

# Cabinet Statement



Cabinet met on Wednesday, 7 August 2019 at the Union Buildings in Pretoria

## 1. ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



### National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) commitments

- Cabinet remains concerned about the high levels of unemployment and the low economic growth figures in our country. The results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for the second quarter of 2019 released by Statistics South Africa, indicate that the official unemployment rate increased by 1.4 percentage points to 29.0% compared to the first quarter of 2019.
- Cabinet remains committed to addressing structural challenges that continue to affect the performance of our economy and its ability to respond to developmental challenges.
- The rapid response agreement signed by all the parties in NEDLAC commits to meet the stakeholders on a monthly basis to track the seventy-seven (77) Job Summit commitments. Monthly meetings will be chaired by President Cyril Ramaphosa with effect from September 2019.

conventional plastics to more environmentally sustainable alternatives.

### 18th African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum

- South Africa recently participated in the 18th AGOA Forum held in Côte d'Ivoire under the theme: "AGOA and the Future: Developing a New Trade Paradigm to Guide United States (US)-Africa Trade and Investment".
- AGOA is a unilateral US trade preference programme that provides duty-free quota-free treatment for over 6 400 tariff lines from 40 AGOA-eligible sub-Saharan African countries, including South Africa, into the US market.
- South Africa's constructive and positive discussions with the US Trade Representative provides potential access to the US market and American investment in our economy, which are important ways of addressing job creation and the elimination of poverty.

public order, protect and secure its inhabitants and their respective properties and uphold and enforce the law.

- Any attack on our law-enforcement officers is an attack on our state and its sovereignty, this attacks should not go unpunished. We call on all communities to support our government agencies, particularly those enforcing our laws and also unite against this banditry actions that seek to attack police officers.
- Cabinet calls on the law-enforcement agencies to continue to enforce the law and act decisively to those who violate the laws of our country. Municipal by-laws must at all times be adhered to and we call on all our municipalities to enforce our municipal by-laws. We remain a law-abiding country that will continue to ensure peace, stability and prosperity for its citizens.
- Cabinet expects all who live or work in South Africa to collaborate with our law-enforcement agencies to combat criminal and illegal activities.
- Cabinet reassures the nation that the country's law-enforcement agencies will act decisively and arrest people who perpetrate lawlessness and violence.

### Destruction of public property

- Cabinet welcomes the end of the recent strike in the City of Tshwane. However, it is highly regrettable that bus drivers blocked major routes into the city with municipal buses, and some of the strikers vandalised infrastructure and reportedly intimidated members of the public.

- Cabinet is concerned about the growing incidents of destruction of public property that accompany protest and strike action in the country. The right to protest is protected and enshrined in the Constitution, and there are many peaceful ways to address public grievances without destroying public services and property. Restoring damaged infrastructure has huge financial and social implications, which negatively impact on citizens who use such amenities daily.



### Attacks on South African Police Service (SAPS) members

- The recent attacks on members of the SAPS in the line of duty in the City of Johannesburg should not be tolerated. Cabinet condemns the attacks in the strongest possible terms and have instructed our police and other law-enforcement agencies to pursue the suspects without any fear or favour.
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 directs that the law-enforcement agencies, inclusive of our police service, must prevent, combat and investigate crime, maintain



### South Africa-Japan Collaboration

- Cabinet welcomes the collaboration initiative between South Africa and Japan to combat plastic pollution by supporting the transitioning of the local plastic industry from

### Silicosis settlement

- Cabinet noted the R5-billion historic settlement approved by the Gauteng High Court, which sends a strong message to mining companies to prioritise the safety of workers to prevent diseases that could potentially occur long after their retirement.
- The High Court judgement will result in thousands of former mineworkers being compensated for the pain and suffering they endured after contracting diseases linked to prolonged periods working in the gold mines.
- Cabinet also commended the legal teams, including the legal aid, which represented various parties in the lengthy case that settled on compensating the former mineworkers or their eligible heirs, on the part of mineworkers who have departed, after they suffered from silicosis or certain types of tuberculosis contracted at certain gold mines after 12 March 1965.
- The following six gold mining companies along with the claimants' attorneys, will set up the Tshamisso Trust, which will ensure qualifying miners or their eligible heirs receive the compensation.
  - African Rainbow Minerals;
  - Anglo American;
  - AngloGold Ashanti;
  - Gold Fields;
  - Harmony; and
  - Sibanye-Stillwaters.

### Mozambique Accord

- Cabinet welcomes the signing of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mozambique on Tuesday, 6 August 2019, as a sign of solidarity with the people of Mozambique, and in support of peace and stability in the country.
- The agreement follows the successful political dialogue between the Government of Mozambique and the Mozambican National Resistance Movement, which culminated in the signing of an agreement on definitive cessation of military hostilities on 1 August 2019.



- South Africa and Mozambique share cordial and fraternal bilateral, political, economic and social relations underpinned by strong historical ties dating back from the years of the liberation struggle. President Ramaphosa and many other Heads of State from SADC attended the signing ceremony.

### Caster Semenya

- Cabinet is disappointed that our star athlete, Caster Semenya, will not be allowed to defend her world 800m title at the World Championships in Doha, Qatar. This follows a ruling by a Swiss court that supported the International Association of Athletics Federation rule that would require her to take testosterone-reducing medication.
- Cabinet fully supports Ms Semenya as she appeals and fights for her fundamental human rights. Like all other athletes, she is entitled to compete without being obliged to alter her body by any medical means.

### National Orders

- Cabinet calls on South Africans to nominate persons they deem deserving of being bestowed with the country's highest honours, the National Orders.
- These awards honour South Africans and eminent foreign nationals who have contributed to the achievement of a free, united, non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous and democratic South Africa in various ways.
- Closing date for the 2020 National Orders nominations:** 31 August 2019.
- Date of Awards ceremony:** April 2020.
- Nominations forms are available on:** The Presidency website: [www.thepresidency.gov.za](http://www.thepresidency.gov.za).
- Members of the public are urged to attach a motivation on the nominated person.

## 3. UPCOMING EVENTS



### National Women's Day

- On Friday, 9 August, the country will commemorate National Women's Day, which symbolises the struggle for a gender-based violence free, non-racial and non-sexist country, under the theme: "25 Years of Democracy: Growing South Africa for Women's Emancipation".
- President Ramaphosa is scheduled to give a keynote address at the Vryburg Showgrounds, in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti District, North West.
- Women's Month has already seen the build-up of activations which target the empowerment and protection of women, including President Ramaphosa's appointment of members to the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE).

The CGE is a statutory body established to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality.

Women have an important role to play in building the country's economy, creating jobs and uplifting families out of poverty. Women empowerment is key to breaking the cycle of abuse that is tormenting our South African society.

Cabinet calls on all stakeholders to prioritise the upliftment of women and join in the activities celebrating National Women's Day tomorrow.

### Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit

- President Ramaphosa will lead South Africa's delegation to participate in

the 39th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the SADC.

- Where:** Tanzania.
- When:** 17 and 18 August 2019.
- During the summit, Tanzanian President John Magufuli will take over the chairpersonship of SADC from his Namibian counterpart, President Hage Geingob.
- The SADC Summit is also expected to deliberate on wide-ranging issues, including implementation of the region's operational plans and priority programmes such as industrialisation, trade, infrastructure development, establishment of a regional parliament, and consolidation of peace and security in the region.

## 4. MESSAGES



### Condolences

Cabinet sent condolences to the:

- people of the Republic of Tunisia following the passing of President **Beji Caid Essebsi**.
- family and friends of **Toni Morrison**, author and Nobel Prize laureate, who passed on at the age of 88. The acclaimed author chronicled the African-American experience in fictions over five decades, in novels including *Beloved* and *The Blues* Eye.
- people of India following the death of veteran Indian politician **Sushma Swaraj**, 67, in New Delhi. Swaraj was the country's Foreign Minister from 2014 to 2019. She was the second woman to hold the office in India's history.

### Congratulations and well wishes

- Cabinet:
  - commends the group of **45 Working on Fire crew** and their senior managers, who spent almost 30 days fighting fires at the Province of Alberta in Western Canada. The team had been deployed to assist in combating the huge Chuckegg Creek wildfire that burnt over 350 000 hectares since May 2019, following a request by the Canadian Inter-Agency Forest Fire Centre.
  - congratulates our swimmers who have done the nation proud at the FINA World Championships 2019 in South Korea. **Zane Waddell** claimed gold in the 50m backstroke. **Chad le Clos** claimed two bronzes in the 100m and 200m butterfly, and

- Tatjana Schoenmaker** claimed silver in the 200m breaststroke.
- wishes the **South African Under-18 baseball team** well when they fly our flag high at the World Cup tournament in South Korea from 30 August to 8 September 2019.
- congratulates **Khanyisile Mthethwa**, the talented flautist, who is the first African to be selected as the recipient of the (2019) Myrna Brown International Scholarship, which is awarded by the National Flute Association of America.

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## 2. CABINET DECISIONS



### Ebola virus disease outbreak

- The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor and the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, briefed Cabinet on the outbreak, as well as the deaths caused by Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the high risks posed to the nearby countries.
- The disease is transmitted from person to person through direct contact with blood and body fluids of persons with

the disease. According to the World Health Organisation, South Africa is classified as one of the low-risk countries in Africa.

- Cabinet was also briefed on the state of readiness to deal with cases of Ebola that may arise in our country. Three separate risk assessments undertaken have confirmed the low risk Ebola profile status of South Africa. Critical health contingency measures have been

implemented in our country including the designation of identified hospitals in all our provinces in the eventuality of us having to deal with Ebola. Apart from hospitals identified, the contingency measures include screening facilities in the ports of entry, communication and coordination as well as designated laboratories.

- Cabinet endorsed the contingency measures that have been put in place to ensure the country responds in the event the disease is picked up. We nonetheless want to assure the country that South Africa remains a low Ebola risk country.

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