

Cabinet Statement

Statement on the virtual Cabinet Meeting
of Wednesday, 3 November 2021



ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



■ 2021 Local Government Elections (LGE)

- Cabinet thanked all eligible voters who cast their vote in the 2021 LGE on Monday, 1 November 2021. These elections marked the 21st anniversary of the establishment of a democratic local government system in South Africa.
- We applaud the tolerance, dignity and patience with which the voters conducted themselves throughout Election Day. The smooth way in which political parties contested the LGE and the emergence of young candidates, especially women, is testament to our vibrant and functioning democracy.

Cabinet commended the Electoral Commission of South Africa, all political parties, members of society and the law-enforcement agencies in the country for their collective efforts to ensure the peaceful elections. Cabinet also commended the media for their important role in providing voters with relevant information to assist them in exercising their democratic right to choose their preferred local government leaders.

- Cabinet reminded all South Africans to strengthen our democracy by actively participating in forums and institutions which hold those elected to account. It called on newly elected officials to keep true to their electoral pledges, and to serve all people equally and fairly.

■ Uptake of vaccines

- Cabinet applauded South Africans who have chosen to protect themselves and their loved ones by vaccinating against the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Our country has already administered over 22 million vaccine doses.
- Three out of every five people aged over 50 years in our country are now vaccinated. We need to get to five out of five of such vaccinated age group by the end of the year to kill the power of the anticipated fourth wave.

The upcoming Vooma Vaccination Weekend from 12 to 14 November 2021 is an opportunity for unvaccinated people to join our nation's fight against COVID-19 by taking the free vaccines at any of the vaccination sites across the country.

- Cabinet reminded people to ensure that they take a second dose of the Pfizer vaccine to be fully protected. Vaccines help prevent serious illness, hospitalisation or death from COVID-19.

■ Energy

- Cabinet acknowledges the disruptions and inconvenience of intermittent load-shedding experienced by South Africans in recent days.
- The Department of Public Enterprises is working closely with the Board of Eskom and management to ensure that we limit the daily duration of load-shedding and the period for which this intervention will be required.
- National Treasury is working with Eskom to grant it the appropriate exemptions to acquire the spare parts needed for repairs and maintenance. Eskom is also making progress in re-employing skilled personnel – including plant managers – to help the power utility make headway at individual power stations and across various operations of the business.
- Over the medium term, government is implementing a number of interventions to resolve our energy challenges and we are making every effort to bring new power generation capacity online in the shortest possible time.
- The interventions include:
 - ✓ lifting the threshold for companies to produce their own electricity without a licence to 100 megawatts (MW);
 - ✓ the announcement of 11 successful bidders for the Risk Mitigation Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme; and
 - ✓ Bid Window Five of the renewable energy programme to procure 2 600 MW of new generation capacity from wind and solar photovoltaic projects.
- While Cabinet is aware that the current energy challenges are frustrating and counterproductive to economic growth, it is confident that the practical actions government is taking to restructure and strengthen our electricity system will eventually improve the country's energy capacity.

■ Investment

- South Africa continues to perform as an investment destination of choice, attracting some of the world's top businesses to expand their operations in the country.
- Toyota South Africa has launched its R2,6 billion production plant in Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. The plant will manufacture the first generation of commercial-scale hybrid electric vehicles in South Africa. This is part of the automotive industry masterplan commitments by the company to increase its levels of investment.
- The launch dovetails with the announcement by Swedish multinational food packaging and processing company, Tetra Pak, to invest R500 million to upgrade its production capacity at its material packaging factory in Durban.
- Aspen Pharmacare opened its new anaesthetic line producing Diprivan locally as part of the R3,2-billion investment in creating world-class sterile production facilities, and turning the site in Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape into the most advanced pharmaceutical precinct on the African continent. The anaesthetic was previously imported and is used in a range of standard medical procedures and operations in South African hospitals, and also used to treat COVID-19 patients on ventilators in intensive-care wards.
- Cabinet also welcomed the recent investment by vehicle maker, Isuzu Motors, into the economy of the country. Isuzu Motors South Africa launched the production facility at Struandale in Gqeberha. Isuzu is investing R1.2 billion into its next generation bakkie programme in South Africa for the South African and Sub-Saharan Africa markets.

The Isuzu plant will create 1 000 direct jobs at its operations in Gqeberha, and across its national and international dealer network, and about 25 000 jobs at hundreds of suppliers across the country.

- All these three investments will advance the localisation programme announced in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan launched by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa in October 2020. They will add billions of rand of annual production to South Africa's gross domestic product.
- Two of the investments had been pledged at the previous



South Africa Investment Conference, and the firms have now commenced with production, creating a significant number of new jobs.

■ 2022 National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) applications

- Cabinet reminded learners and out-of-school youth from poor and working-class backgrounds to submit their applications for funding for the 2022 academic year.
- **Applications for NSFAS funding will close on Friday, 7 January 2022.**
- The applications process is also open to students who are already enrolled at institutions, but are without funding and qualify for NSFAS financial funding.
- For more information on how to apply for funding, call 08000 67327 or visit www.nsfas.org.za.

■ Gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF)

- Cabinet welcomed the triple life sentence handed down to rapist and murderer Mfanaisibili Cornelius Mnisi (29) by the Mpumalanga Division of the High Court in Mbombela recently. This harsh sentence demonstrates the zero-tolerance approach against GBVF by the criminal justice system.
- By working together with the police and other law-enforcement agencies, we can make our streets and communities safer for all. We should all be vigilant and report all GBVF-related incidents to the police or call the National GBVF Command Centre: 0800 428 428 or Stop Gender Violence Helpline: 0800 150 150/*120*7867#.
- Government will participate in the 16 Days of Activism of No Violence Against Women and Children – from 25 November (International Day of No Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day) – to heighten awareness of the scourge of GBVF in the country.

■ Justice for victims of apartheid-era murders

- Cabinet welcomed the recent announcement by Justice and Correctional Services Minister Ronald Lamola of a special team of investigators and state prosecutors that will deal exclusively with Truth and Reconciliation Commission cold cases.
- The special team will be tasked with looking into extrajudicial murders committed by apartheid security police. Such interventions will fast-track the process of finding closure for the families of the victims of apartheid-era murders.

■ Political situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini

- Cabinet noted and welcomed the intervention of His Excellency President Ramaphosa – in his capacity as Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation – in the political situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini.
- President Ramaphosa's meeting with His Majesty King Mswati III on Tuesday, 2 November 2021 follows a visit to the Kingdom by Special Envoys on 21 and 22 October 2021.
- The President had – in his capacity as Chairperson of the SADC Organ Troika comprising Namibia (incoming), South Africa (chair) and Botswana (outgoing) – directed the Special Envoys to engage with the Kingdom of Eswatini on security and political developments in the Kingdom.
- Cabinet welcomed the agreement that the Kingdom of Eswatini will embark on a process towards the establishment of a national dialogue forum.
- Cabinet calls on all stakeholders amongst emaSwati to work together to end violence and conflict, and maintain peace and calm in the Kingdom.

BILL

■ Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill of 2021

- Cabinet approved the submission of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill of 2021 to Parliament for processing.
- The proposed amendments provide for the mechanism to enforce the taking of DNA buccal samples (samples from cells on the inside of the person's cheek) from people convicted under

Schedule 8 offences.

- Schedule 8 offences include sexual offences, robbery, human trafficking and culpable homicide. The collected buccal samples will facilitate future prosecutions for reoffenders.
- The Bill will also enable the establishment of a comprehensive forensic DNA database to strengthen the fight against crime by capacitating the police with evidence to investigate and solve serious crimes.

UPCOMING EVENT



■ Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS)

- Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana will deliver the MTBPS in Parliament on Thursday, 11 November 2021. The statement will detail adjustments to the national budget to ensure our nation's

fiscal sustainability.

- The MTBPS sets out the country's initiatives to reverse the challenges in the economy as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and address longer term structural issues.
- The MTBPS is a call to action for all sectors of society to pull together to drive the economy and advance job creation.
- Cabinet is confident that the MTBPS will again demonstrate government's commitment to building a sustainable economy with input from all sectors of society.

MESSAGE

■ Congratulations

Cabinet extended its congratulations and well-wishes to:

- Ms Lalela Mswane (24), on being crowned Miss South Africa 2021 on 16 October in Cape Town. Her triumph is an affirmation that success can be achieved through dedication and hard work.



Enquiries:

Ms Phumla Williams
Cabinet Spokesperson
Mobile: 083 501 0139
www.gcis.gov.za | www.gov.za

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