

NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON COALITION GOVERNMENTS KEY MESSAGES

BRIEF:

Deputy President Paul Shipokosa Mashatile, will host a National Dialogue on Coalition Governments on 4 and 5 August 2023, with all spheres of government and parties represented in Parliament. The dialogue is a direct response to questions raised in Parliament, regarding the need to establish stability within coalition governments in the absence of a legislative framework.

The National Dialogue will assist in developing a framework for coalition governments, which will serve as the foundation for crafting appropriate legislation at a later stage. There is widespread agreement on the need for a national framework that ensures coalition governments remain responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa.

Coalitions are a feature in many countries across the world and their success has been mixed. They are neither inherently good nor intrinsically bad; some have worked, while others have failed.

The success of coalitions largely hinges on the conditions and challenges each country faces, the socio-political culture, strength of democratic institutions, level of socio-economic development and the degree of national consensus on what each country wants to become.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
<p><i>Let us build a stronger constitutional democracy together.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deputy President Paul Mashatile, will host a National Dialogue on Coalition Governments on 4 and 5 August 2023, with all spheres of government and parties represented in Parliament as well as all sectors of society ▪ The national dialogue will assist in developing a framework for coalition governments, which will serve as the foundation for crafting appropriate legislation at a later stage. ▪ Coalitions are a possibility when legislatures are elected based on proportional representation and their success hinges on the willingness of all parties to work together for the greater good. ▪ The National Dialogue is an opportunity to agree on the principles that can make coalitions work in the interest of the greater good. ▪ By reaching consensus on how coalition governments should function so we can ensure the continued delivery of services to communities to better lives. ▪ All of us have a duty to work towards the common goal of building a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united, and prosperous nation.

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<p><i>The framework will be based on the Constitution.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Constitution calls on us to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values. Coalition governments that bring together political parties, despite their differences, can play an important role in that regard. ▪ It further calls on us to lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people. ▪ Building on the foundational elements of the Constitution, six fundamental principles have been identified to guide the dialogue between and among parties. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Putting people first, and ensuring that coalitions improve the lives of the people; ○ Coalition governments must be committed to combating poverty and to building a growing and inclusive economy; ○ They must contribute towards building a prosperous society in which people have access to land for productive purposes and are meaningfully participating in the economy; ○ They must be committed to building a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united, and prosperous society; ○ A coalition government should be bound together by a commitment to good governance, with no tolerance for corruption; and ○ The party with the largest share of votes should be allowed to lead the coalition, and the executive positions should be allocated proportionally to the votes obtained by coalition partners. ▪ We need all sectors of society to play their part in building a democracy that delivers on the promise of building a better tomorrow for everyone.
<p><i>Let us build a nation that works for everyone.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of a coherent framework for Coalition Governments will contribute to nation-building and social cohesion. ▪ The instability that has been experienced at local government level has undermined our efforts to build a better tomorrow for everyone. ▪ Together we can move beyond the rhetoric and ensure that we focus on tangible outcomes in the short, medium, and longer term. ▪ Coalitions are a feature in many countries across the world and their success has been mixed. They are

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	<p>neither inherently good nor intrinsically bad; some have worked, while others have failed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The success of coalitions largely hinges on the conditions and challenges each country faces, the socio-political culture, strength of democratic institutions, the extent to which the public service is professionalised, the level of socio-economic development and the degree of national consensus on what each country wants to become.
<p><i>Together we can ensure that we continue to serve South Africa.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of a Discussion Document is crucial and will assist in charting a new path. ▪ It will include a synthesis of the existing research, international experiences and recommendations made. ▪ It will look to identify the root causes for instability in municipalities. ▪ It will explore the circumstances that give rise to dysfunctional municipalities, while building voter confidence and transforming the local government landscape. ▪ It will explore regulatory reforms, including regulation of coalitions, thresholds for entering councils and other legislation. ▪ Moreover, the discussion document will consider two paths of frameworks, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To urgently deal with coalitions in the national and local sphere of government and, ○ The establishment of a panel of experts to conduct extensive research, and engage society with regard to the country's electoral system. ▪ Overall, coalition governments function better when parties work together to achieve constitutional values or where ideologically divergent parties set aside their differences and work together in the interest of the people and democracy. ▪ The success of coalitions requires extra-ordinary leadership and the understanding that our nation's success is far greater than narrow self-interest. ▪ The success of coalitions requires political leaders to move away from focusing exclusively on the distribution of political positions and more on how the coalition can serve the public interest. ▪ The National Dialogue is a call for all social partners and citizens of South Africa to use our collective wisdom to create a system that works for everyone.