

Cabinet Statement

Statement on the virtual Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 9 February 2022



ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



State of the Nation Address (SoNA)

- Cabinet welcomed the 2022 SoNA delivered by President Cyril Ramaphosa to the Joint Sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces at the Cape Town City Hall on Thursday, 10 February 2022, which is a rallying point for the entire nation.
- The SoNA is an important event in the calendar of the democratic government as it affords the Head of the Executive the opportunity to reflect on the country's socio-economic and political status, and to also present government's plans for the year ahead and beyond to political representatives of the people and the nation at large.
- In the coming weeks respective Ministers will unpack government's Programme of Action for 2022, which will be informed by the National Budget Speech to be tabled on Wednesday, 23 February 2022 as well as the budget votes of all government departments.

Participation in Census 2022

- Cabinet appealed to all citizens and people who live in the country to participate in Census 2022, which began on Thursday, 3 February 2022 and continues until Monday, 28 February 2022.

This is the fourth post-democracy population count and the last one was conducted in 2011. The results of the Census play an essential role in the allocation of resources to meet the service-delivery and basic needs of our communities.

- South Africans can choose to participate in Census 2022 through telephone, digital computer-assisted counting or physical door-to-door visits.
- Digital computer-assisted counting is only applicable to those who registered online before 5 February 2022.

Update on the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

- Cabinet applauded South Africans for their continued determination in the fight against COVID-19, which helped keep new infections relatively low despite the menace of the fourth wave.
- COVID-19 remains a part of

our lived experience, and all health and safety protocols must be followed at all times, including maintaining social distancing, washing and sanitising hands, and wearing a mask in public that covers both the mouth and nose.

As the deadly virus continues to claim lives, vaccination remains our best defence. The more people vaccinate, the more safer we will be as a nation.

- As the country gradually returns to normality with the economy reopening and schools having resumed daily attendance and full-time learning, Cabinet called on all unvaccinated persons over the age of 12 to vaccinate as soon as possible.
- You only need to present yourself at any vaccination site, even without an appointment, to be registered and vaccinated for free.
- Cabinet also encouraged those who are fully vaccinated to go for a booster shot, which helps increase antibody levels to effectively neutralise COVID-19 variants.
- Booster shots are available to anyone who received their last and primary dose at least six months ago. By being up to date with vaccinations, we do not only reduce the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and death, but we also reduce the risk of future deadly variants.

Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture Report

- Cabinet noted the recent handover of the first and second parts of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture Report to President Ramaphosa as an important milestone in the fight against corruption.

Cabinet firmly supports the process that will see the President mapping out interventions to implement the commission's recommendations when he submits the full report to Parliament by 30 June 2022.

Investigation report on the July 2021 Civil Unrests

- Cabinet joined President Ramaphosa in welcoming

the release of the report of the Expert Panel appointed to review government's response to the spate of orchestrated public violence, destruction and sabotage in July 2021. The President tabled the report of the Expert Panel at a meeting of the National Security Council on Friday, 4 February 2022 and subsequently authorised that it be made public.

- The panel was chaired by Professor Sandy Africa and included Advocate Mojanku Gumbi and Mr Silumko Sokupa as members, with Mr Michael Sarjoo serving as the secretary of the panel.

The panel was mandated to examine all aspects of the security response to the unrests that took place mainly in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng and to make recommendations on how to strengthen security capabilities.

- The report and the insights it provides on the work of and challenges faced by security services, law-enforcement agencies and relevant organs of state will guide government's response.

Gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF)

- As part of the country's fight against GBVF, President Ramaphosa recently signed into law three Acts that strengthen efforts to end GBVF – the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act, Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act and Domestic Violence Amendment Act.

Cabinet believes the signing of the new laws is a major advance to defeat GBVF and calls on the South African Police Service and National Prosecuting Authority to leverage the new provisions to provide justice for those who lost loved ones, friends or colleagues to this scourge.

- Cabinet looks forward to the speedy enforcement of these laws to provide greater protection to victims of violence and abuse.
- Remember to report incidents of GBVF to your local police station, through the toll-free Crime Stop number: 086 00 10111 or 24-hour GBV Command Centre hotline: 0800 428 428.

Working Visit to Mozambique

- Cabinet welcomed the successful conclusion of a Working Visit to the Republic of Mozambique by President Ramaphosa on Thursday, 3 February 2022, at the invitation of President Filipe Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique.
- In his capacity as Chair of the

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, President Ramaphosa visited the troops that are part of the SADC Mission in Mozambique and also participated in the 53rd Commemoration of the assassination of Dr Eduardo Mondlane, the founder and first President of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO).

- President Ramaphosa and his Mozambican counterpart discussed bilateral, continental and global issues, and reaffirmed their commitment to further cooperate on multi-lateral issues.

African Union (AU) Summit

- Cabinet welcomed the outcome of the 35th AU Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 5 and 6 February 2022, which sought to advance peace and security on the continent and strongly condemned unconstitutional changes of governments in Africa.
- South Africa presented the Africa Governance Report 2021 to the AU Assembly, which noted progress in consolidating democracy and moving towards economic integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area. It also recommended that leaders take urgent steps to address drivers of instability such as growing youth unemployment, extremism, mass migration and deepening inequality.
- In setting a new public health order for the continent, the summit endorsed South Africa's concept to establish an African pandemic response fund and proposals on how the continent can cushion itself from any further health shocks.

- Cabinet also welcomed the election of South Africa into the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC). The AUPSC is the standing decision-making organ of the AU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. It is a collective security and early warning arrangement intended to facilitate timely and efficient responses to conflict and crisis situations in Africa. It is also the key pillar of the African Peace and Security Architecture, which is the framework for promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. The AUPSC comprises 15 members with equal voting powers.
- African leaders will convene in Brussels, Belgium for the sixth European Union-AU Summit on 17 and 18 February 2022, which will focus on concerns facing the world such as climate change, and the renewal of peace and security.

African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

- South Africa has concluded its two-year chairship of the

African Peer Review Forum, a structure of the APRM, which aims to promote and protect human rights, consolidate democracy and advance good governance and the rule of law among African countries.

- In its 2021 peer review assessment, South Africa received favourable reviews for the rule of law, oversight bodies like Chapter 9 institutions, the advancement of women's rights, strong refugee protection and the evolution of our electoral system, strong corporate governance, open budget processes and for the proliferation of corporate social responsibility initiatives. The country was also cited for its leadership and management of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The areas of concern raised in the assessment – such as rising inequality and unemployment, corruption, incidents of xenophobia and poor service delivery – are being addressed in our planning and government programmes.

SADC Media Awards

- Cabinet encouraged South African media to submit their entries for the 2022 SADC Media Awards competition. The awards promote regional integration and cooperation, and recognise excellence in journalism in the area of print, photo, television and radio, and encourage media practitioners in member states to cover issues pertaining to the region.
- The first prize winners will be announced on the margins of the 42nd SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government. The forms and rules of the 2022 competition can be found at www.gcis.gov.za/newsroom/media-releases/launch-2022-sadc-media-awards-competition.

Education

- Cabinet commended the Class of 2021 and thanked everyone who contributed to the achievement recorded by learners despite the challenges presented by COVID-19.
- A total of 897 163 candidates wrote the 2021 National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination, an increase of 23,6% in 2020.
- The 2021 NSC pass rate of 76,4%, with 256 000 learners eligible for university entrance, is an improvement of 0,2% from the 76,2% pass rate by the Class of 2020.
- Cabinet wished all the learners well as they embark on their respective post-schooling years.

Through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, government financially supports academically deserving students from poor and working-class families who wish to study at a university or Technical and Vocational Education and Training college.

CABINET DECISIONS

Biannual performance progress reports

- Cabinet approved the biannual performance progress reports for the period from 1 April to 30 September 2021. The reports form part of the Medium Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024. Cluster departmental reports focus on the seven priorities of government and related interventions of the sixth administration.
- Cabinet welcomed the areas wherein there was progress on the set out targets for the period under review. It also noted the intervention plans to address delays in achieving some of the targets.
- A series of Ministerial cluster media briefings will be arranged through the GCIS to allow departments to unpack these performance reports.

Submission of South Africa's Pleistocene Occupation sites for nomination as World Heritage sites

- Cabinet approved the submission of six Emergence of Modern Humans: Pleistocene Occupation sites for consideration and inscription as World Heritage sites.
- Three of these are in the Western Cape (Diepkloof Rock Shelter; Pinnacle Point Site Complex and Blombos Cave); one in the Eastern Cape (Klasies River Caves) and two in KwaZulu-Natal (Sibhudu Cave and Border Cave).
- These sites, which collectively contribute to the understanding of the evolution of humankind, have already been declared as National Heritage sites in terms of the National Heritage Resources

Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999). They showcase the long sequences of human occupation over tens of thousands of years with evidence dating to the period of the emergence of modern humans.

- The submission of these sites is aligned to the World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999), which provides for countries to make these submissions as part of the global understanding of the evolution of humans.

Extension of the National State of Disaster

- Cabinet was apprised on the work that has been undertaken through the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure to determine the extent to which the management of the COVID-19 pandemic still

required the existence of the National State of Disaster.

- Inputs were received from various government departments to determine their respective areas of work that are at an advance stage of completion.
- However, after noting that some of the key departments dealing with COVID-19 had not yet concluded their analysis, Cabinet approved the final extension of the National State of Disaster to 15 March 2022, in terms of Section 27(5)(c) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002).

Draft Electricity Pricing Policy (EPP)

- Cabinet approved the publication of the review of the EPP for public comment.
- The revised EPP seeks to strike a balance in providing



affordable electricity tariffs for low-income consumers and a cost-reflective electricity tariff for all other consumers.

- The policy provides the general pricing principles, the wholesale energy and transmission pricing structure, and the distribution and retail pricing structure.
- The EPP will be published in the *Government Gazette* and can be accessed from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) website: www.dmr.gov.za.

BILLS

National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Amendment Bill of 2022

- Cabinet approved the submission of the NYDA Amendment Bill of 2022 to Parliament. The proposed changes amend the NYDA Act, 2008 (Act 54 of 2008). The current Act provides a legislative framework for the provision of National Youth Service, support towards youth economic participation, youth advisory and information services.
- The proposed amendments strengthen the specific areas of interventions within the challenges faced by youths; clarifies the political reporting lines of the entity and also proposes increasing the size of the NYDA Board from seven to 10 members. It provides for the setting up of NYDA services at local level, especially for youths in rural areas who are unable to easily access the services of the NYDA.
- The proposed amendments were the result of extensive consultation with all the



relevant stakeholders in all the nine provinces.

Marine Oil Pollution (Preparedness, Response and Cooperation) (OPRC) Bill of 2022

- Cabinet approved the submission of the OPRC Bill of 2022 to Parliament, which was approved for public consultation in October 2019. Extensive inputs received from various stakeholders have been incorporated into the Bill.
- Once enacted into law, the Bill will provide for the regulation and management of the country's coastal seas.

tection of the employment of South Africans whilst taking into cognisance the economic skills required by the country. It also considers the country's obligations to the SADC, AU and other international labour migration protocols.

- The NLMP provides a framework and the legal basis to regulate the extent to which employers can employ foreign nationals in their establishments while protecting the rights of migrants. The policy provides the basis for the proposed ESAB.
- Cabinet has approved that the Department of Employment and Labour can commence with public consultation on the policy, which will afford citizens and relevant stakeholders the opportunity to make inputs into the NLMP of the country.

Draft National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) and proposed Employment Services Amendment Bill (ESAB)

- Cabinet has approved the commencement of public and stakeholder consultations on the proposed draft national labour migration policy and the proposed ESAB. The policy provides a balance between the pro-

The Bill proposes amendments to the Electricity Regulation Act, 2007 (Act 28 of 2007).

- The proposed amendments broaden the national regulatory framework for the electricity supply industry. They align the country with the international best practice in energy and provide for the functions of a Transmission System Operator, and for a licensing framework for power generation, transmission, distribution and trading.
- The proposed amendments form part of several steps the country is taking to reform the electricity sector towards achieving a stable and secure supply of energy. They will also strengthen the performance of the electricity industry and ultimately create a conducive environment towards growing the economy.
- The Bill will be published in the *Government Gazette* and can also be accessed through the DMRE website: www.dmr.gov.za.

MESSAGE



Congratulations

Cabinet extended its congratulations and well-wishes to:

- Her Majesty Nkosikazi Nomandla Dorothy Mhlauli**, the newly elected Chairperson of the National House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders. Nkosikazi Mhlauli is the first woman to lead the body of traditional leaders. She was elected following the passing of the former chairperson Ikosi Siphoh Mahlangu.

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