involvement of participating organisations and raises awareness about persons with disabilities, as well as partnership opportunities.***

Sitting Volleyball matches were a hit at the special Sports Day





Editor-in-Chief: Luzuko Jacobs

# citizen's forum

## Did you know...

### Getting involved in Parliament

Do you know how to make contact?

**The South African Constitution gives members of the public the right to be involved in law-making and other processes of Parliament. Do you know how you can exercise this right?**

You are entitled to approach Parliament if you require assistance with a particular problem, or if you want to win support for an issue that is very dear to you. The easiest way to bring a matter to the attention of Parliament is probably through a Member of Parliament (MP). If you are not able to visit Parliament, you can arrange to visit your nearest constituency office, or contact MPs via constituency offices throughout the country, or telephone or write to them at Parliament.

All the major political parties maintain constituency offices, but any constituency office is usually willing to assist someone with a serious request, or a valid query. MPs regularly visit constituency offices where they meet and interact with members of the public.

When the Houses are not sitting, the constituency period presents MPs with an ideal opportunity to report back to their constituencies and interact directly with the public. They can update their constituencies on legislation before Parliament, inform citizens about the work that Parliament is doing and address issues of concern that members of the public bring to their attention. Many MPs are Members of parliamentary Committees and are actively involved in the work of those Committees. MPs have direct input into the Committees and could therefore raise the issues you have highlighted.

On certain days, a Member of the National Assembly, other than the Deputy President, a Minister or a Deputy Minister, may make a statement on any matter. This mechanism is called Members' statements, and it enables ordinary MPs to bring international, national and constituency-related matters to the attention of the Executive. At the end of Members' statements, the Executive is given an opportunity to respond. For something urgent, people can approach the constituency office in their area and ask their representative in Parliament to pose the particular question during

Question Time in the House. MPs submit questions for response by the President, Deputy President and Cabinet Ministers on the portfolios for which they are responsible.

Individual MPs may also propose Private Member's Bills, so if you feel that a law is necessary to regulate a particular matter, or that an existing law should be amended, you can submit it for consideration through an individual MP, provided that you have their support. 

**Remember: by exercising your right to participate, you can help Parliament serve the best interests of the people. To put you in touch with MPs or the political party you support, you can contact Parliament: Write to P O Box 15, Cape Town, 8000 or call (021) 403-2911.**

**Share your views on INSESSION and Parliament by e-mailing [insession@parliament.gov.za](mailto:insession@parliament.gov.za) or post letters to: The Editor, INSESSION Magazine, Parliamentary Communication Services, P.O. Box 15, Cape Town, 8000. Receive a free annual subscription - visit [www.parliament.gov.za](http://www.parliament.gov.za) for more information about Parliament.**

# citizen's forum

## Learning can be fun

The Crossword is focused on learning about the business of Parliament. The solution to the September Crossword and Sudoku will be published in the October edition of INSESSION.

## Rules of crossword

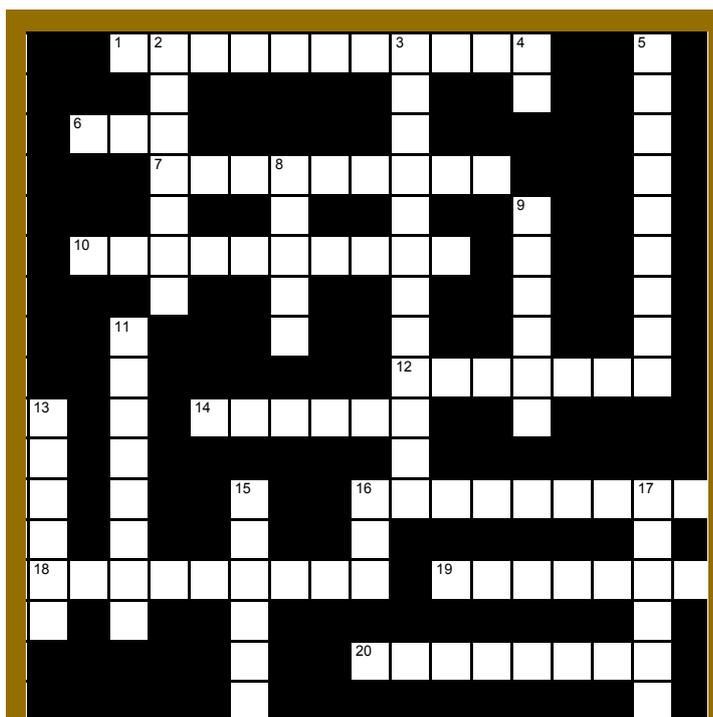
A crossword puzzle is a group of words that have been arranged across and down, so that each word crosses at least one other word at a common letter. The puzzle itself doesn't show the words, only the spaces where the words should be written. A list of numbered clues is matched to numbers placed in spaces on the puzzle where each word starts. You must find the correct word, in order for the clues to match up down and across, otherwise the puzzle does not work out.

## Rules of Sudoku

Sudoku is played on a 9 by 9 board, divided into 3 by 3 cells. The solution of the puzzle is to place numbers on the board so that each row, column or cell contains each number, 1 to 9, exactly once, without moving the initial clues. The idea is to see where the numbers 1 to 9 will fit in. Each cell (or block) must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and each row vertically and horizontally must also contain 1 to 9.

Keep this INSESSION and check your answers in next month's issue.

				6		5	1	
		3		9			7	
7				1			6	3
	1			8				9
2							3	
9		6	7	5				
8	4				9			
			8					
		7					9	



### Across

- Mninwa Mahlangu is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the National Council of Provinces (11)
- A warm part of the Parliamentary symbol which refers to healing the divisions of the past. (Back Cover, INSESSION) (3)
- South Africa's national animal (9)
- The national legislature (10)
- The Mendelsohn collection is kept in the \_\_\_\_\_ (Page 31, INSESSION) (7)
- A flower that symbolises our people in South Africa. (Back cover INSESSION) (6)
- The Speaker or Chairperson ends a session by saying: "The House is \_\_\_\_\_." (9)
- When Parliament checks on the work of government, this process is called \_\_\_\_\_ (Page 6, INSESSION) (9)
- South Africa's national fish (7)
- On \_\_\_\_\_ day we celebrate our history and culture. (8)

### Down

- The record of the debates of Parliament (Page 17, INSESSION) (7)
- The island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned. (6,6)
- The House of Parliament responsible for choosing the President (Abbreviation) (2)
- Government for the people, by the people (9)
- Abbreviation for Independent Communications Authority of South Africa. (Page 26, INSESSION) (5)
- The highest honours that South Africa can confer on people to mark their achievements are called National \_\_\_\_\_ (6)
- At what age can a registered person vote? (8)
- A slip of paper on which voters mark their vote (6)
- The first speech made in Parliament by a new member (6)
- A law made by Parliament is called an \_\_\_\_\_ (3)
- The number of official languages recognised by the South African Constitution. (6)

# citizen's forum

## readers letters

**From Mr Daniel Nuwamanya  
Parliament of Uganda, Kampala**

Dear Sir

We are in the planning stage of re-developing our Parliament website. After a thorough feasibility study and assessment of several Parliamentary websites on the Internet, we feel the website of the Parliament of South Africa is the best. We would therefore like to borrow some of the ideas that you used in developing the process. If you could assist us on this subject it would be highly appreciated.

**From Mr Phiroshaw Camay  
Director, Co-operative for Research and Education  
Fordsburg, South Africa**

Dear Sir

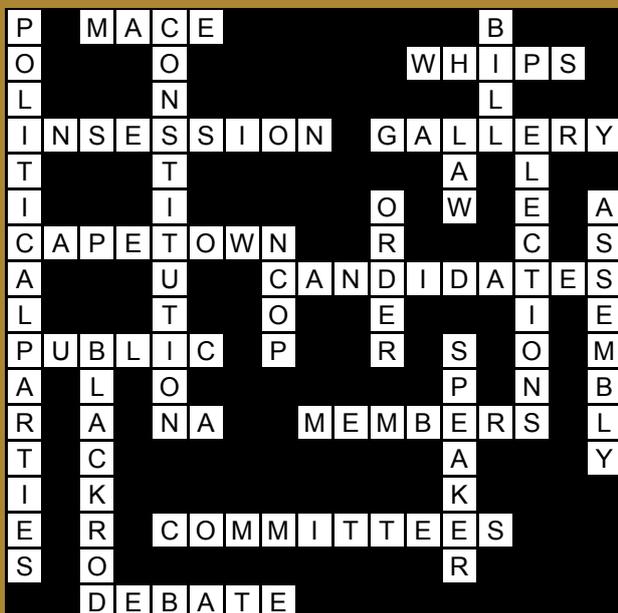
Thank you for the March and April copies of the Insession. It was a pleasure to read them. As usual they were informative and a very easy read. The layout is clean and tidy and not gimmicky. I particularly enjoyed the book reviews. Perhaps for some of us interested in history and art, it may be useful to know if members of the public could visit by prior arrangement and view some of the artwork in your archive. *(Yes, by all means -Editor)*

If you have comments or questions, please write, email or fax to us on [insession@parliament.gov.za](mailto:insession@parliament.gov.za), The Editor, Insession, B O Box 15 Cape Town 8000 or fax: +27 21 403 8096. Otherwise visit [www.parliament.gov.za](http://www.parliament.gov.za) or listen to the Parliament radio programme, on any of the SABC radio stations.

# solutions

to August Crossword and Sudoku

### Crossword



### Sudoku

6	9	2	3	7	5	4	8	1
1	3	5	4	2	8	9	7	6
4	8	7	1	6	9	5	3	2
9	2	4	6	8	7	3	1	5
7	5	1	9	3	2	8	6	4
3	6	8	5	1	4	2	9	7
8	7	3	2	5	1	6	4	9
5	4	6	7	9	3	1	2	8
2	1	9	8	4	6	7	5	3



**OUR SOUTH AFRICA – THE SUN**

The sun heals the divisions of the past, improves the quality of life of all South Africans, frees the potential of each person and builds a united and democratic South Africa, taking its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.



**OUR PEOPLE – THE PROTEA LEAVES**

Our people, building on the foundation of a democratic and open society, freely elect representatives, acting as a voice of the people and providing a national forum for public consideration of issues.



**OUR PARLIAMENT – THE DRUM**

The drum calls the people's Parliament, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces, to consider national and provincial issues, ensuring government by the people under the Constitution.



**OUR CONSTITUTION – THE BOOK**

Our Constitution lays the foundation for a democratic and open society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. It is the supreme law of our country, and ensures government by the people.