

# Cabinet Statement

Statement on the Cabinet Meeting of Wednesday, 01 March 2023



## ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENT



### 2023 Budget Speech

- Cabinet welcomed the 2023 National Budget giving effect to critical interventions outlined by President Cyril Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address. The Speech detailed plans to tackle the energy challenge, reduce unemployment, poverty and the rising cost of living, including combating crime and corruption.

**While balancing our commitments to fiscal discipline, the economic growth and investment and the social wage continues to receive the bulk of public resources, with R66 billion allocated to Social Development and R36 billion to fund the extension of the COVID-19 social relief of distress grant until 31 March 2024.**

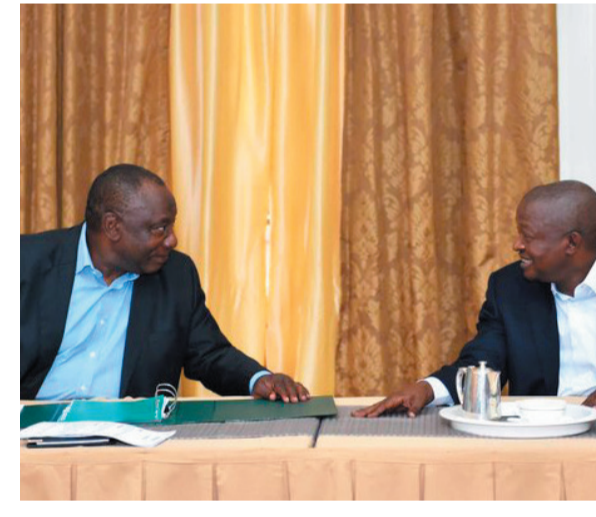
- Furthermore, the increased allocations for all three spheres of government will help alleviate some of the financial pressures, particularly in health, education, and free basic services where the costs of providing services are rising.

### Quarterly Labour Force Survey

- Cabinet welcomed the Stats SA Quarterly Labour Force survey for fourth quarter of 2022, which showed a slight but significant decrease in the rate of unemployment in the country. The official rate decreased by 0.2 per cent from 32.9% to 32.7 per cent.
- All sectors of society are called to drive job creation opportunities so that we can continue the downward trend in the unemployment rate as recorded over the last three quarters. Through our collective effort, we can break the stubborn cycle of unemployment in our nation.
- Government remains committed to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), which includes our mass public employment programme and efforts to support economic growth that bolsters employment after the devastation of COVID-19.

### Deputy President

- Cabinet confirms that Deputy President David Mabuza has resigned as a Member of Parliament, ending his term as Deputy President of the country.
- Cabinet joined President Cyril Ramaphosa in thanking him for his exceptional service to the country over the last five years. Deputy President Mabuza served with distinction and his contribution in building the country we want will forever be remembered by the people of South Africa.



## CABINET DECISIONS

### National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV, TB and STIs 2023-2028.

- Cabinet approved the publication of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Tuberculosis and Sexually Transmitted Infections 2023-2028.
- The full version of the NSP 2023-2028 will be released to the public on World TB Day on the 24 March 2023 in Rustenburg in the North West
- The NSP proposes to deal with HIV, sexually transmitted infections and tuberculosis through a holistic approach that includes preventative and therapeutic measures. This is the 5th NSP for HIV, TB and STIs and it outlines the progress South Africa has made to deal with the three diseases thus far.
- The five-year plan provides a strategic framework for a multi-sectoral approach that is people-centred to eliminate HIV, TB and STIs as public health threats by 2030.
- The drafting of the NSP was coordinated by the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) which brings together government, civil society, and other social partners to build consensus and drive a well-

coordinated, unified response to three epidemics over a five-year period. The process to develop this 5th iteration of our national plan was extensively consulted across society to secure the widest range of views and ideas, and building on the lessons learnt from our previous plans.

- The NSP emphasises the need to break down barriers and maximise equitable and equal access to services through resilient and integrated health systems.
- The inclusion of mental health services and social support is based on the strong association between HIV, TB, STIs with gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), human rights violations and inequalities.
- The new plan features an expanded scope for the management of STIs, including viral hepatitis and Human Papilloma Virus, which are common coinfections in HIV infected individuals.

### Report on the outcomes of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 27).

- Cabinet received a report on the outcomes of United Nations

Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 27) which was held in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt in November 2022. While South Africa acknowledges the challenges remaining in fighting climate change, the gains various parties are making to address the issue are welcomed. COP 27 negotiations contributed to the historic decision to establish a Fund to assist developing countries to respond to Loss and Damage caused by climate change. It established a Transitional Committee to work on the modalities of this fund with a view of taking a decision at COP28 in 2023.

- COP27 also emphasised the need for increased momentum to reform the Multilateral Development Banks and International Financial Institutions and called on the shareholders of these institutions to take decisive action to scale-up climate finance in 2023 and make their institutional arrangements fit for purpose.
- The final COP27 outcome reflects the urgency of the climate crisis, and the need to keep the 1.5-degree temperature target alive during what the International

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) calls the "Critical Decade", including by providing a clear programme to advance the mitigation agenda from now to 2026.

### Hosting of the World Waste Congress 2024

- Cabinet approved for South Africa to host the World Waste Congress in Cape Town from 15 to 18 September 2024. The event is being organised by the International Solid Waste Association, an international network of waste professionals and expert from across the world.
- The congress will benefit South Africa, as delegates will share current trends and best practices in waste management. The congress will attract international experts and technology providers and South Africa's informal waste sector and small business will benefit.
- In 2011, Cabinet approved the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) for implementation. The NWMS has eight key goals including promoting waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste. It also helps the

country deliver effective and efficient waste services and grows the contribution of the waste sector to the green economy. South Africa is also party to international agreements that relate to waste management issues.

### Selection of the Host City for the 15th BRICS Summit

- Cabinet approved that Gauteng would host the 15th BRICS Summit to be held in South Africa from 22 to 24 August 2023.
- South Africa assumed the rotational Chairship of the BRICS Forum from 1 January 2023 under the theme "BRICS and Africa Partnership for Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism".
- South Africa's membership of BRICS has grown substantially since the country joined this group of emerging economies 12 years ago.
- In 2021, over 17 percent of South Africa's exports were destined for other BRICS countries while over 29 percent of our total imports came from these countries/

institutions stand ready to arrest, and prosecute those who break the law.

**We call on anyone with information related to crime and corruption to report what they know to the relevant law enforcement authorities. All of us are duty bound to fight corruption and to the prescripts of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, which requires people in "positions of authority" in the public and private sectors to report, all corrupt activities.**

### Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- Cabinet noted the decision by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to list South Africa as a jurisdiction under increased monitoring or more commonly referred to as FATF's "grey list".
- While the FATF recognised the significant progress made by the country in addressing the shortcomings highlighted in its mutual evaluation report (MER), it assessed that there is more needed to be done.
- Cabinet is cognisant that addressing the identified shortcomings will be in the best interest of South Africa. Government is committed to work swiftly to strengthen the effectiveness of its anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing regime.

### Ugandan State Visit

- Cabinet welcomed the successful State Visit by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of the Republic of Uganda to South Africa on 28 February 2023.
- During the visit, the two Heads of State addressed a Business Forum, and explored trade and investment opportunities. They also witnessed the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) on a number of areas, which included: Industrial Development Cooperation; Tourism; Transport; Communication Technologies; Correctional Services; and Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.
- The Republic of Uganda is South Africa's 15th largest trading partner on the Continent and the second largest in East Africa. Between 2017 and 2021, total trade between the two countries reached R3 billion.

### African Union (AU) Summit

- President Cyril Ramaphosa led the South African delegation at the African Union Summit in Ethiopia under the theme "Acceleration of Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Implementation".
- South Africa provided updates on the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. As Chair of the AU Peace and Security Council, the country also provided an update on progress towards Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2030.
- As AU COVID-19 Champion, President Ramaphosa presented proposals on how the Africa Centres for Disease Control (CDC) can be strengthened and measures adopted to better prepare the continent for pandemics.
- Under the leadership of President Ramaphosa, the COVID-19 African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team was established in support of the Africa Vaccine Strategy. South Africa also secured over 500 million COVID-19 vaccine doses for the continent. Further, the African Pandemic Response Fund was established, which mobilised \$137 million for local production of vaccines, diagnostics, personal protective equipment, oxygen and critical medicines. The Africa Medical Supplies Platform was also launched, to ensure access to vital medical supplies for all African countries.

### Gender-Based Violence and Femicide

- Government condemns the persistent cases of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) and continues to intensify its fight through several interventions.
- These include extensive legal reform, the establishment of a GBVF Response Fund, and support for Thuthuzela and Khuseleka Care Centres, which provide vital services for GBV survivors.
- Furthermore, partnership that government has forged with civil society, business, development partners, the faith-based sector and other sectors to work together to deal with the scourge of GBVF, remain critical.

### Health

- Cabinet welcomed the deliberations of the historic International Medical Countermeasures Meeting that the country co-hosted under the theme "Building consensus for an equitable and sustainable medical countermeasures platform for the next pandemic".
- The meeting explored options to secure equitable access to lifesaving vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics for future pandemics based on need and not on wealth. This began a consensus building exercise ahead of the High Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response at the 78th United Nations General Assembly this year.
- In a separate but related development, the recent Traditional Medicine Summit hosted by the Department of Health is part of the resolutions taken at the World Health Organisation (WHO), African Union as well as Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to integrate traditional medicine into health systems.

### Child Immunisation and Cholera

- The measles outbreak poses a risk to children who are not immunised. Parents and legal guardians are urged to ensure that their children are immunised as part of the nationwide child immunisation campaign. Measles symptoms include fever, red eyes, runny nose and cough, typically appearing before the characteristic rash.

**Following the recent rise in cholera cases, Cabinet urged citizens to be vigilant of any symptoms, which include diarrhoea dehydration, vomiting and body weakness. Spread mainly through polluted water or contaminated food, the public is reminded to boil water, cook food thoroughly, and practice basic hygiene of washing hands with soap and water to prevent transmission.**

- All people who experience cholera-like symptoms, with or without local or international travel history, must immediately visit their nearest health facility.

### Water security

- Cabinet welcomed the launch of the country's largest reservoir, the Vlakfontein Reservoir in Gauteng, which can store up to 210 million-litres of water equivalent to 24 hours of water demand, and is expected to be completed in April 2023. The project has created about 220 job opportunities for the local communities and 110 jobs in the Ekurhuleni Local Municipality.
- Cabinet called on South Africans to protect our water infrastructure by reporting vandalism to the police on 0800 10111 and water leaks to your local municipality. Citizens can also play their part in using water sparingly.

### Severe weather

- The preparedness of Disaster Management teams, limited

the impact of heavy rains, exacerbated by cyclone Freddy that affected the north-eastern parts of South Africa.

- Government continues to mobilise all available resources as part of the national state of disaster to support recovery efforts in areas impacted by flooding. The spirit of Ubuntu was shown by the many NGOs, community, business and relief organisations who have assisted those in need. Our recovery is going to take a massive effort, drawing on the resources and capabilities of our entire nation.
- Residents are urged to stay indoors during stormy weather, never try to walk, swim or drive through fast-moving floodwater or rivers, and people living in low-lying areas should be aware of weather warnings and take the necessary precautions.

### National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

- NSFAS represents a progressive programme by government to systematically break the legacies of inter-generational social inequality of post school education and training.
- Despite the challenges, NSFAS has made significant improvements, funding more than one million students with a projected budget of R47 billion.
- Students, with declined applications for funding, can lodge appeals online with the Independent Appeals Tribunal via the myNSFAS Portal (<https://mynsfas.org.za/>).

### Online Voter Registration

- Cabinet called on all eligible voters to register online at <https://registertovote.elections.org.za> for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections.
- The Electoral Commission launched an online voter registration campaign on 20 February 2023, and appealed to the youth who are eligible to vote to register so that they can exercise their democratic right to vote. Citizens already registered to vote are also encouraged to check their voters' roll address, and update their address if they have moved since the last general elections. Voters must register where they reside, and vote where they are registered.
- You are eligible to register to vote if you are:
  - ✓ A South African citizen;
  - ✓ At least 16 years and older (you can only vote from age 18); andIn possession of a green bar-coded ID book, smart ID card or valid temporary identity certificate.

### United States (US) Alert

- Cabinet noted the alert issued by the US Embassy as part of the US government's standard communication to its citizens travelling and living in the country.
- It indicated a Level 2 travel advisory was in effect, advising them to exercise increased caution due to crime and civil unrest as well as to stockpile three days' worth of supplies, medicines and first aid supplies.
- Government continuously monitors all areas that impact on our nation, any concern is acted upon swiftly to ensure the safety of everyone in the country. Should there be any risks detected, the government will be the first to inform the public.

### SAPS

- Cabinet is pleased that the South African police service has nearly cleared the DNA testing backlog at its forensic service laboratories. This breakthrough will ensure that gender-based violence related cases are speedily resolved.
- The SAPS has also added additional DNA testing capacity with the completion of a forensic laboratory in Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape, which will ease pressure on the existing laboratory in the Western Cape.

## UPCOMING EVENT

### Human Rights Month

- The country commemorates Human Rights Month under the theme "Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights culture into the future". Cabinet encourages South Africans to celebrate our rich cultural heritage and diversity that has the power to unite our nation.
- Let us pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives in our struggle for freedom to ensure we may enjoy human rights and continue to work towards inclusive socio-economic development as envisioned by our founding fathers.

## MESSAGES

### Congratulations

- Cabinet extended its congratulations and well wishes to:
  - South African Women cricket team for flying the flag high by reaching their inaugural ICC Women's T20 World Cup final hosted in the country.
  - The South African women's ice hockey team who made their debut in the Women's Ice Hockey World Championships which was being held in Cape Town.
  - SA Hockey for successfully hosting the FIH Indoor Hockey World Cup in Pretoria from 5 to 11 February 2023.
  - African champions Banyana-

Banyana following their performance at the Turkish Women's Cup, where the team was crowned winners of Group A and brought a trophy back.

- The organisers of the country's first successful hosting of the Formula E race on the African continent, the city joined 11 other global cities holding the Formula E World Championship, run on 100 percent renewable energy.
- Mr Calib Cassim as the Eskom interim group CEO who takes over from Mr André Marinus de Ruyter, who is wished well in his future endeavours.

- The people of Nigeria following the declaration by the African Union Election Observation Mission on a successfully held general election.
- Condolences**  
Cabinet expressed condolences to the family and friends of:
  - Peter Cyril Jones, liberation activist and leader of the Black People's Convention.
  - Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, the daughter of King Solomon kaDinuzulu.
  - Paul Herbst, Director of Medi-Response, respected and dedicated leader in the field of emergency medical services who recently assisted in the country's

rescue mission in Türkiye and Serbia.

- Rafiq Rohan noted journalist and former South African political prisoner jailed in Robben Island who once served as the founding Editor of the government newspaper Vukuzenzele, news editor and later political editor at "The Sowetan", executive editor of "The Star" newspaper, and more recently as a senior editor at Al Jazeera.

**Enquiries:**  
Ms Nomonde Mnuakwa  
Acting Cabinet Spokesperson  
Mobile: 083 653 7485  
[www.gcis.gov.za](http://www.gcis.gov.za) | [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)

