



Unity and peace on the continent

Parliament shows its commitment to mark Africa Day



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Mace of National Assembly

Vision Statement

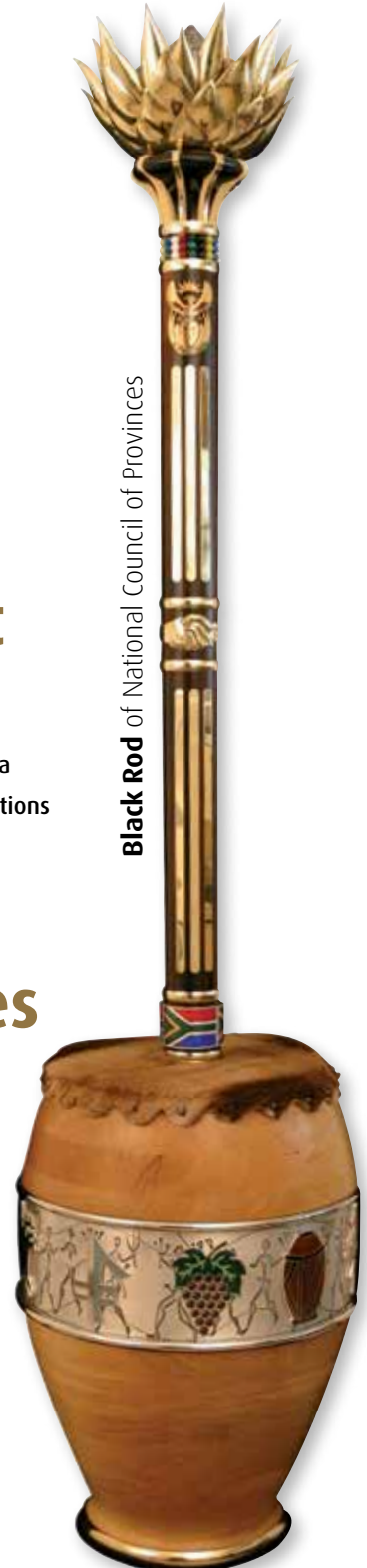
To build an effective people's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of the people and that is driven by the ideal of realising a better quality of life for all the people of South Africa.

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. Strengthen oversight
2. Build a People's Parliament
3. Strengthen co-operative government
4. Improve international participation
5. Build an effective and efficient institution



Black Rod of National Council of Provinces

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COVER: To celebrate Africa Day, the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Thandi Modise, and the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, released doves to symbolise the peaceful coexistence of nations on the African continent.

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OUR IDEALS

VISION 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.


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AFRICA RISING

PLEDGE BY PRESIDING OFFICERS
AND POLITICAL PARTIES

WE, THE DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE
SERVING IN THE FIFTH DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MS B MBETE
Speaker National
Assembly



MS T MODISE
Chairperson National
Council of Provinces

POLITICAL PARTIES

**(1) RECOGNISE –**

- (a) that Africa supported us in our hour of need in the fight against colonialism and apartheid;
- (b) the bold steps undertaken by the people of Africa to transform the continent and create conditions conducive to peace, security and prosperity;
- (c) that through its governance systems and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the African continent can develop itself in a manner consistent with the aspirations articulated in the Agenda 2063 framework;
- (d) the progress that we, as Africans, have made while reflecting upon the common challenges that we face in the global environment; and
- (e) that South Africa is an integral part of Africa and that our national interest is fundamentally linked to the stability, unity and prosperity of the continent of Africa;

(2) REJECT –

- (a) all forms of intolerance in our societies, whether based on race, gender, ethnicity and class; and
- (b) all acts of violence against vulnerable

members of our society based on place of origin, age, and sexual orientation;

(3) COMMIT TO –

- (a) the African Union, which has brought together the continent of Africa to collectively address the problems challenging us;
- (b) the Pan-African ideals of unity underpinning the core values of the African Union;
- (c) strengthening our relations with other Parliaments in Africa to strengthen our regional integration efforts; and
- (d) engaging with the people of South Africa and the rest of the continent on the importance of the bonds that bind us as Africans; and

(4) CALL on our people to –

- (a) proclaim: “We are Africa” and take part in proposed efforts to open the doors of learning and culture from Cape to Cairo and to support Agenda 2063 to develop a better Africa and a better world; and
- (b) celebrate and strengthen, with our fellow Africans, our common humanity and friendship.

Signed on the 28th day of May 2015
at Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

editor's note



“We are Africa” *These words close a groundbreaking pledge drawn up by Parliament and signed by all parties in the legislature. The pledge promises to collectively address the problems challenging us on our continent in a way that underpins the Pan-African ideal of unity.*

Launched to mark Africa Day, but also to show Parliament’s rejection of the scourge of xenophobia that sometimes scars our country, the pledge was drawn up to demonstrate our commitment as South Africans to “strengthening our relations with other Parliaments in Africa ... and to the bonds that bind us as Africans”.

It makes a further promise to “open the doors of learning and culture from Cape to Cairo and to support Agenda 2063 to develop a better Africa and a better world” in the name of “our common humanity and friendship”.

To demonstrate the importance Parliament attributes to Africa Day, indeed to Africa Month in May, all parties came together to sign the pledge and party leaders gathered outside the National Assembly to set free 54 white doves, each representing one of the countries that make up the continent. This issue of *InSession* focuses on the challenges and opportunities facing Africa today.

Africa Day, which commemorates the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (later called the African Union), was celebrated in Parliament with a roundtable discussion which engaged civil society (see page 16), followed by a Joint Sitting (see page 18).

We include a report on the Africa Day celebrations held by the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), which met for its sixth Ordinary Session which was held in Midrand, Gauteng.

The theme of the PAP sitting was “Women’s Empowerment and Development Towards Africa’s Agenda 2063” (see story on page 28), which was echoed at the Southern Africa Sub-Region Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians’ Gender Advocacy Workshop, which was held in Johannesburg (see story on page 24).

This month’s *InSession* also focuses on the President’s Budget debate (see story on page 14) that, with the vote on Parliament’s budget, brings to an end this year’s run of budget votes debates.

The Public Finance Management Act states that the minister of a department must seek parliamentary approval and adoption of the department’s budget vote. The budget debates that traditionally take place at Parliament from May until June each year are the climax of a gruelling process that starts with the Budget speech, which details the budget allocation to the departments for the next financial year.

Finally, June will always be Youth Month, and our education column features current youth perspectives on the challenges facing them (see page 34). Parliament’s Public Education Office interviewed South African students to find out their hopes and challenges. We asked them about their roles in Parliament and what they wanted from their elected representatives.

June remains etched in the collective memory of South Africans as the month that the youth of this country stood up, unarmed and unorganised, to defy the apartheid security forces. This issue of *InSession* is published in memory of the thousands who lost their lives in that countrywide demonstration that changed the trajectory of our history forever.

We also pay tribute to ANC stalwart, Ms Ruth Mompati, who passed away after a lifetime of struggle for democracy and justice. (See her obituary on page 32.) As always, we would like to hear from you. Please email me at insession@parliament.gov.za

Enjoy the read!

Moira Levy
Editor



Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete

MESSAGE FROM THE national assembly



Africa Day marks the day, on the 25th of May 1963, when countries in Africa that had achieved freedom from colonialism, came together to sign a declaration to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Since that time, the African continent has transformed in many ways and today we now have the African Union (AU), which works diligently towards creating a positive future for the people of our continent.

South Africa is an integral part of Africa and our national interest is inextricably linked to the stability, unity and prosperity of the continent. The fifth democratic Parliament will continue to strengthen relations with other parliaments in Africa and spread a message of unity. Our country's celebration of Africa Day is a time for us to celebrate the progress that we – as Africans – have made, while reflecting upon the common challenges we face in the global environment.

Two years ago we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU. We looked back with measured satisfaction at the road we have travelled. But we also committed ourselves to doing more and better in the next 50 years. Agenda 2063 is about the Africa we want to build in the future. It connects the Africa of yesterday to the Africa of today and the Africa of tomorrow. The past has given us many lessons that we can use to drive bravely into a future of collective prosperity and unity.

Agenda 2063 is premised on seven aspirational pillars, which are:

- * A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- * An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism
- * An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- * A peaceful and secure Africa
- * An Africa with strong cultural values and ethics
- * An Africa where development is people-driven, relying particularly on the potential of women and youth
- * Africa as a strong and influential global player and partner

Agenda 2063 also gives priority to regional integration as a key vehicle for Africa's accelerated social and economic development. As such, our Parliament has placed regional integration as one of its areas of strategic focus in terms of our International Relations. Parliament, as guided by South Africa's foreign policy, actively participates in various regional, continental and international forums to promote the African agenda and the role South Africa plays in this regard.

This is embodied in our membership and commitment to the SADC-Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF). In July 2015, Parliament will be hosting the 37th Plenary Assembly of the SADC-PF. This will provide us with an opportunity to further showcase our commitment to regional integration and achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Let us also reflect on the recent wave of attacks by a small minority against our brothers and sisters from various parts of the African continent. I wish to state unequivocally that South Africa and its people are committed to a prosperous and united future for our continent. Parliament will continue to engage critically on a range of issues and activities related to our beautiful continent.

I wish to conclude by reflecting on the words of Amilcar Cabral who said that "our own reality can only be transformed by detailed knowledge of it, by our own efforts, by our own sacrifices". It is only us as Africans, who can define our future, and it is through our work as a united people that we will give our children the future that they deserve.

This speech was delivered by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, on the occasion of the Africa Day Roundtable Discussion on Africa Day, 28 March 2015. 🇿🇦

i put the question

Questions asked in Parliament in May covered issues related to arrangements for the South African Social Security Agency, the general upkeep and tidiness of South African townships and the system for the issuing of visas.

Mr Mncedisi Filtane (UDM) asked the Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, if the process is completed of designing and implementing a system owned and controlled by the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) to ensure that illegal deductions from pensioners' grants are stopped and refunds made with interest. He also asked if the system has been improved to avoid a recurrence of the same problem.

The Minister replied: Sassa has begun with the necessary processes for the transition to the new social grants payment solution, key among which was the re-registration campaign to ensure data integrity and beneficiary authentication. This process has resulted in the re-registration of 22 million beneficiaries and voluntary cancellation of over 150 000 social grants, leading to a saving of R150m. In addition, the re-registration project saw 8 000 jobs created, of which 3 000 were permanent.

I appointed a Ministerial Task Team made up of representatives from Black Sash, the Association for Community Advice Offices in South Africa (ACAOSA), other civil society partners, the Department of Social Development and Sassa. The team was mandated to explore the nature of the deductions, provide recommendations to stop them, and ways to ensure that grant recipients had access to appropriate recourse. The Department and Sassa have begun implementing the measures recommended by the task team. One such is the dispute resolution mechanism, which was approved for implementation in December 2014. The roll out of this mechanism and train-

ing of staff at all local offices and service points is under way. It should be noted that the resolution of the disputes is still dependent on cooperation by the current social grant service provider. By 31 January 2015, approximately 6 076 disputes had been successfully resolved.

The long-term resolution of the illegal deductions will be addressed through the introduction and implementation of a new payment solution. To date, Sassa has drafted a request for proposal (RFP) for a new payment solution, which was published in October 2014. The RFP prohibits any deductions from social grants, except for the deductions permissible as per 26A deductions of the Social Assistance Act.

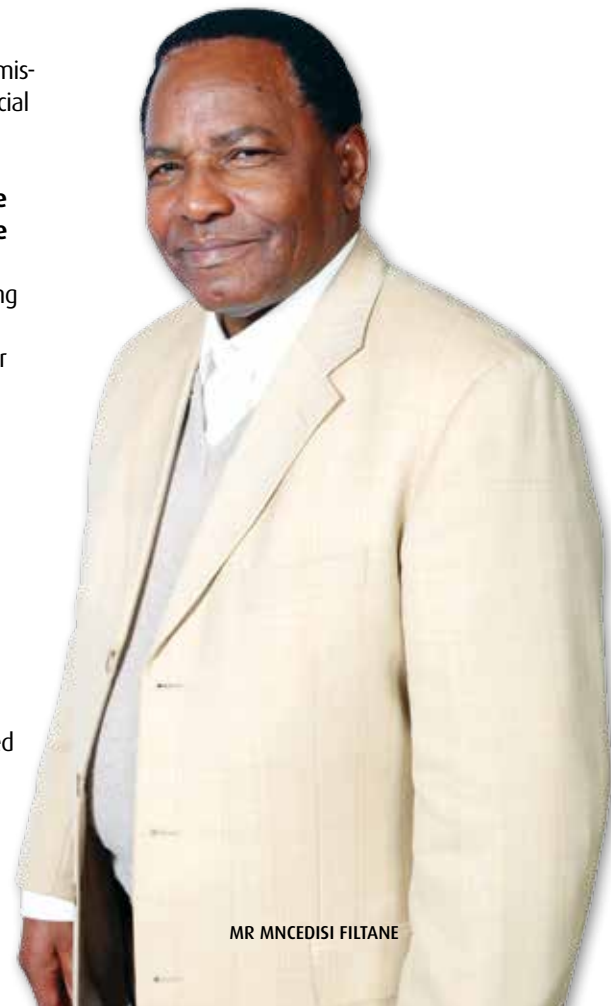
Mr Willie Madisha (Cope) asked the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Pravin Gordhan, if his department is pursuing any policy to take punitive action against mayors of towns and cities for the continuous neglect and general untidiness of townships.

The Minister responded: The department is pursuing two strategic interventions aimed at supporting and strengthening the ability of municipalities to manage their urban spaces more effectively.

Firstly, the back-to-basics approach approved by Cabinet last year is aimed at ensuring that municipalities pay special attention to, among other things, basic management functions in order to create liveable spaces. The Service Delivery Pillar of the back-to-basics approach requires

municipalities to focus on both the delivery of new infrastructure and basic urban management functions such as consistent removal and management of waste, repair of potholes or leakages, and the overall provision of quality services.

Secondly, in September 2014 Cabinet approved a draft integrated urban development framework (IUDF) for public consultation. The overall objective of this policy framework is to ensure the creation of liveable, safe and resilient urban spaces. The various policy levers and strategic priorities identified by the draft IUDF are aimed at ensuring the transformation and proper maintenance of our urban spaces. The back-to-basics approach, as well as the priority areas identified by the IUDF, are aimed at ensuring the transformation and creation



MR MNCEDISI FILTANE

of quality living environments in our urban spaces, which include townships.

Thirdly, in terms of the back-to-basics programme, monthly reports are required in respect of key indicators. Many, but not all, municipalities are complying. A plan has been put in place to increase the reporting levels.

Mr Narend Singh (IFP) asked the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Malusi Gigaba, to furnish information regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the issuing of visas to South African citizens through the VFS Global visa system, average turnaround time from the application stage to the issuing of a visa, problems with the system and cost inhibitions.

The Minister answered: South African citizens do not apply for enabling documents through the VFS Global visa system. Visas are issued to foreign nationals through the VFS Global visa system. The average turnaround time for temporary residence visas is eight weeks as per the Departmental Annual Performance Plan.

The abuse of the appointment system is the most pertinent problem at the moment, although VFS is in the process of dealing with it. The system has no cost implications for the department.

Mr Hermanus Groenewald (DA) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, to outline what plans are in place to ensure that South African statues and heritage sites are protected as part of the country's cultural heritage.

The Minister replied: On Friday, 17 April 2015 I convened a National Consultative Meeting to discuss the challenges facing the transformation of the heritage sector with a focus on statues, place names and symbols that define our public spaces. The meeting was attended by representatives of political parties, civil

society organisations, university students and other interested and affected groups. What follows are some of the resolutions adopted by participants:

* Use existing laws for the transformation, removal, transfer or replacement of any statue, public symbol or place name.

* Government and stakeholders to put emphasis on the fact that attacking and defacing statues is unlawful and criminal, and called for law enforcement agencies to act to prevent these unlawful incidents.

* Communities must work with law enforcement agencies to report unlawful incidents and protect the symbols.

* Review existing laws to test their adequacy and appropriateness in responding to the current need for accelerated change of the current heritage landscape dominated by colonial and apartheid symbols.

* Intensify popularisation campaigns about South Africa's key national symbols in schools for greater civic awareness and national consciousness. These symbols include the preamble to the Constitution of the Republic, the flag and the national anthem.

* The creation of a special purpose task team to assist with conceptualisation, implementation and monitoring, as well as impact assessment of a rapid process of transformation of the heritage landscape towards nation-building. I have identified members of the task team, developed their terms of reference and I am in the process of formally appointing the team.

Ms Tasneem Motara (ANC) asked the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, whether her department has any mechanisms and processes in place to deal with the unlawful deviation from appropriate school quintile classification.

The Minister responded: Deviation by a school from its quintile classification can only occur in terms of the charging

of school fees. Schools in quintiles 4 and 5, although allowed to, may decide not to charge school fees. This deviation is not considered to be unlawful. Schools in quintiles 1, 2 and 3 are not allowed to charge compulsory school fees, but may collect voluntary contributions.

The department has the mechanisms and processes in place to detect unlawful deviation in terms of the charging of school fees. All schools are required to annually submit externally audited financial statements to provincial education departments. The independent external auditors are required to report any deviation from departmental financial policy by the school. Provincial education departments are required to evaluate these audited statements and engage with schools regarding any irregularities reported or identified. All schools are required to annually submit copies of their school budgets to provincial education departments. These budgets should reflect decisions made by the parents regarding the payment of school fees.

Monitoring and evaluation processes such as Whole School Evaluation also provide for on-site evaluation of the financial management of schools, which includes an analysis of income records, budgets and financial statements. No-fee schools lists are published on the department's website. This enables the public to determine the fee-charging status of a school and also report any irregularities with regard to the charging of school fees.

No-fee schools may collect voluntary contributions from the public and parents. To provide clarity on this matter, guidelines regarding voluntary contributions by parents at schools were developed and published in selected newspapers and also circulated to schools via the provincial education departments. 📄

highlights from the committee rooms



Every month Parliament's Committees exercise their law-making and oversight functions. **Cedric Mboyisa** compiled this summary of Committees' deliberations.

* **The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs** has noted the various raids undertaken under the banner of Operation Fiela-Reclaim, which is an operation to rid the country of various illegal aspects such as illegal weapons and drug dens. The Committee further noted the various arrests made as a result of this operation. The Committee will always support any initiative that is aimed at ensuring respect for the rule of law. It is for this reason that the Committee finds it unfortunate that there are suggestions that this operation is targeting foreign nationals.

The Committee notes and appreciates that 423 suspects wanted in connection with various crimes have been traced and that two people were arrested for the negligent handling of firearms. The number of transgressions highlighted as reasons for the arrests point to the fact that this operation is necessary to deal with lawlessness.

South Africa's democratic order is based on the rule of law and, as such, the Committee welcomes the South Gauteng High Court ruling giving the Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) access to arrested foreign nationals. Despite this, the Committee maintains that all undocumented foreign nationals must approach the Department of Home Affairs to regularise their stay within the country. The Committee reiterates its support for Operation Fiela-Reclaim and any other initiative that is aimed at dealing with elements of criminality and general lawlessness within the country.

* **The Select Committee on Appropriations** has expressed its concern about the decision of the National Treasury to withhold the Local Government Equitable Share from municipalities. The National Treasury took the decision because of the debt municipalities owe to Eskom and the National Water Board.

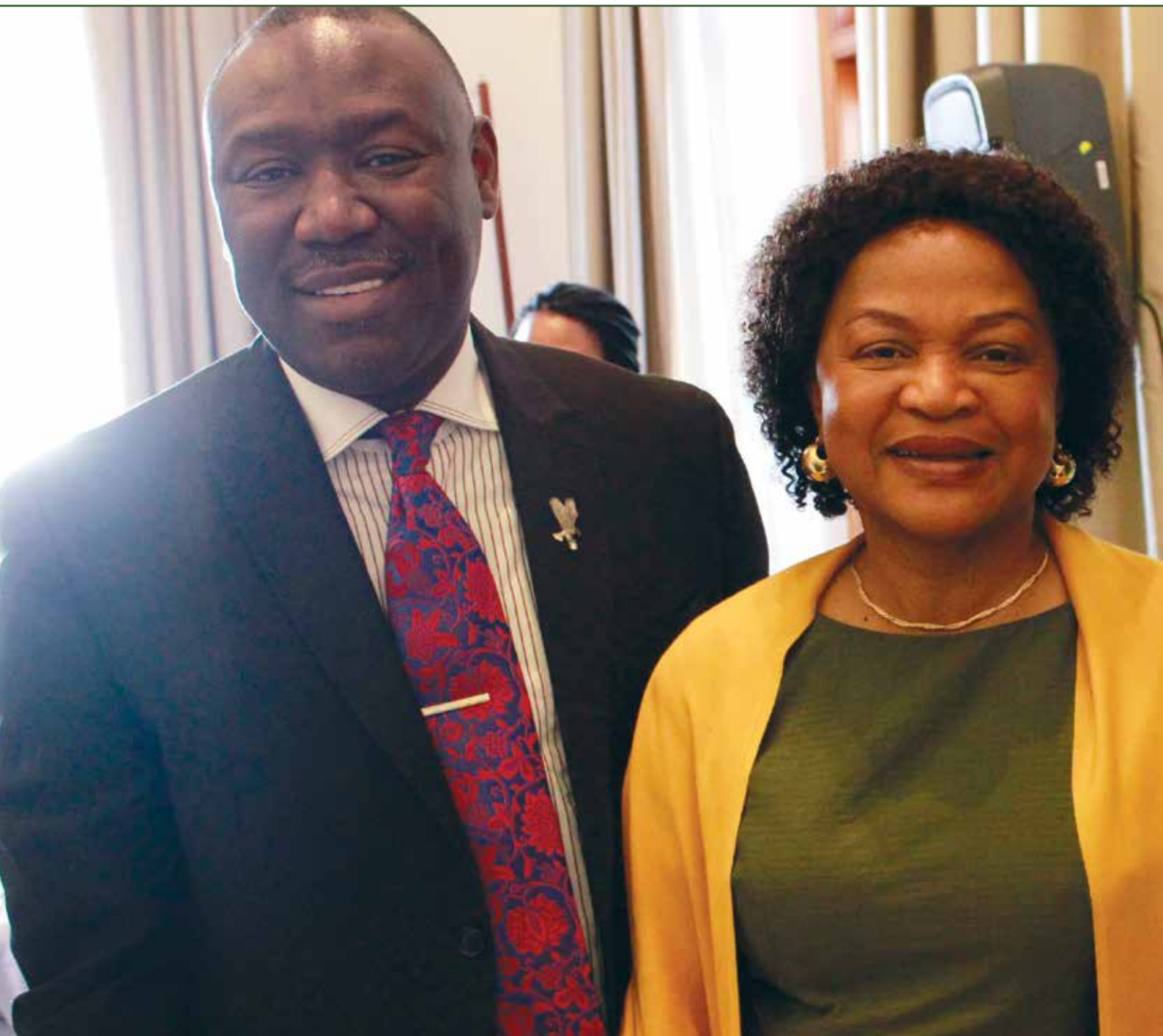
Briefing the Committee on the withholding of Local Government Equitable Share allocations to certain municipalities, the Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) said the decision made by the National Treasury would affect about 59 municipalities and 1 361 416 households. The Chairperson for the Committee, Mr Seiso Mohai, said the Committee had previously been briefed by the National Treasury on the issue. At that time, the Committee had expressed its concern about the consultation process, particularly as it relates to the parliamentary process. "We have to deal with the implications of the decisions of this nature," said Mr Mohai.

During the previous engagement, the Committee had been told that the main purpose of the decision to withhold the Local Government Equitable Share allocations was to encourage municipalities to honour their commitments and to pay the debt. The Committee is of the view that collaboration with various Committees of Parliament needs to take place to resolve the challenges municipalities are faced with and to deal with any discrepancies in billing systems that municipalities may experience.

The Committee came to an agreement that a roundtable discussion should take place with various ministers meeting at a political level to find a solution. Members of the Committee said withholding funds will not resolve the matter and will impact on the poor in affected communities. The withholding of the Local Government Equitable Share allocations will result in the closure of municipalities, which will have a huge impact on service delivery.

* **The Portfolio Committee on Communications** has welcomed the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC's) decision to launch a new television channel called SABC Encore, which airs on DSTV Channel 156. "Primed to broadcast old SABC programmes, the channel will educate our young generation about where we come from as a country in order for them to appreciate how far we have transformed," said Committee Chairperson Ms Joyce Moloji-Moropa.

The channel will be exclusive to pay TV subscribers. The Committee believes it should be accessible on one of the free-to-air SABC TV platforms. Although it has to raise additional funds on top of the 2% seed funding from the National Treasury, the SABC remains a public broadcaster and should be accessible to the public. The Committee believes that the advent of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) project will transform the broadcasting sector in providing quality coverage and access to all SABC TV channels. Ms Moloji-Moropa said that while the Committee applauds the SABC for a job well done, it should not relent on the task at hand, which is to transform channels SABC1 to 3 to reflect local content. 🌐



'We must create a new nation'

Although *South Africa celebrated 21 years of democracy in April this year, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, believes the country is not yet a fully fledged democracy but "a work in progress", writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

The Speaker hosted a delegation of the United States National Bar Association (NBA) and told them that 21 years is not a long time in the transformation of a society that had been oppressed for a long time. "We are a work in progress. A 21-year-old might think they know a lot, but there is still a lot to experience and

learn as you grow," said the Speaker.

The NBA is an voluntary organisation made up of black American lawyers, judges, educators and law students that was founded in the 1920s to champion the interests of black African-Americans within the legal fraternity, who were denied

membership in the American Bar Association.

"We are still in the process of evolving into a new democracy. We often have to remind ourselves that right now we don't have a democracy, we have a democratic dispensation in the making, we are not a finished product yet," Ms Mbete said.

The past 21 years have been an interesting time as Parliament has worked hard to repeal and remove old apartheid laws and most



RENEWAL OF COMMITMENT: The Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, with the President of the National Bar Association, Ms Pamela Meanes, and President-elect Mr Benjamin Crump.

who needs education, transport, proper accommodation and lighting for reading to succeed through the education system," she said.

Ms Mbete said while the country celebrated successfully repealing a lot of apartheid legislation, she learnt only recently that at a local government level, that has not yet been comprehensively done. "We sit with a national-level achievement of repealing and removing old apartheid legislation, but on the ground municipalities are still dealing with the ordinances of the apartheid era. Part of that challenge being that we don't have adequate human resources and the right skills to address all these challenges at once," she said.

With 21 years having passed since democracy dawned, Ms Mbete said much work had been done during that period. "You can't be a finished product when you are 21. However, we are very proud of the things we have gone through, the things we have learnt from around the world, the way in which we have watched other systems unfold. It took us some time to get through the notion that we are now running Parliament after years of protesting outside the gates of this Parliament."

The President of the NBA, Ms Pamela Meanes, said the NBA would continue visiting South Africa and were honoured to be in the country in what was the NBA's fourth visit. "On behalf of our more than 66 000 members, this is our fourth visit to South Africa. It is not our last. We were a part of what you were doing in 1994 and we were honoured to be a part of that – and our commitment is renewed here today," Ms Meanes said. 🌍

importantly, draft a new Constitution for the country.

"The Constitution-making process had to fundamentally address the socio-economic rights which were mostly issues affecting the majority of poor people all over South Africa. We are here now charged with the responsibility of creating a new nation, but we are finding that the legacy of poverty, unemployment and inequality persists in a very complex environment," Ms Mbete explained

"It has emerged, as we have gone again and again to our people to say here are our ideas about how we

should address the difficulties. But it is a very complex situation because people continue to remind us that what matters is that every child must be able to access education, because we believe that is what will secure the future of that child."

As this year has been declared the Year of the Freedom Charter, the Speaker highlighted that the Charter promised free education but it was not "smooth sailing or simple and straightforward. Even if we were to take the whole budget of South Africa and pour it into education, we still would not be able to easily deal with the issues of the black child

The budget process

Part *of Parliament's constitutional mandate is to hold the executive to account, both financially and in the delivery of services. In carrying out this mandate, Parliament recently scrutinised the 40 Budget Votes of the 2015/16 financial year and the five-year strategic and annual performance plans of government departments and their entities, as Mava Lukani reports.*

Apart from the constitutional oversight mandate of Parliament, the Public Finance Management Act states that the political head of a department (a Cabinet minister or a member of the executive council of a province) is responsible for policy matters and outcomes.

This responsibility includes seeking parliamentary (or the provincial legislature's) approval and adoption of the department's budget vote. The director-general of a national department or the provincial head of a department is responsible for outputs and implementation, and he or she is accountable to Parliament or the provincial legislature for the management of the implementation of that budget.

The budget debates that traditionally take place at Parliament from May until June each year are the climax of a gruelling process of holding the executive to account. The journey begins with the Budget speech

delivered by the Minister of Finance that takes place after the State of the Nation Address by the President. For the first time in South Africa's democratic Parliament, the Budget speech was delivered during a Joint Sitting and was followed by a debate of the speech by Members of both Houses of Parliament. The speech details the minister's budget allocation proposals to the departments in the next financial year.

Following the Budget speech, the minister must brief the four parliamentary budget Committees (Standing and Select Committees on Appropriations, and Portfolio and Select Committees on Finance) on the fiscal framework. At this step of the process, the Committees take a closer look at matters of revenue collection and expenditure to ensure that the minister accounts for any shortfall that might lead to a budget deficit.

Deriving authority from the Money

Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, the Standing and Select Committees on Appropriations call the government departments, municipalities, institutions supporting democracy (ISDs) and the public to a public hearing on the annual budget. The Standing Committee on Appropriations calls national departments, especially those mentioned by the President in the State of the Nation Address, as these departments are responsible for government priorities and ISDs. The Select Committee on Appropriations calls provincial departments and municipalities.



The departments then submit their five-year strategic and annual performance plans to the National Assembly (NA). Once the Speaker of the NA is satisfied with the submissions, they are referred to the relevant parliamentary Portfolio Committees for consideration.

Depending on the circumstances, a Committee may ask the National Treasury for a spending history of a department (called a Section 32 report) before considering its submission. This informs the Committee of any under- or overspending, as both have implications for the next financial year.

The Committee then invites government entities and other relevant stakeholders to appear before it to solicit their views on the budget and the strategic and annual performance plans of the department in question.

Once the Committee is satisfied with the department's explanation of the budget and strategic and annual performance plans, it makes a report which the members of the Committee discuss and adopt. The reports are then referred to the NA, which refers them to the extended public committees (EPCs) for further discussion and adoption. The ministers of government

departments that have provincial competence also appear before the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) to account for their budgets.

The Presiding Officers of Parliament, the Speaker of the NA and the Chairperson of the NCOP also account to MPs for the spending of the parliamentary budget. After the EPCs and the NCOP, the NA considers each budget vote and discusses it thoroughly. Members of the NA are expected to expose any failures before adopting a department's budget allocation. The overall 2015/16 budget is R1.1 trillion. 🇿🇦

The Presidency's 2015/16 Budget Debate

President *Jacob Zuma appeared before the Members of the National Assembly (NA) during the budget debate to ask them to adopt the Presidency's 2015/16 R1.2bn budget. In asking the House to adopt the budget, President Zuma said South Africa continues to make steady progress in consolidating democracy and in expanding access to social services, writes Mava Lukani.*

President Zuma said the South African government was guided in its work by the National Development Plan (NDP), which has been translated into an action plan – the five-year medium-term strategic framework.

“We thank the outgoing members of the National Planning Commission who produced the acclaimed NDP,” the President said. He told Members of Parliament (MPs) that the work of government has been enriched by the existence of the NDP. “We know where we want to be in 2030 and have a clear road map of how to get there,” he said.

On progress on the Presidential Coordinating Commission (PCC), the President said this year the PCC has monitored more than 200 project clusters where construction – which includes road repairs and upgrades and the new build programmes of Medupi, Kusile and Ingula power stations – was taking place. President Zuma said other projects include the building of clinics, schools, water pipes and dams, and improving access to broadband facilities.

According to the President, the government continues to implement its energy intervention plan and also continues to support Eskom while exploring the development of reliable energy supply, including from nuclear, renewable energy, hydro power, coal

and gas. “The Deputy President (Mr Cyril Ramaphosa) is managing the support to Eskom, the South African Post Office and South African Airways, the three entities that are facing difficulties,” said President Zuma.

On the issue of attacks on foreign nationals, the President told MPs the government has directed law enforcement agencies to bring the perpetrators to justice without delay. He said the government sent a strong message that South Africa will not tolerate such attacks on foreign nationals. “The South African people have demonstrated to the world that they support peace, friendship and solidarity with their brothers and sisters from the continent,” he said.

Members of the NA brought as many problems as possible before the attention of President Zuma when he appeared before them for the Presidency Budget Debate. The slow growth rate of the economy was among the problems which the leader of the Democratic Alliance, Mr Mmusi Maimane, highlighted. According to Mr Maimane, the South African economy grows at less than 2%. “It should make all of us angry that over the past five years our economy has grown at less than 2%,” said Mr Maimane.

He said despite South Africa's position as a global trading hub and South

Africa's Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) membership and “our vast pool of natural resources one in three South Africans cannot find a job”. Mr Maimane told President Zuma that young black South Africans were not only unemployed but also unemployable because they have not been equipped with the necessary skills to get a job.

“Many are turning to crime because they don't have the opportunity to earn an honest living. Many are abusing alcohol and drugs because it is their means of escape,” Mr Maimane explained.

The current South African executive presidential system in which the President is the head of both the government and the state can cause problems when the President is required to account for the failures of the government, as in most cases that accountability is demanded in a manner that compromises the dignity of the Office of the President. The problem is exacerbated in the absence of a parliamentary committee responsible for the accountability of the Presidency, as it is the case with the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. These views were raised by veteran Member of Parliament and leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi during the debate.

Prince Buthelezi said the protection of the dignity of the Presidency was difficult when the two roles of the Head of the Government and of the State were combined. “Our President should operate above politics, as an umpire, not a player while representing the entire country



ACTION PLAN: President Jacob Zuma asked Parliament to approve the Presidency's 2015/16 budget.

in the international arena," Prince Buthelezi said. Most of the well-established democracies are based on a parliamentary rather than an executive system, he said.

Mr Mosiuoa Lekota of the Congress of the People told the President that the NDP remains in limbo and the economy continues to be in the doldrums, while the political elite live large and the poor remain mired in poverty. According to Mr Lekota, all that the Presidency was succeeding in doing was increasing the national debt. "It is doing so without letting the young people of our country know that the President is placing the burden of settling this huge debt squarely on their shoulders," Mr Lekota said.

Members of the NA also told President Zuma about a growing culture of lawlessness. General Bantu Holomisa of the United Democratic Movement mentioned the building of

shacks in places that are not designed for human settlement. General Holomisa advised the President to ensure that there was meaningful involvement of the people in the spatial development for both urban and rural areas to stop the culture of illegal occupation of land by people for human settlement.

In supporting the budget, General Holomisa advised President Zuma to create a Presidential Council on Sustainable Development with the involvement and direct participation of the broader civil society. He told the President that such an approach would place the citizens of South Africa at the centre of their development as they seek to realise the vision of the country and promote a culture of ownership of its development direction.

"Central to the task of the council would be to consolidate the resources of the country towards an agreed

development path," General Holomisa said.

In his response to the debate, President Zuma told Members of the NA that economic growth will not be achieved by the government alone. He said it will have to involve all sectors of society: business, labour, politicians and civil society. "We need to reach a stage where Honourable Members make constructive suggestions on how to improve economic growth. South Africa belongs to all of us," the President said.

The President urged MPs to assist the government in addressing the culture of lawlessness in their constituencies. He said a collective effort from all leaders in society is necessary to promote respect for authority and the law of the country. He told Members of the NA that as elected Members of Parliament, they have a joint responsibility to build South Africa. 🌐



A new path for Africa's development

To commemorate Africa Day, Parliament held a roundtable discussion on "Africa Rising: Together making Africa realise its full potential through integration and unity". This discussion included contributions from academics, Members of Parliament and civil society on ways to harness Africa's potential and consider the impact of the African Union (AU) over its 50-year history, writes Abel Mputing.

In her opening address, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, commended the AU for unlocking Africa's potential as a cradle of hope, peace and prosperity. She said: "Africa Day marks the day, on 25 May 1963, when countries in Africa that had achieved freedom from colonialism came together to sign a declaration to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Since that time, the African continent has

transformed in many ways and today we now have the African Union which works diligently towards creating a positive future for the people of our continent."

One of the AU's milestones is its adoption of Agenda 2063 as a strategic framework meant to exploit all the possible opportunities available to Africa that will position it as a dynamic force in the global

arena. "Two years ago we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU. We looked back with measured satisfaction at the road we have travelled. But we also committed ourselves to doing more and better in the next 50 years. Agenda 2063 is about the Africa we want to build in the future. It connects the Africa of yesterday to the Africa of today and the Africa of tomorrow. The past has given us many lessons that we can use to drive bravely into a future of collective prosperity and unity – and to strengthen Africa's role as a strong and influential global player," she said.

The presentation of the Deputy Director-General of Statistics South Africa, Ms Kefiloe Masiteng, contextualised patterns of migration and attributed them to South Africa's economic growth. "Migration is a natural phenomenon driven by growth. And naturally, people migrate to a certain country because they



STRATEGIC THINKING: The House Chairperson of the National Assembly and Programme Moderator, Ms Thoko Didiza (left), with Parliament's Transformation Officer, Ms Nozipho January-Bardill, and the Director for Advanced Studies of African Society, Prof Kwesi Prah, at a round table discussion held at Parliament to commemorate Africa Day.

are attracted by the developmental trajectory of that particular country. South Africa is no exception. Likewise, the foreign nationals on our shores are attracted by South Africa's developmental trajectory," she said.

Speaking on peace and stability on the African continent, Dr Adekeye Adebajo asked: "Who will keep the peace in Africa now that the colonisers are gone?" This question, which was asked by Prof Ali Mazrui, one of Africa's foremost public intellectuals 50 years ago, was the theme of Dr Adebajo's presentation. He asked this question because he was of the view that the AU seems not to have learnt from its predecessor's (OAU's) mistakes and Ghana's first president Dr Kwame Nkrumah's call for the establishment of a High Command that will be charged with peace-keeping on the continent. "Kwame Nkrumah advocated for the formation of Africa's High Command that will not

only wage war against the colonial regimes, but that will also keep the peace when the colonisers have been ousted. Today, Nkrumah's call has not been heeded. We still don't have a peace-keeping force in Africa, we have delegated this responsibility to former colonial regimes to do that. Ali Mazrui asked this question mindful of the fact that there will be no peace in Africa if this role is delegated to our colonisers. And that has proven to be the case," he said.

Even in the absence of High Command, there is no strategic partnership between Africa's two super powers: South Africa and Nigeria to fill this void. The results are dire. He attributed the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) political upheavals to this void. "The DRC has so much potential as one of the leading economic hubs of Africa. But since the days of Mobutu Sese Seko its resources have been plundered. Today, its regional vultures are destabilising it and are feasting on it to propel their own economies. And there is no one who is willing to act against this callousness," he said.

This vacuum has also led to the growth of violent extremism that manifests itself in groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabaab in Somalia. He also decried those in public office who are unwilling to cede power. "The ruling parties cling to power at all costs. To date, there are only four leaders from the ruling parties who have stepped down willingly. Most of those who cling to the public office against the wishes of the citizens have done little to protect their citizens or to look after their welfare. As a result, three million Africans are today refugees fleeing political conflict

and persecution from their own countries."

On the richness of African history and culture, Parliament's transformation officer, Ms Nozipho January-Bardill said: "We must highlight the contribution of Africa in the global context. And how its literature, its dance, its costume, intelligence, its performing and fine arts and its creative energy are crucial to our future generations."

Speaking on Pan-Africanism, emancipation, democracy and Africa's development, Prof Kwaa Prah emphasised the importance of literacy. "While brick and mortar considerations are important, development cannot take place when there is massive illiteracy, but literacy is not an abstract notion. If literacy is to have a developmental edge, it must be literacy in the languages of the masses. That way, knowledge which is crucial for development can easily be accessed by the masses. None of the developing societies of Asia works principally in colonial languages. Not even those that, like Africa, were colonised by Europe. The fact that we continue in Africa to work in the colonial language is an indication of our neo-colonial status."

He said the culture of democracy in Africa would not be consolidated if it is dispensed in foreign languages because it will alienate the participation of its greater masses, many of whom are illiterate. "By the same token, the culture of democracy, which requires the participation of the masses and their elected representatives, cannot be strengthened when the affairs of the democratic governance are conducted in languages which are foreign to the masses," he said. 🇵🇸



AFRICA RISING: The Secretary to Parliament, Mr Gengezi Mgidlana (back row, far left) and leaders of political parties flanked by the Presiding Officers, Ms Thandi Modise and Ms Baleka Mbete (front row, fourth and third from right), on the steps of the National Assembly after signing the anti-xenophobia pledge.

Parliament discusses African unity

Agenda *2063, an ambitious, long-term plan by the African Union (AU) to promote development, end conflict and promote unity in Africa was recently debated during a Joint Sitting of the two Houses of Parliament as part of Africa Month celebrations, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*



The Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Baleka Mbete, signs the anti-xenophobia pledge.



The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Thandi Modise, signs the pledge.

Members of Parliament (MPs) from both the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), as well as representatives of the South African Local Government Association (Salga) held a discussion under the theme: "United in our diversity in advancing Agenda 2063"

to exchange views on how to end poverty and wars in Africa in the next 48 years.

While hailing the strategy as a great idea, MPs also raised challenges that might hinder the successful realisation of Agenda 2063. They also reflected

on the recent xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals and said that such acts must never happen again.

Arts and Culture Minister Mr Nathi Mthethwa said the attacks against foreign nationals were a blight on South Africa's achievements during



SIGNING THE PLEDGE: Deputy Chief Whip of the African National Congress, Ms Dorris Dlakude.



Leader of the Democratic Alliance, Mr Mmusi Maimane.



Economic Freedom Fighters' Ms Hlengiwe Maxon

the past 21 years of democracy and freedom. "It is with great sadness that we note the events of the past few weeks, when our country experienced the worst kind of criminality, matched only by the brutality and criminality of colonialism. By attacking foreign nationals, those perpetrators were violating the Constitution," the Minister said.

Inkatha Freedom Party leader Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi said the xenophobic attacks have marred the celebration of Africa Month. "The xenophobic attacks are another expression of the demons we still wrestle. Until that battle is won, unity will remain elusive and a united Africa is predicated on reconciliation," he said.

Mr Solly Malatsi of the Democratic Alliance said: "In order to truly grow as a country and continent, we must be critical of the self-inflicted wounds that are derailing Africa from reaching her full potential. Our elders have led us this far, but the challenges that confront the continent now need the freshness of youth for Africa to prosper." Also condemning the attacks on

foreign nationals, Mr Nhlanhla Khubisa of the National Freedom Party said Africa must never again witness the xenophobic attacks against other fellow African brothers and sisters. "The continent still faces a challenge of ensuring that the continent is stable and all member states are able to govern with honour, respect and dignity. We need stable governance in Africa.

"Agenda 2063 should be underpinned by a new order, a new revolution where African states fight against internal squabbles, greed, hatred, corruption and fraud which are sometimes seen to be endemic in some of the member states and their governments," Mr Khubisa said.

The United Democratic Movement's Mr Nqabayomzi Kwankwa said for Africa to achieve Agenda 2063, African countries must create conditions necessary to help democracy take root. He said the success of nations relied on their ability to entrench good governance, and promote and consolidate democracy, because where there is democracy there is likely to be observance of the rule of law and of

human rights.

"It is time to ensure that the peoples of Africa benefit from the mineral wealth beneath their soil. We need to reconfigure the hidden dynamics in the world that shape the relationship between Africa as the powerless continent and the mighty in the world, because these are important in how trade and wealth accumulation are determined," he said.

"South Africa is part of the AU and the Pan-African Parliament also participated in peace missions and our business people are active in Africa, yet we are not as connected as we ought to be – the recent xenophobic attacks have helped to deepen African distrust," said Mr Willie Madisha of the Congress of the People.

Mr Mntomuhle Khawula, a KwaZulu-Natal delegate in the NCOP, said the biggest threat to Africa's dream is that African countries have very little at their disposal, yet the little that is available the leaders want to grab all of it for themselves while the people they lead are suffering. "Africa is a continent very rich in resources, yet very poor in economy and wealth.

United Democratic Movement's Mr Nqabayomzi Kwankwa.

Leader of the Congress of the People, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota.

Leader of the United Christian Democratic Party, Rev Kenneth Meshoe.





Leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi.



National Freedom Party's Mr Nhlhla Khubisa

This suggests that there is nothing wrong with Mother Africa, but with the people. The unity we displayed when struggling for independence does not translate into the unity we need post-colonialism," said Mr Khawula.

Rev Kenneth Meshoe of the United Christian Democratic Party called on Africans to work harder for unity on the continent and strive to live peacefully side by side with fellow Africans, regardless of where they were born. "Poverty reduction is central to everything we dream for Africa but new research by the African Features Project concludes that the proposed target of getting extreme poverty below 3% of the population by 2030 is unrealistic and insensitive to the actual conditions of many African countries," said Rev Meshoe.

According to Mr Lennox Gaehler, an NCOP Delegate from the Eastern Cape, the possibility to realise the ideals of Agenda 2063 is threatened by the high levels of poverty and inequality derived from historical economic exclusion. He said the current leadership of the continent must increase the efforts of mobilising the

whole of the African people to unite and act towards the creation of an exclusive and better continent.

"While cooperation with many other countries and nations across the globe, with intentions to share and learn experiences, is appreciated, we must begin now to create a possibility for African countries to be able to do the same among themselves," he said.

An NCOP Special Delegate from Mpumalanga, Ms Reginah Mhaule, said the ideals advocated by the founders of the Organisation of African Unity (now AU), 52 years ago, still elude the continent today. She said strategies and measures to overcome conflict, insecurity and terrorism in Africa are urgently needed.

"Our greatest challenge must be to develop a holistic, long-term post-conflict healing, reconciliation and reconstruction. The absence of holistic and lasting peace historically remains one of the core hindrances to the attainment of a tangible socio-economic transformation. It is therefore correct to say that conflict

within and between our countries is the one factor that has contributed more to the present socio-economic and political problems on the continent and the suffering of the civilian population," she said.

Mr Andries Tlouamma of Agang SA said the independence of Africa had simply brought the continent new masters, like the multinationals and International Monetary Fund. "The real challenge is to ensure that our resources benefit our people first. Africa must stop living on its knees and fight for its God-given natural resources," he said.

Pan Africanist Congress President Mr Luthando Mbinda said: "African people are one nation, therefore they need to conclude their political and economic unification – one army, one foreign policy and one currency. That unity must underpin the African value system."

Salga representative, Councillor Ms Flora Maboja-Boltman, said the AU has presented Agenda 2063 as a "comprehensive strategy to optimise the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans. 🇸🇦"

Leader of the African Independent Congress Mr Mandlekosi Galo

Leader of the Pan Africanist Congress, Mr Luthando Mbinda.

Leader of the Africa People's Convension, Mr Themba Godi.





PAP focuses on Africa's developmental efforts

Illicit *financial flows from Africa, arms trading and corruption have been listed among the major causes of underdevelopment and the ongoing wars and conflicts in the continent. These revelations emerged during the Debates on the Illicit Financial Flows from Africa (IFF) and the State of Peace and Security in Africa by the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) during its Sixth Ordinary Session in Midrand, Johannesburg, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

Members of the PAP lamented the ongoing conflicts in Africa, corruption and poor governance and called for urgent action by African leaders. The 10-member high-level panel on illicit financial flows from Africa, chaired by former South African president Mr Thabo Mbeki, exposed how Africa was losing more than \$50bn (R600bn) annually in this manner.

"This estimate is based on data obtained from the International Monetary Fund Direction of Trade Statistics which, as Mr

Raymond Baker, the President of Global Financial Integrity explains, report annual exports and imports for all pairs of reporting countries," said Mr Mbeki.

He added that the figure of \$50bn was an underestimate, as it excluded elements such as trade in services and intangibles, and proceeds of bribery and trafficking in drugs, people and firearms. It is also estimated that over the last 50 years, Africa lost in excess of US\$1 trillion (R12 trillion) in illicit financial outflows. "Illicit financial flows" is money that is

illegally earned, transferred or utilised. These funds originate from three sources: commercial tax evasion; trade mis-invoicing and abusive transfer pricing; and criminal activities such as the drug trade, human trafficking, illegal arms dealing, smuggling of contraband, and bribery and theft by corrupt government officials.

In 2011, the African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development jointly convened by the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa identified illicit capital outflows as a major obstacle to development efforts.

They formed a high-level panel to investigate and make recommendations on steps Africa can take to stop these illicit financial outflows. The recommendations state that Africa needs large volumes of capital to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment. It is precisely in this context that the importance of stopping illicit financial outflows that deplete capital reserves becomes clear.



ONE CONTINENT: The flags of all the countries in Africa ring the National Assembly foyer in honour of Africa Day.

for. “We are convinced that peace and security are key to our development. There can be no development on our continent without peace and we as the PAP join hands with the Peace and Security Council to work closely towards bringing about the restoration of peace in the conflict areas within our continent.

“We are asking the leaders in Burundi to respect the constitution that has brought them to power. We are asking them to take responsibility for the lives and property of the citizens of their country. Burundi has to have peace and should not be sacrificed on the altar of political issues. We believe that the people of Burundi need to come together and work towards peace and an atmosphere that is devoid of any level of militarisation,” he said.

Mr Amadi referred to reports that thousands of Africans had drowned in a bid to get away from the life of poverty and hunger on the continent.

“I had an opportunity to visit one of the camps where I spoke with one of the migrants, and the young man said to me that it is better for him to die trying to get to Europe than face the shame in his village watching his mother, brothers and sisters suffering from hunger and starvation without opportunities for employment.

“The problem of African youths dying in the Mediterranean is not a European problem but an African problem, and we need to find Africa’s solutions to that problem. We must create opportunities for our young men and women to find employment, to have access to education, healthcare, peace and security,” he said.

The Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council, Ambassador Ms Amina Djibo Diallo, said it was not possible to begin to speak of

development in Africa without peace, stability and security on the continent. “The current situation in Africa remains concerning in light of the number of crises, including the terrorist threats, free movement of weapons across borders, inequality, the lack of democracy and the violation of human rights,” she said.

Mr David Pierre from Seychelles said: “Long-lasting peace in our continent demands, as a prerequisite, that each African leader shows true belief in democratic political leadership and shows real political will to ensure that his or her country is led on the basis of true democracy, governance, respect for the rule of law, respect for human rights and on the will to empower women and the youth.”

He said leaders must ensure that the people of Africa are educated and empowered so as to be able to participate in their economic development and help eradicate poverty.

Dr Bernadette Lahai from Sierra Leone lamented the effect of conflict in Africa, particularly on women and children, as it is during conflict that women and children are caught between warring factions – and as a result suffer discrimination, rape, abuse and all types of inhumane treatment.

“We must also address the issue of the arms trade, which is fuelling the conflicts in Africa. We now have the Arms Trade Treaty, which came into effect last December and many countries have yet to adopt, sign or ratify it. It is important that we put under control and surveillance the transfer of arms between and among countries,” she said. 🌍

PAP also celebrated Africa Day, under the theme of women's empowerment. See page 26, as part of a focus on women.

“The African Development Bank and others estimate that Africa needs an additional US\$30bn (R360bn) to US\$50bn annually to address its infrastructure needs. With regard to the latter, we must explain that here corruption features in two contexts. One of these which we have just mentioned is the expatriation of corruptly acquired resources,” Mr Mbeki said.

“The other is corruption understood as the abuse of entrusted power to facilitate the illicit export of capital by others and, therefore, its prevalence throughout the various activities which represent the illicit outflows. The second important finding [of the panel of African ministers] I must mention is that the outflows from Africa end up somewhere else in the world. Accordingly, to stem these outflows requires cooperation and joint action among the originating and receiving countries,” he said.

The outgoing PAP President, Mr Bethel Amadi, said the root causes of the crisis in many member states were well known and most of the time uncalled

Women's struggle far from over

The *Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) has come a long way, from operating on the margins as an unrecognised lobby group with no political standing in the affairs of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) to claiming the centre stage as the vanguard of its gender mainstreaming agenda, writes Abel Mputing.*

The Southern Africa Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Gender Advocacy Workshop, which was held in Johannesburg recently, provided a fitting moment to assess how far the gender mainstreaming agenda in the legislative and executive sectors in this region has come and the challenges that lie ahead.

The Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of Kenya and President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Africa Region, Mr Justin Muturi, agreed that CWP has made good progress and has given women a credible voice in its resolve to foster the mainstreaming of gender equality in decision-making positions.

"I am glad to note that since the inception of the CWP, women have gained a platform where they can discuss ways of increasing the number of women in Parliament and ensuring that gender considerations are streamlined in legislation in the respective countries. As the CPA Africa Region President, I am happy to note that great strides are now being taken to ensure that women's participation is evident and meaningful. Over the years and particularly in Africa, the number of women in political leadership positions has grown."

In southern Africa, South Africa and Mozambique have reached the

30% mark set by the 2005-2015 Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equity. Mr Muturi agreed that Kenya was one of the countries lagging behind in this regard, but there are plans in place in the form of Article 27 (3) in Kenya's constitution to ensure that Kenya meets the requirements of the CPA Plan of Action for Gender Equity. Mr Muturi said the role of women as agents of positive change is more important than ever, given the fact that the continent faces big challenges, ranging from security concerns created by Boko Haram in Nigeria and terrorism by militant groups like al-Shabaab in Somalia to xenophobia in South Africa.

The Deputy Speaker of the Gauteng Legislature, Mr Uhuru Moiloa, said African women have reached high political positions in Africa. He mentioned the President of Liberia, Ms Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, former president of Malawi, Ms Joyce Banda, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) as examples. However, he said the struggle for the liberation of women in Africa is far from over.

To underscore the historical nature of the gender question and how incomplete Africa's liberation would be without the liberation of women, Mr Moiloa paraphrased late Mozambican president Mr Samora Machel's words calling for the liberation of women in 1973: "The liberation of women is a fundamental necessity for our revolution, a guarantee of its continuity and a precondition for its victory."

Mr Moiloa continued: "We should continue this noble and necessary course by affirming that our collective struggles will not be complete without the total liberation of women. We recommit ourselves to this course, fully aware that at the heart of women's marginalisation is the patriarchal order that confines them to the domestic arena and reserves for men the arena where political power and authority reside. We are fully aware that democracy and human rights have been defined and interpreted in terms of men's experiences. Society has been organised and its institutions structured for the primary benefit of men."

Mr Moiloa admitted that the necessary instruments to address the gender question are in place, but that has not yet been achieved. "Our recent history is littered with forums and resolutions aimed at resolving this historic task of total liberation of our people in their entirety. The challenge, however, is the ineffective implementation of these resolutions. And that is a responsibility that rests on our shoulders as leaders to create conducive conditions for the successful and meaningful implementation of resolutions, and harness efforts aimed



GENDER EQUITY: CWP Vice-Chairperson Ms Thoko Didiza.

at finding sustainable solutions to the gender question.”

The House Chairperson of the National Assembly and CWP Vice-Chairperson Africa region, Ms Thoko Didiza, agreed with Mr Moilola’s sentiment that there are many progressive constitutions in the southern African region that promulgate the mainstreaming of gender equality in decision-making positions in the legislative sector and in the executive, but said that in most instances what happens on the ground is not compatible with what is contained in these constitutions.

“We have many progressive and gender-sensitive commitments in our constitutions, but the question is what happens beyond the statutes? How do we make sure what is contained in them is actualised? In most instances one cannot compare what is happening in real life and

what is in the constitution. What do we do beyond the paper to make sure the commitments and instruments written on it are actualised and become real?

“Despite all the representational gains that women have registered in the legislative sector and in the executive, the under-representation of women in the executive portfolios of political parties in the region is disquieting. It is critical to ensure that women occupy high-profile decision-making positions in their political parties to defend the gains they have made thus far, because that is where the real political power and influence lie,” she said.

“The pronouncements and commitments made by parties have helped to promote gender equality. But are women occupying decision-making positions in their political

parties? What matters is that women should occupy senior positions in their political parties and that is how women can defend the gains they have achieved thus far.”

According to the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Thandi Modise, we must look beyond the numbers and focus on what women legislators can accomplish in their legislatures. As such, there is a need to use women’s structures, such as women caucuses, to foster strategies and policies that can entrench the agenda of gender in both the legislative sector and in the executive in our lifetime.

“We need effective women’s caucuses in our parliaments because women’s caucuses can be particularly useful in strengthening the voice of women who constitute an under-heard constituency in legislatures.” 🌟

Let's take Africa to the world and the world to Africa



The *Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Tourism, Ms Beatrice Ngcobo, has highlighted the significance of the Committee's involvement in the tourism indaba held in KwaZulu-Natal in May, writes Mava Lukani.*

The indirect involvement of the members of the Portfolio and Select Committees of Parliament in the recent 2015 Annual Tourism Indaba that took place at King Shaka International Convention Centre in Durban, was a step in the right direction given the dynamism of the nature of the constitutional relationship between these parliamentary Committees and the Department of Tourism, Ms Ngcobo said.

Ms Ngcobo led a group of members of the Portfolio and Select Committees to the 2015 Annual Tourism Indaba. "Our attendance of the indaba this year has been driven largely by a deepening tradition of close relations between the Department of Tourism and Parliament," Ms Ngcobo

explained. She said the Portfolio Committee on Tourism wants to broaden the scope of its relationship with the department.

The indaba is regarded as one of the largest tourism marketing events on the African calendar and one of the top three "must visit" events of its kind on the global calendar. It showcases a wide variety of southern Africa's best tourism products, and attracts international buyers and media from across the world. The indaba is owned by South African Tourism and organised by Pure Grit Project and Exhibitions Management.

Although the 2015 Indaba took place a few weeks after the ugly xenophobic

violence that swept through the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, Ms Ngcobo said the indaba attracted an increased number of international, continental and local participants. "I was encouraged to note that the glory of our country on the world map of tourism was not diminished by the violence against foreign nationals," Ms Ngcobo said.

She said members of the Portfolio and Select Committees had an opportunity to interact with international figures, the champions of trade in the travel and tourism sector. According to Ms Ngcobo, the 2015 Indaba programme had a session of sharing of experiences between the ministers of tourism from various African countries and provincial MECs for tourism. She said the management of migration was a key topic for discussion.

"As Members of Parliament we were delighted by the presence and active



participation of the provincial MECs for tourism in the session, as our country is currently challenged by the issues of migration management. The Zambian Minister of Tourism shared his country's use of the univisa in his country's migration management," Ms Ngcobo said.

Univisa is a proposal to have a common visa system for countries in the Southern African Development Community. It is still in the pilot phase, but it is thought that it will have a big impact on tourism in the region if it is implemented.

Opening the 2015 Indaba, the South African Minister of Tourism, Mr Derek Hanekom, said the event has evolved into Africa's largest and most successful tourism trade platform. "It is now a truly pan-African trade show and its brand strength continues to grow year after year," Mr Hanekom said.

He told attendees that the indaba was where they would find the best access to Africa's unique offerings. "In the next few months we will be announcing measures to make the Indaba even more competitive. We will be issuing a call for proposals from prospective partners with a global reach to work with us and to expand this ship's sailing routes," he said.

He said the indaba created an important opportunity for Africans to meet and discuss common challenges, opportunities and barriers at policy level. "Our point of departure is that we are united in our resolve to build the positive brand of Africa as a continent of unparalleled tourism opportunities and to enhance tourism as a mainstream economic sector, a sector of hope for Africa and its people," Mr Hanekom said.

He further said all the stakeholders of the tourism industry were united in denouncing the spate of recent attacks on foreign nationals living in South Africa. "These deplorable incidents of violence do not reflect who we are as a nation or who we are as a continent," he said.

Referring to the xenophobic attacks, he praised the government's swift response and the overwhelming majority of South Africans who respect human rights. Mr Hanekom assured the buyers and the exhibitors that South Africa would never allow the criminal actions of a few to derail the togetherness forged by the vast majority of South Africans. "We are determined that our country will always be open to welcome people from around the world."

According to Mr Hanekom, tourism was making an important and valuable contribution to the South African economy. "Taking the direct

and indirect impacts of tourism together, our tourism sector now contributes over 9% of South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) and supports over 1.5 million job opportunities countrywide. And it continues to grow."

He said on the African continent, tourism directly and indirectly supports 20.5 million jobs and represents 8.1% of Africa's GDP. In some countries more than 50% of their GDP comes from tourism. He said some of the world's unique tourism offerings are found in Africa. "Only in Africa do we have sites that tell a compelling story about who we are and the road that humanity has travelled. It stretches from the earliest origins of humankind to our recent struggle for freedom and equality. Chapters of that story are written in many countries of our continent," Mr Hanekom said.

Places like Robben Island in Cape Town and Nelson Mandela's original home in Soweto are sites that have meaning for the entire world, and have become iconic symbols of "our recent political history, signifying the triumph of freedom over oppression," Mr Hanekom said.

He also mentioned that international arrivals in Africa increased to 56 million last year and this is expected to grow by between 3% and 5% in 2015. He told the Indaba participants to adopt the slogan: Let's take Africa to the world and take the world to Africa.

African delegates attending the 2015 Annual Tourism Indaba came from Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, among other countries. 🌍

Africa Day focuses on gender equality

Many African countries have not done enough to advance the issue of gender equality. This was the main concern when delegates from all over the continent celebrated Africa Day on 25 May during a session of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) in Midrand, Johannesburg, writes **Cedric Mboyisa**.

PAP celebrated Africa Day under the theme “2015 The Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development Towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”. The former PAP president, Mr Bethel Amadi, said: “Africa has not been able to meet its targets. Women, who are the backbone of the continent, must be empowered to take charge of their destiny.” He said implementation remained a critical challenge on the African continent. He added that Africa lagged behind in many aspects due to its failure to robustly push and pursue women’s issues.

The inaugural president of PAP, Ms Gertrude Mongella, was scathing about some African leaders. “How many times must we tell you that we are equal?” asked Ms Mongella. She said women ought to be allowed to advance in life. “What is wrong with Africa? We love war. We love to break rules. Africa is bleeding.”

Turning to the issue of African leaders who refuse to relinquish power, Ms Mongella slammed African leaders who were “too diplomatic” in dealing with despots who wanted to cling to power at all costs. “What is happening in Burundi is pathetic. We negotiate too much (with leaders who want to be rulers for life). Conflict has become business in Africa. It is women who suffer more as a result of this. Where are the Nigerian girls? This parliament must make laws to hold African leaders to account,” Ms Mongella said.

In her presentation, “From theory to action: Strategies to increase women’s participation in decision-making in Africa”, Executive Director of the African Women’s Development and Communication Network Dr Dinah Musindarwezo said equal participation of men and women in political affairs made governments more representative of society and more accountable and transparent, and ensured that the interests of women and men were taken into account in policy-making.

She said only eight countries in Africa – Angola, Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda – have reached the 30% target of women representation in government. Tanzania has made some remarkable strides in terms of gender representation in parliament – it has 256 women and 364 men in its national assembly. When it comes to ministerial positions, countries such as Cape Verde, Benin, Rwanda and Nigeria have at least 40% of ministers are women. She pointed out that women still did not join political parties or occupy top positions in political parties in significant numbers.

“The reality of politics requires that there has to be a popular demand for the transformative goals to which we aspire. These goals include equality, peace, sustainable development, democratic governance, and accountable and efficient government,” Dr Musindarwezo said.

Gender expert Ms Litha Musyimi-Ogana, who presented a paper during the session, “Review of the progress of the African Women’s Decade 2010-2020: Implications for women’s empowerment in Africa, challenges and successes”, said the African Union had made “remarkable progress” in terms of women’s participation in decision-making processes. She cited the election of two female presidents – Ms Ellen Johnson Sirleaf [current President of Liberia] and Dr Joyce Banda [former President of Malawi]. “We have also witnessed the election of the first (female) Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma,” said Ms Musyimi-Ogana.

She listed the 10 themes central to the African Women’s Decade:

- * fighting poverty and promoting empowerment of women and entrepreneurship;
- * agriculture and food security;
- * health, maternal mortality and fighting hunger;
- * education, science and technology;
- * environment and climate change;
- * peace, security and prevention of violence against women;
- * governance and legal protection;
- * finance and gender budgets;
- * women in decision-making positions; and
- * the empowerment of young women.

“As parliamentarians of PAP, we are expected to report to PAP directly on the status of the implementation of the Women’s Decade in our countries. Based on the reports that PAP receives, the PAP Committee on Social Affairs, Women, Children and People Living with Disabilities is expected to compile a report on the implementation of the decade to the PAP General Assembly,” Ms Musyimi-Ogana said. 🌍

Deadline for MPs to disclose private interests



Mr Aumsen Singh



Mr Amos Masondo

From *the Deputy President and Ministers to ordinary Members of Parliament, the time has come for them to disclose their business interests and indicate, among other things, if they get paid for any work performed outside Parliament, their property and land ownership, as well as gifts and sponsorships received, writes Temba Gubula.*

According to the Code of Conduct and Ethical Conduct, MPs are also obliged to declare whether they received gifts and hospitality offers of over R1 500, from a source other than a family member or permanent companion or gifts of a traditional nature provided that this does not create a conflict of interest for the Member.

Members of Parliament are also required to disclose any foreign travel they have undertaken, other than personal visits paid for by the Member, business visits unrelated to the Member's role as a public representative, and official and formal visits paid for by an organ of State or the Member's party.

This practice, according to the Joint Committee on Ethics and Members' Interests, is a requirement that all MPs are required to abide by every year. Co-Chairpersons Mr Amos Masondo and Mr Aumsen Singh said the Committee resolved to give all MPs until 30 June 2015 to declare their private interests for 2015.

In previous Parliaments, MPs were required to do this earlier as was prescribed by the then Code of Conduct. This has changed because in October 2014, the fifth Parliament adopted a new Code of Ethical

Conduct and Disclosure of Members' Interests for Assembly and Council Members. Unlike the old code of conduct where MPs were obliged to declare within 30 days of the opening of Parliament, the new code states that MPs' disclosure must be within 60 days from the opening of Parliament or 60 days of the appointment of a Member who was not a Member at the opening of Parliament.

Along with the new code of conduct, a new form for the Disclosure of Members' Interests was adopted. The new disclosure form has new inclusions that require MPs to declare whether they have any trusts, long-term loans or liabilities. The new form also requires MPs to disclose any current contracts they have with public institutions so that the Committee can ensure that an MP with such a contract is only allowed to continue with that particular contract up to its expiry date and that it does not get extended or renewed.

The new form also has a new preamble which Committee members applauded, saying it captures the principles by which all MPs must abide, namely selflessness, integrity, objectivity, openness, honesty and leadership.

The 30 June deadline, according to the Co-Chairpersons, will afford members ample time to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the new Code of Ethical Conduct and Disclosure of Members' Interests and with the new disclosure forms.

One element which is considered when setting a deadline, according to the Committee, is that it should be realistic enough to afford the Committee ample time to process all declarations. Once the declarations have been processed and captured, each MP will get an opportunity to check that all the information has been captured correctly and is a true reflection of what they submitted.

The Committee does this to ensure that an accurate Register for Members' Interests is available to the public. The Committee Chairpersons said this year's Register for Members' Interests would be adopted and published in September.

The Committee is empowered to ensure that all MPs comply with the Code. In the event of non-compliance, the Committee may, among other things, recommend that an MP be reprimanded in the House; receive a fine not exceeding the value of 30 days' salary; or face a reduction of salary or allowances for a period not exceeding 30 days. The Committee Chairpersons said, however, that they hoped MPs would always comply so that there would not be a need for the imposition of penalties. 🙏

NCOP delegation successfully intervenes in Ladismith water crisis

Within *a period of three weeks, the water crisis in Ladismith in the Western Cape was resolved through the National Council of Provinces' Taking Parliament to the People programme, writes Elijah Moholola.*

When the delegation of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) visited Ladismith early in March as part of the Taking Parliament to the People (TPTTP) pre-visit, the looming water crisis was underscored by the fact that the main Le Grange Dam only had enough water to satisfy the water needs of the residents of Ladismith for five days.

The leader of the delegation, Mr Dikgang Stock, said at the time: "The water that is in this dam at the moment will only last until approximately the end of March. The municipality will have to rely on the nine boreholes they have drilled [of which only three were functioning]."

"And as more pressure is put on those boreholes, there is the possibility that they may also run out of water. So this is an urgent need for which we have to submit a report as soon as possible, so that the Department of Water and Sanitation can quickly deal with the matter."

When the *InSession* team returned to the dam during the TPTTP programme in mid-April, the situation was much changed, with the dam holding enough water for an estimated 22 days while the nine new boreholes were fully equipped and supplying water to the town. This is a

tremendous turnaround and one that illustrates just how effective TPTTP can be as a vehicle through which the three spheres of government can work together to ensure that service delivery challenges are resolved.

The Le Grange Dam, which is the main storage dam for surface water in Ladismith, is structurally unsound and can at any given time only be filled to 60% of its capacity. This limitation resulted in the town experiencing water shortages during the dry periods of summer, which is from January to April when there is little rainfall.

"This year, the water challenges reached unprecedented levels when Ladismith experienced the worst drought in 35 years, which was attributed to, among other things, the rising temperatures and the impact of climate change. The Kannaland Local Municipality Council decided that the area should be declared a disaster area," the Mayor, Mr Morne Hoogbaard, said.

"We sought funding from the national government, particularly the Department of Water and Sanitation, to assist us with emergency funds to put in place certain interventions to address the challenge. Among the interventions was the equipping

of the boreholes that had been drilled last year. Those boreholes are now equipped and that strategic intervention took us through the drought," Mr Hoogbaard told the *InSession* team.

"As a result of the emergency intervention, we currently have nine boreholes which are equipped and can supply water to the town. We don't channel the water from the boreholes through to the dam because it is high-quality water – we put it directly into the reservoirs. The dam is looking much better, but at any given time when the dam is full there is only a month's supply of water in it for the town," Mr Hoogbaard said.

"Due to the limitations resulting from the capacity of the dam, the nine boreholes play an instrumental role in the short to medium term, but there is a long-term plan being thrashed out by the Kannaland Local Municipality," Mr Hoogbaard said.

"What we need is another dam and out of the studies we have done with the Department of Water and Sanitation, the plan is to build a new dam. The draft documents and designs will be presented to the department and we hope the department will give final approval.

"The new dam is expected to give capacity of about 700 000 cubic meters of water to a million people, so along with the boreholes, which will augment the water supply



WE ARE HERE TO SERVE: (from left) Members of Parliament Mr Mntomuhle Khawula, Mr Dikgang Stock, Mr Moses Mhlanga and Mr George Michalakis at the site visit to the La Grange dam outside Ladismith.

of Kannaland, this will create an opportunity for economic growth and of course, this will lead to water security for the town and its people," he said.

The current capacity of the Le Grange Dam is only 47 000 cubic litres. The Kannaland Local Municipality has also devised other initiatives to deal with the water challenges.

"Once you are in a crisis, you have to be innovative. We have about three or four smaller dams around the town. Collectively, these dams have about 20 000 cubic litres of water. So now we have linked all these dams with the main channel that flows to the Le Grange Dam. This means that it's unnecessary to run around with pipes [to access water from these dams]. Now, with the press of the button, the water will be pumped to the channel

and supply Le Grange Dam," Mr Hoogbaard said.

The municipality still has to pump water to the reservoirs, which is why it is important for a new dam to be built in order to limit costs associated with electricity, diesel and other related costs. "As a result of this emergency intervention, we have decided that with the emergency funding from the Department of Water and Sanitation, we will equip two of the boreholes with solar power. With solar power there are obviously no costs, apart from the cost of the solar panels. The two boreholes are currently equipped and they are pumping water directly to our water works," Mr Hoogbaard explained.

He emphasised the significance of the successful collaboration between the three spheres of government – local,

provincial and national. "Without the strategic partnership between the Department of Water and Sanitation and the provincial government, this could have been much more difficult to handle. But the three spheres of government showed that if we work together and work towards the same vision – to prevent the town from running out of water – then this can be done in a very short time.

"Most of these projects were implemented within a space of three weeks. So this has been a tremendous effort from the three spheres of government working together."

This echoed the sentiment expressed by Deputy President Mr Cyril Ramaphosa on the last day of the TPTP when he described the NCOP as "a network for best practice". 🌟



tribute *to* Ruth Mompoti

14 September 1925 – 12 May 2015

A motion of condolences for the late Ms Ruth Mompoti in the National Assembly evoked memories of a gentle giant of the liberation struggle, who was motivated by the situation of women in South African society. This motivation led to her participation in organising the 1956 Women's March against passes to the Union Buildings which, for the first time in history, brought the situation of women to the top of South Africa's political agenda, writes Abel Mputing.

The late Ms Mompoti was destined to serve. She first displayed her commitment to the nation when she became a teacher. In 1954, she joined the African National Congress (ANC) and was elected to the National Executive Committee of the ANC Women's League and became a typist

at the Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo law firm in 1961. She played an active role as a founder member of the multiracial Federation of South African Women and was one of the organisers of the historic Women's March on 9 August 1956. Today, this march is commemorated as Women's

Day to mark the strides women have made in their fight for self-determination.

Her commitment to freedom was so great that she sacrificed her own personal and family comforts, leaving two children behind to join the armed struggle in exile. It is this character that won her a reputation as the mother of the liberation struggle. Hence, she was affectionately called *Mme*, which means beloved mother in Sesotho.

It is these selfless sacrifices that earned her the *Isithwalandwe* – the highest honour conferred by the ANC on those who display exceptional leadership. "South Africa has lost an inspirational struggle veteran who contributed immensely to the fight for our democracy. The fact that Mme Mompoti was awarded *Isithwalandwe* speaks volumes about her contribution to our country's freedom and democracy. We convey our condolences to her family and friends. May her soul rest in everlasting peace knowing that her role in building our country's future will never be forgotten.," said the Deputy Chief Whip of the African National Congress (ANC), Ms Dorries Dlakude.

Much is known about the late Ms Mompoti as a freedom fighter, but little is known of her excellent negotiation skills which contributed to the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of political parties, according to ANC MP Ms Masefele Morutoa. "She was one of the two women in the ANC leadership who met former president Mr Frederick de Klerk in the negotiations that led to the commitment from the then government of the day to release all political prisoners and the granting of

indemnity from prosecution of those who were in exile. Her presence in these negotiations has cemented her role as one of the political leaders who paved the way for a peaceful transition to democracy. We owe that to her," Ms Morutoa said.

Inkatha Freedom Party MP Mr Mangaqa Mncwango said: "Ms Mompoti had a magnanimous disposition, which endeared her to many and which allowed her to play the role of a mother with ease. I had the honour and privilege of travelling overseas with her and I can personally attest to her magnanimous character, benevolence and kindness to all. A great light has left our land."

It is her nobility that endeared her to both friends and foes, said United Democratic Movement MP Ms Cynthia Majeke. "Ms Mompoti was blessed with resilience beyond measure. She was obedient to her calling and dared even her oppressors to embrace love. Her majestic ways were indicative of more than just a mere person – she was indeed an extraordinary human being. Her model is one for the ages and we thank her sacrifice."

Democratic Alliance MP Ms Anchen Dreyer canonised Ms Mompoti as a perceptive and self-critical thinker who was open to reason. "The history of Ruth Mompoti was not entirely uncontroversial. During an interview in London in 1987 she claimed that being gay is abnormal. But when asked again by Mr Graeme Reid, one of the editors of the book *Sex and Politics in South Africa*, which deals with sexual equality in the Bill of Rights, she changed her stance, claiming that times and attitudes change. Mr Reid was stuck by her

sincere response and on the spur of the moment, asked her if she would write a foreword to the book and she agreed.

Her resolute character elevated the plight of women on South Africa's political agenda and is an endorsement of her unconditional dedication to South Africa's gender agenda, said African Independent Congress MP Mr Lulama Ntshayisa. "The late Ms Mompoti will be remembered for her bravery and hatred of oppression."

Pan-Africanist Congress MP Mr Luthando Mbinda said: "You were a shining star of Africa, walking in the footsteps of African women warriors, in the likes of Nehanda of Zimbabwe, Queen Nzinga of Angola, Asantewaa of Ghana and Makeda of Ethiopia. Your light is streaming across the field of time and space."

Economic Freedom Fighters' MP Ms Hlengiwe Mxoxo saluted her for being a true servant of the people. "We have indeed lost a struggle stalwart and a true leader who remained humble throughout her life. Ms Ruth was a champion of our people, who selflessly served this country at the time when apartheid was viciously killing and persecuting our people."

African Christian Democratic Party MP Ms Cheryllyn Dudley said: "As a founding member of the Federation of South African Women, she is fondly remembered as one of the leaders of the historic Women's March on 9 August 1956, which is now commemorated as Women's Day."

Ms Mompoti was at the forefront of the liberation struggle and her commitment to freedom was an

inspiration, said Congress of the People MP Mr Mosiuoa Lekota.

"We have lost one of the best leaders in South Africa. We first learnt of her sterling work when she was in exile and we were on Robben Island. We formed in our minds a picture of a huge, six-foot-tall person. When we met her for the first time at a conference at Westville University in Durban after the unbanning of political parties, we met a well-trimmed lady who was soft-spoken, and who was a source of deep inspiration."

African People's Convention MP Mr Themba Godi said: "When a person passes away we naturally look back at the life she lived. We remember a parliamentarian, a diplomat, a mayor, and above all a freedom fighter. She belongs to a generation that discovered its mission – never to betray it, but to serve, suffer and sacrifice for the realisation of freedom for the African majority. Like many, she was prepared to forsake her personal and family comforts for the sake of the struggle. She left her two small children behind and went into exile – what a sacrifice."

National Freedom Party MP Mr Nhlanhlayise Khubisa said: "As South Africans we owe it to the memory of Dr Mompoti to cherish our liberty for which she has fought so tirelessly. We owe it to her memory to strengthen our democracy."

Ms Mompoti occupied various high-profile public positions and became a Member of Parliament in April 1996. She was appointed ambassador to Switzerland, a post she held from 1996 to 2000. She also served as Mayor of Vryberg and a district there bears her name. 🌹

Youth Day: A Day of Remembrance

What is the significance of 16 June?

This day marks the high point of resistance by the youth of South Africa which continued until the advent of democracy in 1994. The Soweto uprising triggered a countrywide series of protests that were violently suppressed by the apartheid authorities. Scores of people died, hundreds were arrested and many left the country to join the banned liberation movements in exile.

16 June 1976 symbolises human sacrifice, commitment to freedom and the full realisation of an active citizenry. It also gave effect to the development of an education system that respects human dignity, cultural diversity, freedom of choice and strives to ensure equal access to opportunities.

The actions of young people in the 1970s contributed immeasurably to shaping the future of our country. As future leaders, they were able to define their destiny and chart the course they wished to follow. Through their sacrifices, they fuelled the fight against an oppressive regime, which in the end led to democracy.

What are the challenges being experienced by the youth of today?

In order to get youth perspectives on 16 June, the Public Education Office interviewed young people to find out their thoughts on challenges being experienced by the youth of today. A focus group interview was held with a class of Grade 11 learners from Cape Town.

The interviewer asked the learners eight questions as a group. Here is what they had to say:

What are the biggest challenges you face as a South African citizen?

Learner 1: Gangsters in schools.

Learner 2: Staying out of trouble in general.

Learner 3: Service delivery. The whole Eskom and load shedding thing. You can't do your school work. When you get home there are no lights and it is winter and it is getting cold.

Learner 4: Load shedding also causes security problems.

Learner 5: Service delivery in schools, for example, the bad teachers in schools. I mean their work ethic, not being well organised. The work is just on the board and you must just write it down.

Learner 6: Uncertainty of getting a job. When I get matric or a degree there is no certainty that I will get a job here in South Africa.

Do you feel your voice is heard when you raise your concerns?

Learner 1: No, if we bring our point across they usually take the adult's opinion.

Learner 2: No, opinions in schools are being forced upon us.

Learner 3: Sometimes people come for our answers and opinions and they don't take us seriously, they just leave.

Learner 4: No, because you can stand up for something, but you have the fear that it is not going to be taken seriously.

Learner 5: Our voices are heard but nothing is done about what is said. Getting the message across is not the problem, getting results is the problem.

Learner 6: Decisions are made and we are not even asked. Learners are not consulted. For example, extended school times and too much homework.

What is the first word that comes to mind when you hear the statement "public participation in Parliament"?

Learner 1: Society.

Learner 2: Hope.

Learner 3: Not enough.

Learner 4: Less power.

Learner 5: Powerlessness.

Learner 6: Impossible.

What do you believe Parliament is doing for the youth?

Learner 1: Nothing.

Learner 2: Yes, Nothing.

Learner 3: No, a lot.

Learner 4: It is not well distributed among the youth. Some affluent areas have more than enough for the youth, and other areas like townships don't have much.

Learner 5: I believe that in Parliament they are more focused on themselves. They are not focused on their job, which is to provide for the people of the country.

Learner 6: Yes, they take advantage of their positions.

What comes to mind when you hear the term "xenophobia" and what do you think Parliament should do about xenophobia and other intolerance?

Learner 1: If the country was able to provide for their citizens xenophobia would not be happening.

Learner 2: It is an attack on foreign Africans. It could be stopped by making it easier for foreigners to get citizenship.

Learner 3: They need to sort out [the Department of] Home Affairs. Talking from experience, things get lost and that leads to people following illegal routes.

Learner 4: Attacks based on borders. My dad told me that South Africans would be happy if there were restrictions put on foreigners, for example, business opportunities so that citizens of the country are still happy.

Learner 5: Attacking people that are from other countries.

Learner 6: Parliament can't account for everything that other people do.

What meaning does the date 16 June have for you?

Learner 1: It is the day that the youth



showed the country that they have a voice and that they have power.

Learner 2: It is when black and coloured youth marched against the unfair education system imposing Afrikaans on them.

Learner 3: To commemorate the pre-democracy youth.

Learner 4: Remembering what the youth of the previous years did for us and how they fought for us.

Learner 5: Yes, it is in their remembrance.

Learner 6: It is Youth Day.

How do you think Parliament should engage youth in public participation?

Learner 1: Youth Parliament should have a seat in the real Parliament.

Learner 2: They should come to schools and ask and actually listen and do something about it.

Learner 3: When there is conflict, nobody really feels that they can voice their concerns.

Learner 4: Parliament could hold workshops, allowing youth to use art to make their voices heard.

Learner 5: And through sport.

Learner 6: It must form a group of young people who are elected by the youth.

Please complete the following sentence: I believe that my future in South Africa ...

Learner 1: ... is going to hell.

Learner 2: ... is successful and bright.

Learner 3: ... is limited.

Learner 4: ... is doomed.

Learner 5: ... is messed up.

Learner 6: ... depends on the people in charge.

The interests of the youth are now championed by the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). The Minister in the Presidency, Mr Jeff Radebe, is responsible for the NYDA. The democratic government has put the NYDA in place to deal with all youth matters, from policy to development. The NYDA is mandated to establish a platform for job creation, skills development, skills transfer, and funding for South Africa's youth.

What is the role of Parliament in youth development?

Parliament has both Portfolio and Select Committees on Women, Youth, Children and Persons with Disabilities. These Committees are responsible for oversight on youth matters and must deal with legislation that affects young people. Parliament, in its oversight role, oversees the implementation of enacted legislation, which includes laws intended for the country's youth.

In line with African unity, Parliament promotes a programme of action against xenophobia and other related intolerance to ensure that we live

in peace, harmony and unity with fellow citizens of other countries. This programme is extended to all people, including youth, to see growth and development opportunities as a way of strengthening democracy not only within South Africa, but beyond our borders.

How can South Africa's youth get involved in Parliament?

To make Parliament more accessible, there is a programme called "Members' Interface" in which young people can meet with an individual Member of Parliament to discuss issues pertinent to them. They can also make their voices heard through oral or written submissions. The youth also form part of the public that can attend Committee meetings where most of Parliament's work takes place, and they can attend sittings in order to observe, enrich and empower themselves.

Youth Parliament, which is held during Youth Month in June, raises matters pertinent to youth. Participation is restricted to young people and proceedings are dedicated to them. Young people are also frequently invited to take part in other parliamentary programmes, such as public hearings, the State of the Nation Address and other outreach and public participation programmes. 🌍



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.