

# Cabinet Statement



Virtual Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 10 March 2021

## ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



### Attacks and killings of police officers condemned

**Cabinet condemned the continued attacks and killings of police officers as not only barbaric but also a threat to national security. Members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) and other law-enforcement agencies, including private security companies, put their lives on the line daily to keep us safe; and they also deserve our support and protection.**

- Cabinet welcomed the swift police investigation that led to the arrest of a suspect in connection with the murder of two Western Cape police officers on Sunday, 28 February 2021, who were also robbed of their firearms. All acts of criminality, including murder, will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will be hunted down and brought to book.
- Cabinet also commended the SAPS action in seizing cocaine with a street value of over R500 million from a fishing vessel on the Saldanha coast. The operation was led by detectives from the Organised Crime Narcotics Unit, in

collaboration with other SAPS units.

- The SAPS was also commended for seizing 400 vials, equivalent to about 2 400 doses, of fake Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) vaccine at a warehouse in Germiston, Gauteng. Officers also recovered fake masks and arrested three individuals.

**Cabinet urges the public to avoid buying fake vaccines from unscrupulous peddlers who endanger the lives of unsuspecting citizens. Through the Department of Health, government has started to implement a free vaccination programme that will reach all South Africans who volunteer to be vaccinated. To date, Phase 1 of the vaccination programme at designated vaccination sites throughout the country has covered over 100 000 people.**

- Unfortunate death during the Wits University student protest**
- Cabinet is saddened by the unfortunate death of Mr Mthokozisi Ntumba (35), who was killed during the Wits University student protest in



Braamfontein in Johannesburg on Wednesday, 10 March 2021, and expresses its condolences to the family and friends of the deceased.

- The Independent Police Investigative Directorate is already conducting an investigation to determine the circumstances that led to the death.
- Cabinet urges the police to exercise restraint whilst ensuring public order during protests and never to use live ammunition.

### African Swine Fever (ASF)

- An outbreak of ASF has been reported at two farms in Mfuleni in the Western Cape. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture has imposed a ban on the sale and movement of live pigs from Mfuleni to limit the spread of the disease.
- ASF is a contagious disease that affects domestic and wild pigs, but does not affect people. However, Cabinet calls for extreme caution to be exercised to prevent the spread of the disease to other parts of the country.
- Farmers are advised to pre-cook any swill for at least an hour before feeding it to pigs, to ensure the inactivation of the ASF virus and other diseases of concern.

### Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures for the fourth quarter of 2020

- Cabinet noted the GDP figures for the fourth quarter of 2020 that were released by Statistics South Africa on Tuesday, 9 March 2021.
- Real GDP grew by 6.3%, largely as a result of the further easing of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. The outcome reflected strong growth in household final consumption and manufacturing output.
- As a result, for the full year of 2020, real GDP contracted by 7.0% – a better outcome than expected.
- The manufacturing sector grew by 21.1% in the fourth quarter of 2020.

- Nine of the 10 sub-sectors recorded increases (led by food and beverages, motor vehicles and parts, and metal and steel products).
- Trade growth (9.8%) was led by retail trade, motor trade, catering and accommodation.
- Agriculture posted its highest annual growth (13.1% for 2020) as a result of favourable weather conditions and improved performance in the grain, horticulture and livestock sub-sectors.
- On an expenditure basis, household final consumption expenditure increased at a rate of 7.5%, led by restaurants and hotels; food and non-alcoholic beverages; and recreation and culture sub-sectors.
- Gross fixed capital formation increased by 12.1%, led by increased investment in transport equipment and construction works as road passenger and freight activities improved and civil engineering works resumed.
- Cabinet remains confident that the economy will recover through the prioritised health interventions as well as continued collaborative efforts of government, business, workers and communities in implementing our Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

### Proudly South African Buy Local Summit & Expo

- President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered the virtual Keynote Address on Tuesday, 9 March 2021 to the 9th annual Proudly South African Buy Local Summit & Expo, held under the theme: "Localisation as a driver of Economic Growth". Proudly South African is an agency of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition.
- The summit was live-streamed across multiple online and social media platforms to allow wider participation in the discussions.
- A virtual expo allowed companies to showcase their products and services in a

short video that provided an online meeting hub for those who want to trade.

- Cabinet calls on South Africans and businesses to support our home-grown products and services, particularly during this economic recovery period, to boost economic growth and job creation.
- Visit to the Biovac Storage facility**
- Deputy President David Mabuza visited the BioVac Storage facility in Midrand, Gauteng on Tuesday, 2 March 2021 as part of the work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on COVID-19 Vaccines, which oversees the successful roll-out of the vaccination programme.
- The Biovac Institute, a Cape Town-based biopharmaceutical company, is jointly owned by government and the private sector. It was formed in 2003 to be responsible of South Africa's immunisation



programmes in vaccine development, and the logistics of storing and distributing vaccines to various vaccination sites.

- Over the years, Biovac has developed sufficient capacity to store and distribute vaccines. Cabinet was satisfied with its contribution towards the vaccination roll-out programme and the work being done with other pharmaceuticals to produce COVID-19 vaccines.

**Cabinet calls on everybody to remain vigilant and continue practising the health protocols of wearing a mask when in public spaces, regularly washing hands with soap and water or using a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer, maintaining social distancing of at least 1.5 metres and avoiding large gatherings.**

- The prevention of the possible third wave is all in our hands.



## CABINET DECISIONS

### National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

- Cabinet received a briefing from the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande, on the current funding shortfall challenges faced by the NSFAS. These challenges have delayed the finalisation of the registration of first-year university students.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges of the scheme. Some of these being the extended academic year and a number of students qualifying for the fund due to parents having lost their jobs.
- To resolve this challenge, Cabinet:
- approved additional funding and the details of which will be unpacked by Minister

Nzimande immediately after this briefing.

- directed that further work must be done to find a more sustainable approach to fund students for their tertiary education.
- Cabinet remains committed to ensuring that all deserving students are not excluded due to the lack of funding.

### Draft Position Paper for Land Administration and Land Tenure Reforms in Communal Areas

- Cabinet approved the draft Position Paper on Land Administration and Land Tenure Reforms in Communal Areas for further consultations with relevant stakeholders.
- The proposed reforms provide a legal framework to initiate the process of transferring



communal land to persons or communities whose tenure of land is legally insecure.

- These reforms will also expand the communal asset base to empower communities to engage in cultural, social and economic activities of their choice.
- The consultations will culminate in the convening of the envisaged National Land Summit.

### Vaccine procurement

- Cabinet received a briefing by Health Minister Zwelini Mkhize

and Finance Minister Tito Mboweni regarding contract negotiations for vaccine acquisition with different pharmaceutical companies.

- Cabinet considered some of the difficult terms in the contracts that are not aligned to the provisions of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) and acknowledged the deviations already granted by National Treasury in the interests of the lives of South Africans.
- The deviations included

prepayment provisions to ensure that South Africans have access to the vaccines as soon as possible.

- Cabinet supported the efforts of National Treasury and the National Department of Health to continue with the negotiations and ensure quick access to vaccines for all.

### National State of Disaster

- Cabinet approved the extension of National State of Disaster to 15 April 2021. This is done in terms of Section 27(5) (C) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002). The public is urged to continue adhering to all COVID-19 health measures and restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus.

## BILLS

### Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Bill of 2020

- Cabinet approved the publication of the OHS Bill of 2020 for public consultation.
- The Bill seeks to amend the OHS Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993) and align it to international trends. It also seeks to strengthen the safety measures of workers in their respective workplaces.
- The Bill introduces the provisions that empower employees to withhold their labour should they feel the environment is dangerous and unsafe, without being victimized by the employers.

Protection Bill for tabling in Parliament. The Bill repeals the Housing Consumers Protection Measures Act, 1998 (Act 95 of 1998).

- The proposed amendments include expanding the protection afforded to housing consumers – including repairs, renovations, alterations and additions to an existing home.
- The Bill also proposes transformational programmes in the home-building industry.
- A number of inputs have since been received from the industry stakeholders through public consultations. The Bill will go through further consultations with the parliamentary process before it is passed into law.

### Housing Consumer Protection Bill

- Cabinet approved the submission of the Housing Consumer



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### World Water Day

- When:** Monday, 22 March 2021.
- Campaign:** #SaveWater – launched by the Department of Water and Sanitation to remind all South Africans that every drop counts.
- South Africa will join the international community in marking World Water Day, which raises awareness of the global water crisis and focuses on the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation for all by 2030.
- Despite the recent good rainfall, the water-scarce country is still susceptible to sustained droughts exacerbated by climate change.
- Cabinet calls on South Africans to use water sparingly as our wasteful behaviour today could impact future generations. Let us be the responsible generation that took the turning into our collective hands by turning off the tap of water wastage.

## MESSAGES

### CONGRATULATIONS

- Cabinet expressed congratulations to:
- Ms Tshapho Faith Koopa**, a local medical scientist from Pathology LabOne who discovered a COVID-19 testing antigen. The antigen is part of the COVID-19 test kits being rolled out by LabOne laboratories in Khayelitsha, Western Cape and Midstream, Gauteng.
- Pathology LabOne purchased the test kits in partnership with Prince Amon Moagi of the Bakgatla tribe in North West, Africapacity Investment Group and Brawne Capital.

### CONDOLENCES

- Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:
- Ms Karima Brown** (54), an exceptional veteran journalist and activist.
- Mr Peter Matlare** (61), an entrepreneur and Absa Deputy CEO who also held various executive roles at a number of top South African businesses and the SABC.
- Mr Azwifarwi Dick Ralushi** (71), a liberation struggle veteran. Mr Ralushi was a member of the Black People's Convention and served as its Publicity Secretary. He was a member of the Northern Transvaal Action Committee, an affiliate of the United Democratic Front, and an underground activist of the African National Congress's military wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, under the Northern Transvaal Rural Machinery.

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