

Cabinet Statement

Statement on the Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 23 February 2022



ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

National Budget Speech

- Cabinet welcomed the 2022 National Budget tabled by Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana in Parliament, Cape Town on Wednesday, 23 February 2022.

The budget put some flesh to the commitments made by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his 2022 State of the Nation Address (SoNA) delivered on Thursday, 10 February 2022.



- The budget demonstrates government's commitment to fiscal discipline and consistent economic management, and its cherished objective of funding critical priorities which provide socio-economic support to vulnerable South Africans.

The far-reaching interventions announced in the 2022 National Budget Speech are geared towards creating a conducive environment for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Post-SoNA cluster media briefings

- Cluster Ministers are holding post-SoNA media briefings to elaborate on government's Programme of Action for the year ahead and beyond, as outlined by President Ramaphosa during the recent 2022 SoNA.
- These media briefings highlight government's commitment to implement the priorities aimed at improving the lives of the people by, among other things, creating favourable conditions to create much-needed jobs.

Update on the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

- Cabinet applauded South Africans for their continued determination in the fight against COVID-19, and also cautioned that the current low rates of infections and deaths should not mislead people to become careless.

South Africa has already administered over 31 million doses of the vaccines, which resulted in almost 17 million adults being fully vaccinated.

- Cabinet emphasised that COVID-19 has not yet been defeated and with winter approaching, people must remain vigilant and continue with the non-pharmaceutical interventions of regularly washing or sanitising hands, wearing a mask in public that covers both the mouth and nose, keeping a safe social distance and opening windows for proper ventilation.
- Above all else, vaccination remains the best defence against COVID-19 and future variants, as it drastically reduces the risk of serious

illness, hospitalisation and even death.

- Cabinet also welcomed the announcement of additional changes in the current vaccination programme, which again seek to ensure the accessibility of vaccines. Starting from Wednesday, 23 February 2022, the waiting intervals between the first and second dose have been reduced from 42 days to 21 days.
- Also, people will now be able to use a different booster vaccine from the primary vaccine used or even be able to use the same vaccine from the primary vaccine to the booster vaccine dose.
- The eventual return to normal life and full participation in socio-economic activities depends significantly on the number of vaccinated people. The recently launched #KeReady or "I am ready" campaign seeks to encourage more young people aged between 18 and 34 years to get vaccinated.

Social cohesion and nation-building

- Cabinet condemned recent disturbing incidents of racism in some schools in the country, which are inconsistent with

the values enshrined in our world-acclaimed Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

- Cabinet proclaimed that racism will not be tolerated in our democratic society that is still healing from the scars of apartheid. It urged all schools to tackle racism by exposing it whenever it rears its ugly head so that it can be dealt with speedily.
- Cabinet called on parents and teachers to put the interests of learners first and to work together in building a non-racial and non-sexist society.

Cash-in-transit robbery foiled in Gauteng

Cabinet commended the multidisciplinary team of law-enforcement agencies led by the South African Police Service and the Crime Intelligence Unit that intercepted a gang of heavily armed suspects in Rosettenville, Johannesburg on Monday, 21 February 2022. The gang was suspected of planning to commit a cash-in-transit robbery.

- Ten suspects were arrested and eight were fatally shot following a shootout with the police. The suspects were found in possession of unlicensed firearms and ammunition, explosives and hijacked vehicles. An investigation is underway to establish the origins of the weapons.
- Cabinet wished the police officer who was injured during the shootout a speedy recovery. It reiterated the clarion call to the public to continue working closely with law-enforce-

ment agencies in ensuring the safety of our communities.

Migration

- Cabinet reminded everyone that law enforcement and other relevant agencies are mandated to deal with issues of migration and undocumented foreign nationals.
- There is no room for any actions that violate the law such as intimidation, destruction of property and violence. We call on those with legitimate concerns to raise them with the relevant authorities so that they can be addressed constructively.
- To ensure that migration issues are addressed orderly, government recently released the draft National Labour Migration Policy for public comment, which provides a framework and the legal basis to regulate the extent to which employers can employ foreign nationals in their establishments while also protecting the rights of migrants.

African Union (AU)-European Union (EU) Summit

- President Ramaphosa attended the 6th AU-EU Summit held in Brussels, Belgium on 17 and 18 February 2022, at the invitation of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat.
- The President participated in roundtables on climate change, energy transition, digital technology and transport. He also chaired the roundtable on health systems and vaccine production.
- Cabinet welcomed the outcomes of the summit, which laid the foundation for a renewed and deeper partnership between the AU and EU.

CABINET DECISIONS



Draft National Water Resources Strategy-Third Edition (NWRS-3)

- Cabinet approved the publishing of the NWRS-3 for public comment. The draft strategy was preceded by a three-year review of the NWRS-2 which was approved by Cabinet in 2013. The review identified areas of success and areas that remain a challenge.
- This strategy proposes a

strengthened integrated water quality management. It provides for innovative and appropriate technology on water and sanitation. It introduces stricter minimum requirement for the wastewater treatment. The strategy also responds to the National Climate Change Response Strategy.

- Water remains one of the key drivers in the socio-economic development of the coun-

try and it makes a significant contribution to the economic recovery programme of government.

2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (CPPDCE)

- Cabinet approved the submission of South Africa's 2nd Quadrennial Periodic Report to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). This body oversees the implementation of the 2005 CPPDCE.
- Member countries are expected to submit their reports every four years. Reports should provide updates on their policies and measures taken to protect and promote diversity of cultural expressions within their countries.
- The report will form part of

the UNESCO Global Report which is published every four years. South Africa became a signatory to the CPPDCE in 2006.

Feasibility Study Report on the National Monumental Flag Project

- Cabinet approved the feasibility study report conducted towards exploring the construction of the South African National Monumental Flag Project.
- Monumental flags are installed by countries to express their identity and pride. Once constructed it will become a national landmark, located also to be a tourist attraction site that will serve to display the country's brand image.
- The project will be led by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture as part of its mandate of promoting

nation-building and social cohesion.

South African Airways (SAA)

- Cabinet was informed that further progress had been made in the disposal of 51% of shares in the SAA to the Takatso Consortium, the preferred Strategic Equity Partner for the SAA. It comprises Harieth General Partners, a leading investor in African infrastructure and airports, and airline management firm Global Airways.
- The Sales and Purchase process has now been concluded and signed by the Department of Public Enterprises and Takatso Consortium.
- The next step involves the approval of this transaction by various regulatory bodies. The public will be updated on further developments in this regard.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Human Rights Month

- South Africa commemorates Human Rights Day on Monday, 21 March 2022 under the theme: "The Year of national unity and renewal: promoting and protecting our human rights".
- Cabinet called on all South Africans to use Human Rights Month to foster greater social cohesion, nation-building and a shared national identity.
- It is our duty as a nation to ensure that we

combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and all related intolerances. Through our diversity, we can strengthen our unity and build a cohesive society.

Presidential Imbizo

- President Ramaphosa will conduct a Presidential Imbizo in North West on Saturday, 12 March 2022. The event affords the President the opportunity to interact with communities and oversee the service delivery programme at the local level.



MESSAGE

Condolences

Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:

- Ms Nomakula "Kuli" Roberts** (49), a media personality and a local pop culture legend who worked as a television and radio presenter. She was

also a magazine and newspaper feature writer.

- Mr Ebrahim Patel** (70), who was the first president of the South African Rugby Football Union. As a champion who was a driving force towards non-racial rugby, he served in

the International Rugby Board (now World Rugby).

- Nkosi Ngangomhlaba Matanzima** (79), who was the founding member of the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders and also served as its chairperson for years.

- Mr Rikhado Muziwendlovu Makhado, aka Riky Rick** (34), who was a rapper, songwriter, singer, composer, actor and fashion designer. His greatest hip-hop hits include *Amantombazane*, *Boss Zonke*, *Sidlukotini* and *Ungazincishi*.

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