

CABINET STATEMENT

on the Cabinet meeting of
Wednesday, 6 May 2026

ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

HEALTH

South Africa demonstrates world class medical and scientific expertise through its handling of Hantavirus cases

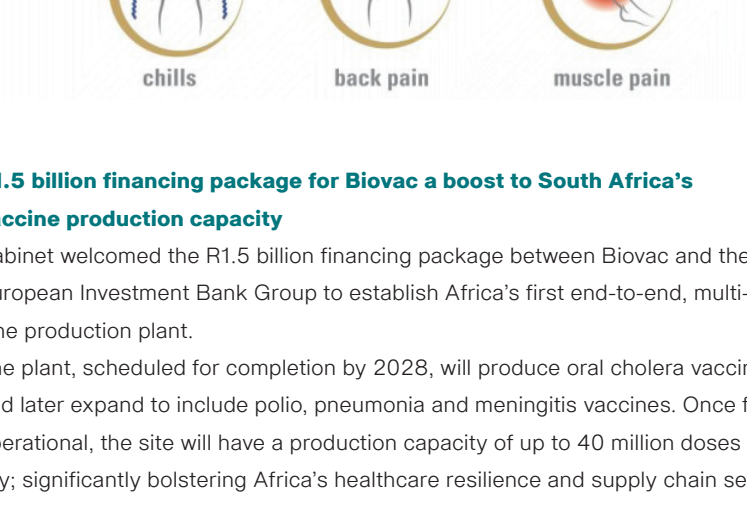
Cabinet congratulated the National Institute for Communicable Disease on their level of expertise in diagnosing two cases of Hantavirus within 24 hours of the patients' admission at a Gauteng hospital.

Cabinet was briefed about the circumstances that led to the Hantavirus patients being admitted to a South African hospital from the MV Hondius cruise ship.

Cabinet further congratulated the Department of Health for the speed and effectiveness with which they conducted contact tracing of people who came into contact with the patients before the diagnosis was made.

Cabinet wishes to allay fears of another outbreak due to the prevalence of rats in some municipalities; scientists have assured citizens that the Hantavirus is not found in any rats in South Africa or the African continent.

Hantavirus symptoms



- R1.5 billion financing package for Biovac a boost to South Africa's vaccine production capacity**
- Cabinet welcomed the R1.5 billion financing package between Biovac and the European Investment Bank Group to establish Africa's first end-to-end, multi-vaccine production plant.
- The plant, scheduled for completion by 2028, will produce oral cholera vaccines and later expand to include polio, pneumonia and meningitis vaccines. Once fully operational, the site will have a production capacity of up to 40 million doses annually; significantly bolstering Africa's healthcare resilience and supply chain security.
- The project is also expected to create more than 20 000 skilled jobs and around 7 000 indirect jobs, while promoting technology transfer, innovation and long-term health resilience across the continent.

- Foot-and-mouth disease**
- Cabinet welcomed progress of the vaccination programme that has led to a total of 2.59 million cattle vaccinated for foot-and-mouth-disease (FMD) to date.
- Cabinet noted the arrival of two million doses of the FMD vaccine from Türkiye, as part of the first tranche of a six million dose order. The Department of Agriculture is distributing the vaccines to provinces using a targeted, science-based allocation model informed by animal risk and population data.
- A further five million doses have been ordered from Argentina through Onderstepoort Biological Products.

ECONOMY

- Government continues to intervene to minimise the high cost of fuel**
 - Cabinet continues to intervene to minimise the escalating cost of fuel as a result of the continuing USA/Israel war in Iran, that has also impacted the Gulf region.
 - Cabinet welcomes a R17.2 billion fuel levy subsidy as announced by the Minister of Finance, that will be in effect from April to June 2026;
- while the Inter-Ministerial Task Team continues to evaluate other interventions to minimise the impact of the global fuel and fertiliser shortage on South Africans.
- Cabinet has directed the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources, supported by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, to coordinate a SADC response to secure fuel and fertiliser supply in the region.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Immigration challenges**
- Cabinet condemned the viral circulation of fake videos and images claiming to be of attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa. The fake videos and images are not only fake, but they are intended to undermine the reputation of South Africa internationally and undermine South Africa's pursuit of a better Africa agenda.
- South Africans are within their rights to protest against the spiralling illegal immigration challenge; however, violence linked to protests is not acceptable and law enforcement must deal with the instigators of such violence.
- Cabinet condemned the opportunistic attempts to hijack the genuine concerns of South Africans about high unemployment and limited economic opportunities by mobilising South Africans to destabilise the country, including mobilising attacks on foreign nationals and tribal mobilisation.
- Cabinet reiterated that there was ongoing work to address illegal immigration, which includes strengthening border management through the work of the Border Management Authority; speeding up deportations; dealing with criminality within the émigré communities; and protecting jobs and opportunities for South Africans.
- On opportunities for South Africans, Cabinet has directed the Department of Employment and Labour to intensify inspections of workplaces to ensure compliance with employment laws across vulnerable sectors such as hospitality, farms, trucking and construction among others.
- Cabinet further directed municipalities to ensure the enforcement of municipal by-laws, with priority given to trading by-laws. South Africans must also play their part by refraining from sub-leasing their business licenses.
- On a policy level, the Revised White Paper on Immigration addresses constraints with current immigration laws by introducing provisions of "first country of safety" principle, moving refugee reception centres nearest to the border and clauses to enable relevant departments to designate certain trades, professions and businesses only for South Africans and refugees.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Landmark achievement under Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project - Senqu Bridge**
- The launch of Senqu Bridge in Mokhotlong, Kingdom of Lesotho, represents a landmark achievement under Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The new bridge will ensure uninterrupted access to Mokhotlong, Sani Pass and surrounding areas.
- The project has contributed significantly to the upliftment of Lesotho's economy, with South Africa constructing hundreds of kilometres of roads to improve access to remote dam sites and providing royalty payments of approximately R3.8 billion annually to the country's fiscus under the project.
- The Lesotho Highlands Water Project ensures that Gauteng has access to bulk water through the Vaal Water System while Lesotho generates hydropower and support the provision of potable water, irrigation, fisheries and the promotion of tourism.
- President Ramaphosa's working visit to Spain confirms South Africa as a valued partner**
- Cabinet welcomed the successful

official visit to Spain by President Cyril Ramaphosa, which has led to over €2.1 billion commitments to South Africa's just energy transition in the fields of green hydrogen, electric vehicles, renewable energy and grid infrastructure.

- In 2025, total trade between South Africa and Spain reached approximately €2.8 billion, with exports to Spain rising to €1.3 billion. Additionally, over 150 Spanish companies currently operate on South African soil, supporting more than 20 000 jobs across sectors ranging from renewable energy and infrastructure to financial services, technology and tourism.

CABINET DECISIONS

- Revised White Paper on Local Government, 2026**
- Cabinet approved the gazetting of the Revised Draft White Paper on Local Government for public consultation. The Revised White Paper is part of local government reforms to build a modern, fit for purpose, local government system capable of delivering services sustainably.
- A review of the White Paper was initiated to ensure that the Local Government Policy Framework remained responsive to current and evolving developmental, economic, spatial and environmental realities. Priority focus areas identified are institutional culture in municipalities; political leadership and accountability; intergovernmental coordination; citizen involvement; financial and fiscal reforms; and traditional leadership.
- The Revised Draft White Paper adopts a phased and sequenced implementation approach to ensure a coherent and sustainable transition in local government. The draft recognises that previous reform

efforts have often faltered at the implementation stage, due in part, to insufficient attention to sequencing and transition management. As a primary reform action, the Revised Draft White Paper proposes the establishment of a time-bound Local Government Transition Management Body.- SANDF Long-Term Force Evolution Strategy**
- Cabinet approved the Long-Term Force Evolution Strategy and Planning Concept for the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and its supporting strategic policy documents.
- After decades of constrained funding, ageing platforms and under-resourced capability development, the SANDF has developed a Long-Term Force Evolution Strategy structured according to the milestones outlined in the "Journey to Greatness" Plan.
- The strategy links defence modernisation with national development, regional stability and economic growth to create a resilient and future-ready

defence force capable of addressing current domestic challenges and long-term threats.

- 70 Years of Women's Struggle and Empowerment: Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women Index**
- As part of a commitment towards meaningful empowerment of women as the country marks 70 years since the 1956 Women's March, Cabinet approved the implementation of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women Index as an annual scorecard to measure and track progress in socio-economic empowerment of women over time.
- The index addresses the absence of a comprehensive, standardised measure of women's socio-economic empowerment and participation in decision-making structures in South Africa. On the social sphere, the index will focus on health and education; on the economic sphere, the index will focus on labour market and resources; and on the decision-making sphere, the index will

focus on public and private sector decision-making.

- The baseline of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women Index indicates public sector decision-making as a dimension that scores highest in terms of women empowerment, while labour market and resources dimension records the lowest scores. The lowest indicator areas include firms with female ownership, share of female Chief Executive Officers of firms listed on the JSE, access to credit and employment in high skill occupations.
- 70 Years of Women's Struggle and Empowerment: 6th Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**
- Cabinet approved South Africa's 6th Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- The report provides progress made by South Africa in strengthening the

UPDATES TO CABINET

- Fixing Local Government: 2025/26 Quarter 2 progress report on the implementation of financial recovery plans for municipalities under national intervention**
- Cabinet received an update on the implementation of Financial Recovery Plans (FRPs) for the four (4) municipalities placed under national intervention in terms of Section 139 (7) of the Constitution, namely: Lekwa, Enoch Mgijima and Ditsobotla Local Municipalities and the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. Progress in implementing the FRPs to secure a turnaround in the financial and service delivery performance of these municipalities has been dismal, with the exception of Ditsobotla.
- Cabinet noted that in the other three municipalities, the implementation of the FRP has stagnated on Phase 1, which should have been completed within 12 months of the FRP being approved. The main concerns are non-implementation of activities with financial impact, marginal improvement on financial indicators

and ratios and ineffective controls on expenditure indicators resulting in marginal improvement of service delivery.

- Cabinet approved the retention of the four municipalities under national interventions in terms of Section 139 (7) read with Section 139 (5)(a) of the Constitution; and that measures be developed to compel municipalities in financial distress to enter Distribution Agency Agreements for entities such as Eskom, to take over electricity distribution and revenue collection.
- Designation of the proposed Fetakgomo Tubatse Special Economic Zone, Limpopo**
- Cabinet was apprised and supported the intention of the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition to designate the proposed Fetakgomo Tubatse Special Economic Zone (FTSEZ) located in Sekhukhune District of Limpopo.
- The FTSEZ is a strategic component of the Limpopo Development Plan that aims foster industrialisation, stimulate economic growth and

generate employment by attracting investments in the mining, mineral beneficiation, energy, agriculture and automotive sectors. The FTSEZ will be implemented in three phases.

- Potential economic opportunities for South Africa through the African Continental Free Trade Area**
- Cabinet was apprised on potential economic opportunities for South Africa in the rest of the continent through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The AfCFTA creates one of the world's largest single market with over 1.3 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding US\$3.4 trillion.
- The comprehensive AfCFTA Agreement presents strategic opportunities to unlock economic potential, expand export markets, deepen industrial value chains, promote investment and drive sustainable growth.
- Since South Africa's launch of trade under the AfCFTA preferential terms from January 2024 to February 2026, trade increased to R2.6

billion, spanning a diverse range of products such as mining equipment, appliances, food items, apparel, plastics and electrical machinery.

- Hammanskraal clean water supply**
- Cabinet received a progress report on the Hammanskraal Clean Water Project driven by Magalies Water under the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and the City of Tshwane (CoT). Upon completion, the project will provide portable water to approximately 47 550 households, serving an estimated 180 679 residents.
- Cabinet noted that all four modules on the part of the project which is delivered under Magalies Water have been constructed and tested, enabling the system to produce up to 50 ml of treated water per day.
- The Minister of Water and Sanitation will later inspect the project and ensure oversight on outstanding work by the CoT to ensure full access to water for Hammanskraal communities.
- The DWS also updated Cabinet

on progress regarding unblocking blocked water projects and the status of municipal debt to water boards, which pose a severe risk to water security and the financial viability of these boards. The detailed briefing on this would be done after the WaterCom.

- Electricity supply remains stable as the elimination of load reduction continues**
- Cabinet welcomed the Winter Electricity Outlook presented by Eskom, which indicated that loadshedding was unlikely between April and August; marking a significant turning point in our nation's energy journey. Cabinet further welcomed progress in addressing load reduction, with 352 968 customers no longer affected during peak periods. Load reduction has been eliminated in the Northern and Western Cape, with the next five provinces due for load reduction elimination in 2026. Only Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) will have their load reduction eliminated by 2027.

BILLS

- Children's Act Amendment Bill, 2026**
- Cabinet approved the submission of the Children's Act Amendment Bill, 2026 to Parliament.
- The Bill aims to streamline fragmented Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes and regulations that were overseen under Chapter 5 of the Act by different authorities, into a consolidated ECD regulation under the revised Chapter 6 of the Amendment Bill, placing it under the sole responsibility of the Department of Basic Education. The Amendment Bill introduces a single registration process for ECD centres and one set of norms and standards for the ECD programme.
- Draft Nuclear Energy Amendment Bill, 2025**
- Cabinet approved publication of the

Draft Nuclear Energy Amendment Bill, 2025 for public consultation.

- The Draft Bill amends the Nuclear Energy Act of 1999 which provides legislative framework for South Africa's participation in international trade in nuclear material and technology.
- The Draft Bill also addresses regulatory gaps resulting from developments in the global and domestic nuclear landscape by

updating terminology, aligning the Act with international standards and strengthening oversight of nuclear material, goods and related activities across the value chain.

- National Building Regulations and Building Standards Amendment Bill, 2026**
- Cabinet approved the National Building Regulations and Building Standards Amendment Bill, 2026

for public participation. The purpose of the draft Bill is to promote uniformity in law within the jurisdiction of municipalities and to ensure safe construction practices through sound building science, good workmanship and quality materials.

- The Amendment Bill responds to complaints regarding challenges related to the inconsistent application and interpretation of the Act.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

- Africa's Travel Indaba**
- Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 will take place from 11 to 14 May 2026 at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre (Durban ICC) in KZN.
- The Indaba will be hosted at a time where there has been a surge in international tourist arrivals. In March this year, 911 962 visitors chose to visit South Africa, a 12.5% increase when compared to same period in 2025.
- This follows a record-breaking tourist season in 2025 with 10.5 million arrivals. From January to March 2026, South Africa has already recorded 2 910 029 inbound travellers.
- In a related development, South Africa has cemented its status as Africa's leading aviation hub following a safety audit by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, a United Nations specialised agency on aviation.
- Milestones of Freedom Campaign**
- This year marks a series of defining milestones in South Africa's democratic journey to be commemorated through the Milestones of Freedom Campaign, to be launched at the Union Buildings in May 2026 under the theme: "Honouring the Past. Delivering the Future".
- These milestones include the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution; the 50th anniversary of the 1976 youth uprisings; the 70th anniversary of the anti-pass campaign; and the 60th anniversary of the forced removals from District Six.
- Together, these seminal moments reflect the long road travelled in the pursuit of democracy and freedom, while reminding us that, despite meaningful progress, the journey continues for the current generation.

- South Africa's 2nd International Special Economic Zones Infrastructure and Investment Conference**
- Cabinet approved the hosting of the 2nd International Special Economic Zones infrastructure and investment Conference from 16 to 17 July 2026 in KZN.
- The conference will bring together high level local and international investors and will serve as a platform where ideas and innovative solutions are proposed to facilitate and build vibrant Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as well as ensuring investment in South Africa.
- South Africa has 12 SEZs with nine currently operational. The operational SEZs host 224 operational investors with an estimated cumulative investment value of R31.7 billion and 28 821 jobs created.

- Child Protection Month**
- Child Protection Month is commemorated annually to raise awareness of children's rights and the need to protect them from harm. During this period, key government departments, as well as child protection services and various civil society organisations, will intensify efforts to mobilise all sectors of society to safeguard children, address persistent social ills and strengthen areas requiring focused development and intervention.
- Cabinet calls on all members of society to work collectively to protect the rights of children, prioritise their wellbeing and support their holistic development.
- Africa Month**
- South Africa will join the rest of the continent in observing Africa Month and Africa Day on 25 May 2026.

The month is an opportunity to advance unity, deepen regional integration and reaffirm a shared African destiny. This period invites reflection and celebration of our rich identity, heritage and cultural expression. It also calls on all Africans to work together in driving the development and progress of the continent.

- As we commemorate Africa Month, we recognise our achievements while taking stock of progress made towards realising the vision of the African Union Agenda 2063 for a united and prosperous Africa.
- Football Fridays**
- Cabinet has ruled on South Africans to rally behind Bafana Bafana on their road to the 2026 FIFA World Cup by wearing green and gold on Fridays to boost national spirit and pride.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- National Presidential MSME and Cooperatives Awards**
- The Department of Small Business Development has revised the National Presidential Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Cooperatives Awards to include a provincial leg and sector-specific categories to enhance recognition, inclusivity and impact.
- The provincial leg of the revised awards kicks off in July with the following categories:
 - MSME of the Year in the Agricultural Sector;
 - Financial Services MSME of the Year;
 - MSME of the Year in Digital Economy, Technology and Innovation;
 - Manufacturing Sector MSME of the Year;
 - Green Economy MSME of the Year;
- Youth-led MSME of the Year;
- Women-led MSME of the Year;
- MSMEs owned by Persons with Disabilities of the Year; and
- Cooperative of the Year.
- 2026 Local Government Elections**
- President Cyril Ramaphosa announced Wednesday, 4 November, as the official date for the 2026

Local Government Elections. Cabinet calls on all eligible voters to register to vote or update their details using the official Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC)'s online portal – www.register2vote.elections.org.za which is available around the clock. Citizens can also visit their local IEC office to register; while those who have applied for IDs are reminded to

globally, closely followed in second place by the Cape of Good Hope Beach. The rankings underscore the enduring international appeal of our tourism sector.

Cabinet and extends its well wishes to:

- Dr Naledi Pandor** on her appointment as Chancellor of Nelson Mandela University. A distinguished activist, academic and public servant, Dr Pandor has demonstrated lifelong commitment to education that has helped shape South Africa's democratic and social landscape.
- the Blitzboks** for winning their first-ever Hong Kong Sevens title after defeating Argentina 35-7 in the final at Kai Tak Stadium.
- South Africa's Men's Relay Teams** for winning silver medals in the 4x100m and 4x400m finals of the World Athletics Relays in Gaborone, Botswana.

collect them from the Department of Home Affairs.

- Alternatively, citizens may register during the National Voter Registration weekend on 20 and 21 June 2026, at the same voting stations where they intend to cast their ballots on election day.

MESSAGES

CONDOLENCES

Cabinet expressed condolences to the friends and family of:

- Ms Cynthia Shange**, a revered cultural icon, who made an immense contribution to South African film and television; earning prestigious honours including Lifetime Achievement Awards in recognition of her enduring impact in the local entertainment industry.
- Mr Albert Mazibuko**, co-founder of the iconic group, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, which won five Grammy Awards and featured on **Paul Simon's** acclaimed 1986 Graceland album.
- the late South African opera legend, **Ms Mimi Coertse**, who was one of South Africa's greatest cultural ambassadors and among the country's most celebrated operatic voices. She inspired generations of musicians, performers and young artists. Her legacy will continue to shape South African music and culture for generations.

- Retired Judge President **Achmat Jappie**, who passed away at the age of 70. He served as Deputy Judge President and later Judge President of the KZN Division of the High Court, as well as Acting Justice of the Constitutional Court and at the Labour Appeals Court.
- Ms Thumeka Bikwana**, Member of the Mayoral Committee for Corporate Services in the Chris Hani District Municipality, who was murdered on 6 May 2026.

CONGRATULATIONS

- South Africa has the world's best beaches
 - South Africa continues to remain a popular global tourism hotspot with the 2026 Global Beach Report by international travel specialist, Travelbag, recognising two of the country's beaches on this prestigious global list.
 - Boulders Beach in Cape Town** has been officially recognised as the number one beach

globally, closely followed in second place by the Cape of Good Hope Beach. The rankings underscore the enduring international appeal of our tourism sector.

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Issued on behalf of Cabinet by:

Minister in the Presidency,
Ms Khumbudzo Ntshavheni

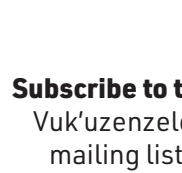
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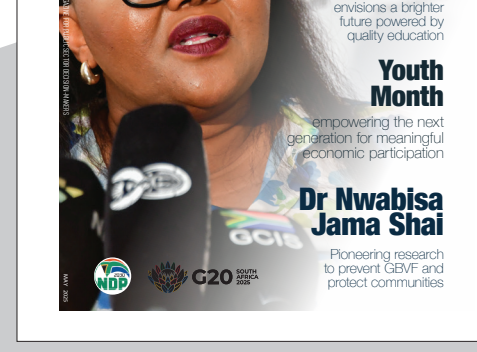
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