

Cabinet Statement

Statement on the Cabinet Meeting of Thursday, 16 November 2023



ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Economic recovery and growth

■ Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS)

Cabinet welcomes the 2023, 3rd quarter, QLFS results, as released by Statistics South Africa, that indicated employment figures have surpassed the pre-COVID-19 employment levels.

Cabinet is pleased that all provinces, but one, have contributed to the 399 000 increase to the number of employed people to a total of 16,7 million people in employment in the 3rd quarter, compared to 16,3 million in the 2nd quarter of 2023.

- The strong contributions to additional jobs of KwaZulu-Natal (up by 152 000), Limpopo (up by 70 000), North West (up by 61 000) and Mpumalanga, indicate the gradual but steady realisation of the goal of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan of rebuilding better, stronger and inclusively.
- Cabinet appreciates the continued and consistent contribution of the following sectors and industries:
 - ✓ The formal sector employment increased by 287 000 whereas informal sector increased by 29 000 jobs;
 - ✓ Finance (this includes business services) up by 237 000 jobs; and

- Community and social services up by 119 000 jobs and agriculture by 61 000 jobs.
- Cabinet also noted the negative impact the electricity and logistics constraints continued to have on the manufacturing, mining, transport and utilities. Cabinet is confident that noticeable progress will soon be visible in eradicating both load-shedding and constraints within the freight and logistics industry.

Cabinet is also pleased that despite remaining challenges, youth unemployment is gradually declining (a decrease of 1,9% from the previous quarter), and a 237 000 increase in the number of employed youth, rising to a total of six million youth in employment.

■ Investments

- In the same trajectory of a recovering and growing economy, Cabinet welcomed the additional R5-billion investment by the Ford Motor Company (FMC) for its new plug-in hybrid electric Ford Ranger that is earmarked for export to Europe, New Zealand and Australia. The company currently employs 5 200 people in South Africa.
- Cabinet further welcomed the investment by Procter & Gamble (P&G) in its new state-of-the-art production line of the Pampers Premium Care in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. The P&G cumulative investment since totals approximately R900 million since 2018 and currently employed over

4 000 direct and indirect jobs throughout its value chain.

- Both the FMC and P&G project launches are testament of the valuable contribution of President Cyril Ramaphosa's investment drive through the South Africa Investment Conference and a reaffirmation of South Africa as an investment destination of choice.

■ South Africa's red meat access to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

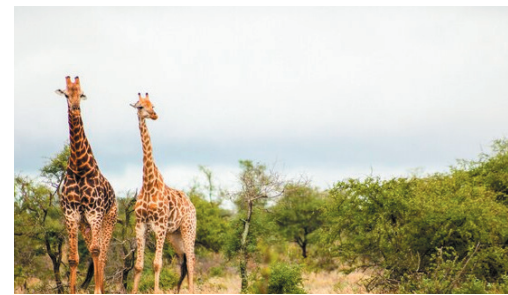
- Cabinet welcomed the signing of the red meat agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during the Saudi-African Investment Summit. This agreement marks a critical step in ensuring that South African red meat products gain access to an important market, and further strengthens the contribution of the agricultural sector in both economic growth and job creation.
- Cabinet congratulated Ministers Thoko Didiza and Ebrahim Patel for the work done to ensure the opening of this market for South African red meat products.

■ Deliberate distortions of the Agri-Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) requirements for agricultural exports

- Cabinet condemned deliberate distortions by some sections of the media of the Agri-BEE requirements for agricultural exports to stoke racial tensions, and reminded the media that its freedom equally comes

with responsibility.

- Cabinet expressed its appreciation to the agricultural industry, in particular the SA Wine and Agricultural Chamber of Business, commonly known as Agbiz, for rejecting attempts to plunge the country and the sector into racial tensions by publicly clarifying the distortions as soon as they were published. Your posture on this matter, demonstrated that indeed you have embraced the spirit canvassed by the Springboks of being Stronger Together.



■ Tourism

- Cabinet noted the partnership established between the Department of Tourism and Google as a game changer that will assist in promoting South Africa as a prime tourist destination.
- The partnership aims, amongst others, to facilitate the use of digital tools to enhance tourism experiences and sustainability, including the commitment that Google Maps will use technology to avoid crime hotspots.

Fight against crime and corruption

■ Integrated crime fighting

Cabinet welcomed the deployment of 3 300 members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), from 28 October 2023 until 28 April 2024, to support the South African Police Service (SAPS) and other law-enforcement agencies to deal with illegal mining in the country.

- This deployment affirms government's commitment to put an end to illegal mining and create conditions for inclusive growth and transformation of the economy.



- The Ministers of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster have provided progress with work underway to fight against crime, and the Minister of Police last week provided an update on the quarterly crime statistics.

■ National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council's (NACAC) National Dialogue

- Cabinet welcomed the successful hosting of the NACAC's National Dialogue, which deliberated on progress in implementing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and recommendations of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture.
- The progress includes eight (8) out of 16 recommended pieces of legislative reforms to address specific recommendations of the State Capture Commission that are now before Parliament. These Bills cover areas such as public procurement, administrative reform, conduct of public servants, reform of intelligence services, money laundering and electoral reform.
- The Asset Forfeiture Unit has been granted freezing orders worth R14 billion for state capture related cases and has recouped R5.4 billion of the ill-gotten gains. In addition, the Investigating Directorate has taken 34 state capture and corruption cases to court, involving 205 accused persons.
- Fight against gender-based violence and femicide**
- Cabinet condemned in the strongest terms the stabbing of a female Cape Peninsula University of Technology student, by her husband.

Cabinet calls on society to work together with government to eliminate gender-based violence whilst law-enforcement agencies continue to bring perpetrators of such callous acts to justice.

■ Death of children due to malnutrition

- Cabinet noted with concern the reported deaths of children due to malnutrition as reported by the South African Human Rights Commission.

Cabinet wishes to remind members of the public about government support programmes such as the Child Support Grant, which is aimed at assisting families to meet the basic needs of children.

- This is in addition to the comprehensive Social Assistance Programme through which government provides healthy meals to vulnerable households through the National School Nutrition Programme, and Community Nutrition and development centres.

■ Voter Registration

- Cabinet reiterated its call to all eligible voters to register to vote at their nearest voting station, including to update their details during the Voter Registration Weekend of 18 to 19 November 2023.
- To assist voters who need to collect IDs they have applied for or to apply for Temporary Identification certificates, the Department of Home Affairs had aligned its operating hours with those of the Electoral Commission of South Africa during the voter registration weekend.
- Cabinet has reminded that citizens can also use the online voter registration facility (<https://register tovoteregistration.org.za/Welcome>) that has been operating since February 2023, to register or update their details.

Infrastructure development

■ Energy

- The Minister in The Presidency responsible for Electricity has provided a comprehensive public briefing on the status and progress with ensuring electricity security.

■ Water Security

- Cabinet is pleased with reports that the disputes that resulted in delays towards implementation of the Mzimwubu Dam project have been resolved and a site establishment commenced in early November, whilst consultations with traditional leaders on social issues is underway.
- Cabinet was updated that the raising of the Clanwilliam Dam wall to increase storage capacity to 344 million cubic metres – for the benefit of the people of the West

Coast District Municipality, Cederberg Local Municipality and Matzikama Local Municipality – is underway.

- Cabinet was briefed that the construction of the Tzaneen Dam re-commenced in June 2023, with the estimated completion date of April 2025.
- Cabinet was apprised that a joint team of the three metropolitan municipalities (Ekurhuleni, Joburg and Tshwane) and Rand Water continue to meet daily to address root causes of water challenges. At the centre of Gauteng's water challenges is water losses caused by old municipal infrastructure and deficiencies in water leakage monitoring and efficient repairs.

■ SA Connect Phase Two

- Cabinet received and considered an updated report on the implementation of the SA Connect Phase 2 project. SA Connect is a flagship programme of government that seeks to bridge the digital divide by

connecting households and government institutions and provide Wi-Fi access to communities across the country.

- On progress with Phase 2 of the project, Cabinet was pleased that 1 000 households were connected with broadband and that 1 000 community Wi-Fi hotspots are planned to be installed by December 2023.
- In addition, the project has rolled out infrastructure for Internet connectivity that allows households to access the Internet at cheaper rates. For R249 per month, a subscribing household has unlimited access to robust Internet, with cheaper data costs as low as R5 for one gig per day.
- It is estimated that the project will also contribute to economic participation through the provision of 4 505 semi-skilled and 169 skilled employment opportunities, and will support over 75 small to medium-sized companies.
- In addition, high-demand spectrum will be

provided to more than 18 000 schools, 943 libraries, 5 731 health facilities and 8 241 tribal authorities over the next months through the social obligations to telecommunications companies.

■ Broadcasting Digital Migration

- Cabinet noted the progress the country is making with the migration from analogue to digital broadcasting. As of 23 July 2023, all 123 analogue transmitters above 694 Megahertz were switched off in the remaining four provinces namely; the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng. This will free up the spectrum needed for mobile broadband, and other information and communications technology-related needs.

- Cabinet was briefed that the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies had determined December 2024 as the final date for the switch-off of all analogue broadcasting services, and that progress is on to meet the set target date.

■ Municipal Cleaning and Greening Programme

- Cabinet encourages South Africans to join the programme to keep our country clean and free from litter by participating in the municipal cleaning and greening initiatives taking place across the country.
- The programme, which has already created more than 37 000 work opportunities, is aimed at clearing the 7 251 illegal dumping hotspots in communities across the country.
- This involves the daily cleaning of streets, clearing illegal dumping sites, cleaning coastal areas and the revitalisation of parks.

Capacity of the State

■ Improved National and Provincial Audit Outcomes (2022/23 financial year)

- Cabinet was briefed by the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) on the outcomes of the 2022/23 financial year national and provincial audits. The AGSA pointed out encouraging trends of continuous improved performance which indicates overall improvement in accountability, transparency, adequacy and effectiveness of controls.
- The departments and institutions that have achieved unqualified audits with no findings (clean audits) have increased from 94 during the 2018/19 financial year to 147 during the 2022/23 financial year, reporting a year-on-year improvement.
- The departments and institutions that have achieved unqualified audits with findings are 162 and this represents 39% of the audited institutions.
- The institutions and departments with disclaimed findings have decreased from

25 during 2018/2019 reporting period to five (5) during the 2022/23 reporting period and represent only 1% of audited institutions.

- Although the AGSA reports an estimated R14 billion in financial losses, measures to address material irregularities also show an improvement.
- Although challenges still remain, the outcomes of the 2022/23 national and provincial governments audits dispel claims that State capacity is in total collapse, with independent and objective assessments by institutions such as the AGSA indicating a very strong and continuous improvement trajectory.

■ International Relations – State Visit to Qatar

- Last week, President Ramaphosa concluded a State Visit to Qatar at the invitation of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar. The visit underscored three decades of diplomatic relations.
- The President was joined by a high-level business delegation and engaged the Qatari business community in various sectors with the aim of improving trade relations.

- President Ramaphosa and the Amir agreed to set up working teams that will look into increasing Qatar's investment into South Africa to match the depth of the diplomatic relations.

■ Geopolitical matters

- Cabinet reiterates the call made by African leaders for an end to the war in Gaza, during the African-Saudi Summit in Riyadh hosted by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. The summit condemned the targeting of civilians and the violations of international law by the Israeli Government.
- Cabinet continues to be concerned by the atrocities of the Israeli Government against the people of Palestine, including the deliberate attacks on the United Nations (UN) School in Gaza and the massacre of hundreds of children who had sought refuge at the school, in addition to the continued attacks on hospital staff, patients and hospital infrastructure.
- It is because of these continued atrocities that are being committed with impunity by the Israeli Government with the support and protection of powerful countries, that on 17 November 2023, South Africa – together with the Comoros, Djibouti,

Bolivia and Bangladesh – jointly referred the situation in Palestine and Israel to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

- While the Palestinian Authority did ask the ICC to investigate crimes under the court's jurisdiction in 2018, South Africa believes the current atrocities, particularly in Gaza, need renewed attention with the full backing of state parties. Our ambassador in the Hague delivered the referral in person, which asked the ICC to investigate the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide with a view to holding those most responsible accountable. Given that much of the global community is witnessing the commission of these crimes in real time, including statements of genocidal intent by many Israeli leaders, we expect that warrants of arrests for these leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, will be issued shortly.
- The ICC has been able to investigate the situation in Palestine since 2021 when the issue of territorial jurisdiction was settled. However, we have noted that the Office of the Prosecutor has continued to drag its feet despite the gravity of the situation. The current atrocities may not have

occurred if these investigations took place as soon as the Palestinian Authority first made its referral.

- We expect now that other state parties have also added their voices for an end to the impunity by Israel, and the significant levels of evidence available, that international warrants of arrest will be issued by the time the Conference of Parties meet in mid-December in New York. Failure to do so will be indicative of a lack of will to act by the ICC and a strong signal to the total failure of the global system of good governance and the need to establish a new system.
- More children have been killed over the last month than those killed per annum in all conflicts combined for the last three years. More UN staff members have been killed in Gaza since the founding of the UN. The numbers of journalists killed have been staggering. These are all people killed by the actions of the Israeli Government, not to defend itself, but, evinced by the statements of its leaders to clear most of Gaza of Palestinians and to occupy it.
- The world cannot simply stand by and watch; the global community need to rise to stop this genocide now.

CABINET DECISIONS – including those of the Special Cabinet meeting of 9 November 2023

■ African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) 20th Anniversary celebrations

- Cabinet considered and supported the request for South Africa to host the 20th Anniversary celebrations of the APRM from 23 to 30 November 2023. South Africa supports the African Union's mission to promote the African Union's (AU) shared values of democratic governance and inclusive development on the continent.
- The 20th Anniversary celebrations will include the participation of current and former heads of state and government and the AU Commission.

■ Utilisation of funds from the Criminal Assets Recovery Account (CARA)

- Cabinet approved the use of monies in the CARA to fight against illegal mining and other crimes.
- The R2 172 359 000 is allocated to fight illicit mining, which continues to be a

threat to the South African economy. The money is allocated to the SAPS, SANDF, Department of Home Affairs and Border Management Agency. The SAPS will use the funding to buy vehicles, helicopters, Nyctas and will deploy more 4 000 officers for 18 months.

- Illegal mining and other organised crimes cost South Africa billions of rands each year and it affects our position as an investment destination.

■ The Just Energy Transition Implementation Plan (JET-IP)

- Cabinet approved the JET-IP, which will guide South Africa's transition to low carbon economy through the scaling up of renewable energy sources.
- The JET-IP sets out a number of interventions South Africa needs and investments required for the country to transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy in line with the National Determined Contributions presented to the UN. Cabinet is

of the view that the JET-IP demonstrates South Africa's commitment to a just transition in line with the country's energy needs.

- The JET-IP will be driven by a combination of reforms in the energy sector, including the Mpumalanga Just Transition, New Energy Vehicles and Green Hydrogen, among others. The plan further responds to South Africa's commitments under the Paris Agreement and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change as well as the National Development Plan (NDP) commitments.
- The JET-IP will enable South Africa to gradually meet its carbon emissions reduction commitments while at the same time, it will ensure inclusive economic growth, energy security and employment.

■ Draft National Public Transport Subsidy Policy

- Cabinet approved the gazetting of the draft National Public Transport Subsidy

Policy for public comments. The policy proposes that South Africa's public transport funding should move from subsidising a particular mode of transport to a user-subsidy model.

Government recognises that the transport sector is at the heart of the country's development, with most households completely reliant on public transport for mobility.

■ Biannual Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019-2024 performance progress reports

- Cabinet received and considered the MTSF biannual progress reports for the period 1 April to 30 September 2023. The reports form part of the consolidated government priorities towards the achievement of the NDP goals.
- The reports focused on the seven priorities of government that were identified by the Sixth Administration, namely:

- Priority One:** Building a capable, ethical and developmental state;
- Priority Two:** Education skills and health;
- Priority Three:** Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic service;
- Priority Four:** Spatial integration, human settlements and local government;
- Priority Five:** Social cohesion;
- Priority Six:** Economic transformation and job creation;
- Priority Seven:** A better Africa and a better world.

- The Minister in The Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation will lead detailed briefings with the clusters on the Programme of Action.

BILL

■ South African National Petroleum Company (SANPC) Bill

- Cabinet approved the publication of the SANPC Bill for public comments. The Bill gives effect to the Cabinet decision to merge PetroSA, South African Gas Development Company (iGas) and the Strategic Fuel Fund.
- The Bill makes provisions for the establishment of a state-owned company that will ensure South Africa participates meaningfully in oil and gas development. It will also guarantee the country's security of energy supply to support economic development and growth.
- The SANPC will oversee strategic planning, coordination and governance of the country's petroleum resources, and this will contribute to development and job creation.

UPCOMING EVENT

■ 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children (25 November to 10 December)

This year marks the 25th Anniversary since South Africa initiated the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign.

- The launch will be held in Mpumalanga at the Nsikazi Stadium, City of Mbombela under the theme: "Accelerating actions to end gender-based violence and femicide: leaving no one behind". The sub-theme: "Safe access for women to clean water: a basic human right", addresses barriers women face in safely accessing water and sanitation.
- South Africa and the Union of Comoros will co-host the 3rd AU Men's Conference on Positive Masculinity in Leadership to End Violence against Women and Girls on 27 and 28 November 2023 in Pretoria under the theme: "Consolidating Commitments Towards the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls."



MESSAGES

■ Congratulations

- Cabinet extends its congratulations and well-wishes to:
 - Prof Dire Tladi**, formerly of the University of Pretoria, on his election by the UN as a judge of the International Court of Justice. Prof Tladi is a highly respected scholar, a skilled diplomat and is the first South African ever to be elected to the court in its 78 year history, the second judge from the Southern African region and the second youngest judge ever to be selected to the court.
 - the **AGSA**, for being appointed the external auditor of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. This is a reaffirmation of the above-average international standing of South Africa's institutions. Previously, the AGSA was an external auditor of the UN, more

- than 10 years ago.
- Mamelodi Sundowns**, for winning the flag high and making history by finishing the Inaugural African Football League. This triumph is another example of the unifying power of sport, which continues to foster nation-building and social cohesion.
- Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies** for becoming the CAF Women's Champions League Final by beating Sporting Club Casablanca.
- the **Proteas** for demonstrating resilience and fighting spirit in their defeat against Australia in the Cricket World Cup semi-finals and congratulate Australia for winning the ICC 2023 World Cup.
- legendary actor and playwright **Dr John Kani**, who has been awarded an honorary Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in recognition of his services to drama. An OBE is a British

- chivalric order which recognises one for making a great impact in one's line of work.
- Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande**, who has been awarded an honorary professorship by the Beijing Jiaotong University in China. This is in recognition of his contributions to education, and is a symbol of strengthening ties between South Africa and China.
- Dr Kogile Naidoo**, who was awarded the prestigious Outstanding Female Scientist Prize presented by the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership, a research programme of the European Union.
- South Africa's **InvestSA**, a branch of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition that won a UN Investment Promotion Award at the 8th World Investment Forum, who was promoting and facilitating

a large energy project that includes foreign investment for the construction of the country's largest renewable energy project expected to provide clean energy to 200 000 households.

- South Africa was ranked in first place in the GBS World Competitiveness Index, for its support for centres in the category of 'Global Customer Lifecycle Management' and ranked second in the Global Customer Service and Support Services category.

■ Condolences

- Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:
 - South African music icon **Marc Rantseli**, who was part of the musical duo Marc Alex, which he co-founded with his brother Alex Rantseli.

- legendary former sports journalist and news editor **Sello Rabothata**. He is known for his love of football, and formed part of the team that helped coin the name Bafana-Bafana for South Africa's National Soccer Team.
- much-loved radio personality **Irvin Sihlopho**, who anchored and produced sports shows on SABC's Ukhozi FM.
- a Palestinian but also a Head of the Gift of the Givers' Gaza office, **Dr Ahmed Abbasi**, who was killed in the ongoing Israel-Hamas war.

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MOVING TOWARDS 30^{YRS} OF FREEDOM