

# Cabinet Statement



## Statement on the Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 4 August 2021

### ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



#### ■ Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) vaccine roll-out

- South Africa's national vaccination programme has fully gathered pace and the health sector (public and private) vaccinates a minimum of one million people in three days. To date, over eight million South Africans have been vaccinated.
- At the current pace, President Cyril Ramaphosa should soon announce a revised target date for the country to reach population immunity.
- Cabinet continues to call on South Africans to vaccinate, as it remains our most effective weapon in the fight against COVID-19. People can now go to any vaccination site with their identity documents, even without an appointment, to be registered and vaccinated.
- Cabinet welcomed the delivery of 5.6 million Pfizer vaccines this week donated by the United States of America, which will ensure an adequate supply of vaccines to intensify our vaccination roll-out programme.

**From 1 September 2021, people between the ages of 18 and 34 will be eligible for vaccination.**

- Cabinet noted the significant decline in new infection cas-

es in South Africa after the country officially surpassed the peak of the third wave.

- However, four provinces – Western Cape (although just announced a peak), Northern Cape, North West and Free State – have been recording increases in daily new infection rates.
- Cabinet reiterated its call to all people in South Africa to continue adhering to the prevention protocols of wearing a mask in public, washing hands with soap and water or using a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitiser, maintaining a social distance of about 1.5 metres and avoiding large gatherings.

#### ■ Opening of schools

- Cabinet welcomed the smooth opening of schools, especially the return of all primary pupils to daily classes. Cabinet urged all schools to continue to work within the established COVID-19 health protocols.
- The decision to return all primary pupils to daily classes was taken after considering the best interests of the child and it will help to recover the learning time that was lost during the hard national lockdown.

#### ■ Public Service wage agreement

- Cabinet thanked public servants and those involved in the salary negotiations

for putting our nation and her people first, following the recent signing of the collective agreement on wage increases in the Public Service.

- Cabinet is pleased that all parties showed collective leadership and a steely resolve to find a solution that benefits public servants and citizens, and calls on everyone to move forward in this same spirit of partnership and patriotism.

#### ■ Update on the security situation

- Cabinet welcomed the efforts of law-enforcement agencies to speedily restore stability in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. It also commended law-enforcement agencies for the progress they are making in bringing to book those responsible for the incitement of the violence.

**We would like to reassure South Africans that no stone will be left unturned to bring to justice those responsible for the unrests that took place in the two provinces.**

- To date, a number of suspects have been arrested and appeared in various courts for public incitement, and law-enforcement agencies and the National Prosecution Authority are seized with ensuring successful prosecutions.
- Cabinet noted that the number of deaths as a result of the violence has been revised to 354, with the number of reported deaths linked to the unrests in Gauteng remaining unchanged at 79 and 275 in KwaZulu-Natal by 4 August 2021.
- For the numbers of reported deaths in KwaZulu-Natal, eThekweni Metro accounts for the highest number at 122. Of the deaths reported

in eThekweni, 36 were reported in Phoenix (29 murders and seven inquests, and to date, 22 suspects have been arrested for the murders in Phoenix and have appeared in court).

**Cabinet urges the communities in Kwa-Zulu-Natal to work together and support government efforts to address racial tensions and undertones that threaten to undermine the values the founding fathers of a democratic, non-racial and equal South Africa gave up their freedom and lives for.**

#### ■ Rebuilding the economy

- Cabinet welcomed the R36 billion in economic relief support from government as a second set of a package of interventions to get the country back on its feet from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and exacerbated by the unrests and destruction of business properties that took place in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and some parts of Mpumalanga; albeit at a very small scale.
- The bulk of this relief is for the R350 Social Relief of Distress Grant to alleviate poverty and hunger amongst the poorest in society, and the support packages for employees and businesses.
- Government continues to seek additional support packages to ensure a speedy economic recovery in line with the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.
- The task of rebuilding the economy belongs to all South Africans. Cabinet called on every citizen and the private sector to join our national efforts to rebuild together, better and faster for a prosperous, equal and better South Africa.

#### ■ Energy

- Cabinet welcomed the completion of the Medupi Power Station, with all the six generation units fully on the grid. This will go a long way in alleviating the pressure on the grid and government remains focused on ensuring energy security.

**Cabinet wishes to congratulate Ms Zandi Shange, the Project Director for Medupi Power Station, for bringing this mammoth power plant fully online. As the history of construction engineering is written, the women of our country will be fully represented as Ms Shange is the first African woman to deliver a project of this magnitude.**

- Government has urged both the management and employees of Eskom to stay the course and deliver on the outstanding power stations, including renewables.

#### ■ Israel Observer Status in the African Union (AU) Commission (AUC)

- Cabinet strongly objects to the unjust and unilateral decision by the Chairperson of the AUC to grant Israel observer status in the AU. The AU is the legitimate representative of all African member states that should be consulted on such decisions.
- The AU embodies the aspirations of all Africans and carries the mark of confidence in its leadership of the African peoples. Therefore, it should endeavour to take decisions which are not in conflict with the principles of the AU Charter.
- The continued occupation of Palestine by Israel remains totally unjust and shameful, and takes away the human rights of Palestinians. This unilateral decision follows the recent unjust attacks on innocent Palestinians by the Israelis in East Jerusalem and Gaza.

**Cabinet calls on the AU to reconsider its unilateral decision to grant Israel an observer status in the AU. It remains unequivocally committed to efforts aimed at reviving a political process that would lead to the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, existing side by side in peace with Israel.**



### CABINET DECISIONS

#### ■ Women's Month commemoration

- Cabinet approved the theme and activities for the commemoration of this year's Women's Month, which pays tribute to the more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 9 August 1956 in protest against the extension of Pass Laws to women.
- This year's events will be celebrated under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: Realising Women's Rights". The theme is aligned to the year-long celebration of the 150th anniversary of Struggle stalwart Charlotte Manny Maxeke.
- The brave actions of these women encourage us to rebuild our nation to become stronger after the recent public violence in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, and from the socio-economic and health impact of COVID-19. These incidents have showed us that when we stand together as a peace-loving and law-abiding nation, we can overcome any challenge that affects us.
- While our nation has made great strides for women's rights, more needs to be done to entrench gender equality and fight the scourge of gender-based violence and abuse of women in our society.

**Cabinet called on all sectors of society to make our policies on gender equality a lived reality and take a stand against violence against women by reporting perpetrators to the nearest police station.**

#### ■ Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) Inquiry on the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

- Cabinet approved the release of the report of the IMC Inquiry into NSFAS. The committee was appointed in May 2020 to look into the business processes, systems

and capacity of the NSFAS to deliver on its mandate.

- The investigation focused on the root causes of the problems experienced by NSFAS and the implementation of the new bursary scheme since 2018. The enquiry provided valuable recommendations towards improving the operations of NSFAS.
- Cabinet appreciated that some of these recommendations have already been implemented. The report can be accessed through the Department of Higher Education and Training website: [www.dhet.gov.za](http://www.dhet.gov.za).

#### ■ National Infrastructure Plan (NIP) 2050

- Cabinet approved the publication of the NIP 2050 for public comment. The plan drives the country's infrastructure investment drive, which also integrates African economies through some of its regional projects.
- In addition to driving economic growth, it will also address the legacy of apartheid spatial injustices. It is anchored on the participation of government, business, state-owned entities and civil society.
- Its priority sectors include energy, freight transport, water and digital communication. The NIP 2050 will soon be gazetted for public consultation.

#### ■ Incorporation of the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) and Cooperative Banks Development Agency (CBDA) into the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)

- Cabinet approved the incorporation of the SEFA and CBDA into the SEDA. The merger of these entities will enable an integrated government support to small, micro and medium enterprises as well as cooperatives with effect from 1 April 2022.
- A proposed single agency will provide both financial and non-financial support to these businesses.

By pooling all the resources together, the agency will be more impactful and accessible in all the districts and metros.

- The approved incorporation will result in the reclassification of SEDA (which will be renamed later) in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) from a Schedule 3A to a Schedule 2 entity.
- Cabinet approved the extension of the Board of SEFA to 31 March 2022 to enable the alignment to the commencement of the transitional arrangement.

#### ■ Norms and Standards for the safe operation of tourism during COVID-19 and other pandemics

- Cabinet approved the Norms and Standards for the safe operations of the Tourism Sector in the context of the COVID-19 and other related pandemics.
- The Norms and Standards provide common minimum health and safety measures that will ensure uniformity across the tourism sector. They will cover services such as accommodation, food, tour operators, casinos, weddings and other related activities.
- We are now on a par with international markets and it will enable the sector to fully open for international tourist arrivals.

#### ■ National Conference on Migration and Urbanisation in South Africa

- Cabinet endorsed the National Conference on Migration and Urbanisation in South Africa held virtually from 26 to 30 July 2021. Migration and urbanisation have been part of South Africa's four Population Policy priorities since 2015.
- The conference took stock of the available data, knowledge and information on migration and urbanisation trends in the country.
- Such information serves as evidence base for policy and

programme development, including planning in all three spheres of government.

- The conference was organised collaboratively with relevant government departments, research community and civil society.
- The conference culminated in the setting up of a Forum for Migration and Urbanisation Data and Research to serve as a knowledge resource to support the work of migration and urbanisation.

#### ■ South Africa's election as an International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) designated Regional Space Weather Centre

- Cabinet approved and welcomed the designation of South Africa as a Regional Space Weather Centre for ICAO. This was announced after South Africa received excellent audit results from ICAO.
- South Africa, through the South African National Space Agency, has been designated to provide space weather information that is now an adopted standard by ICAO for all aviation requirements.
- South Africa has been given three years to upgrade its current limited capacity to meet ICAO's requirements.
- The requirements require 24-hours/seven-days operations with an established team of trained forecasters and specialist space researchers.
- It has also been granted permission to collaborate with the Pan-European Consortium for Aviation Space Weather User Service.
- The designation affords South Africa an opportunity to grow its science and engineering technology and innovation sector, and puts the country in the map as a global player in the space science.

#### ■ African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA)

- Cabinet approved the submission to Parliament the

revised agreement (AFRA) for another five years.

- AFRA is an intergovernmental agreement established by African member states to further strengthen and enlarge the contribution of nuclear science and technology to socio-economic development on the African continent.
- South Africa has been an active member of AFRA and it collaborates with other member states to promote the agreement's objectives on the African continent.



#### ■ National Freshwater (Inland) Wild Capture Fisheries Policy

- Cabinet approved the National Freshwater (Inland) Wild Capture Fisheries Policy for implementation. The policy provides an efficient regulatory regime for the inland fisheries sector. It also formalises the currently informal and unrecognised activities of small-scale fisheries.
- The policy, amongst others, provides for the setting up of developmental fisheries governance institutions; support to growing inland fisheries value chains; management of a sustainable inland fishing and addresses the issues of equity and transformation of the sector.

#### ■ Proposed pre-release calendar for the publication of crime statistics for the 2021/22 financial year

- Cabinet approved the proposed pre-release calendar for the publication of the quarterly crime statistics for the 2021/22 financial year. The proposed remaining pre-release calendar crime statistics is August 2021 for quarter one and November 2021 for quarter two. Crime statistics for quarter three and quarter four will be released in February and May 2022 respectively.

### BILLS

#### ■ Older Persons Amendment Bill of 2021

- Cabinet approved the submission of the Older Persons Amendment Bill of 2021 for tabling in Parliament. The Bill amends the current Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006).
- The amendments seek to strengthen measures that protect older persons. It improves the services

offered to older persons such as social support, health, community-based and residential-based care.

- The proposed Bill introduces the services offered to older persons. It also provides for the removal of older persons with disabilities from a hostile or unhealthy environment without obtaining a Court Order.

#### ■ Draft Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) Amendment Bill of 2021

- Cabinet approved the publication of the draft NPO Amendment Bill for public comment.
- The Bill amends the current NPO Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997). The Act was meant to create an enabling environment in which NPOs could be formed and function optimally. Overtime gaps

have been identified, particularly on smaller NPOs and community-based organisations.

- The proposed amendment addresses the challenges faced by smaller NPOs; deals with abuse of NPOs and simplifies accessibility procedures.
- It also proposes the setting up of the NPO Registrar to strengthen the servicing, monitoring and promotion of transparency and accountability of the NPOs.

### UPCOMING EVENT

#### ■ Women's Day

- President Ramaphosa will deliver the virtual Women's Day address on Monday, 9 August 2021, as part of our country's celebration of Women's Month under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: Realising Women's Rights".

### MESSAGES



#### ■ Congratulations

- Cabinet extended its congratulations and well-wishes to:
  - Ms Tatjana Schoenmaker, for winning South Africa's first Olympic gold medal in Tokyo, Japan after competing

in the women's 200m breast-stroke final in a world record time. She had earlier won a silver medal during the 100m breaststroke.

- Ms Shanon Buitendag, for winning silver in the women's surfing finals.

These outstanding achievements at the Tokyo Olympics bring our nation's medal tally to three.

#### ■ Condolences

- Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:
  - Mr Shona Ferguson (47), the television (TV) and film producer and actor who contributed enormously to the development of the country's film industry.
  - Mr Clive Scott (84), the TV veteran and legendary actor who graced our screens for many years.
  - Mr Pandelani Jonathan

Mudzwa Makhado (99), a veteran political activist who was one of the leaders of the 1960 anti-pass campaign, and who also dedicated his life to the struggle for democracy and freedom.

- Mama Thalitha Monica Lebea-Timpuru (87), the fourth tirelessly for the liberation of this country as well as a non-racial, non-sexist and a first South Africa. She was the first Matron of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO).
- Mr Geoff Makhubo (53), the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg; a selfless and hardworking leader who championed service delivery. He was the Regional Chairperson of the African

National Congress.

- Mr Luthendo Benedict Sigogo (49), the Acting Mpumalanga High Court Judge and Commissioner of the Judicial Service Commission, with a stellar career in the legal profession, and was a dedicated champion of transformation. He also served as the president of the Black Lawyers Association.
- Family and relatives of members of Parliament who recently passed on.

**Enquiries:**  
Ms Phumla Williams  
Cabinet Spokesperson  
Mobile: 083 501 0139  
[www.gcis.gov.za](http://www.gcis.gov.za) | [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)