

BUDGET SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE NONO MALOYI SPEAKER TO THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

03 June 2010

Honourable Deputy Speaker, Mme Veronica Kekesi.

Honourable Premier, Mme Maureen Modiselle.

Members of the Executive Council (MECs).

Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs).

Councillors who are present.

Dikgosi tsa rona le boemedi jwa Ntlo ya Segosi mo Porofenseng.

Management and Legislature Staff; officials from various Departments and Municipalities present.

Business leaders, Religious and Faith Leadership present; Leadership of various political parties represented in the Legislature and Members of the media.

Distinguished guests.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Comrades and friends.

Good Afternoon.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

From the time of his awakening, the scholar-activist Walter Rodney who fought against African imperialism was concerned with the destiny of the poor. He was concerned with the deprivation of the oppressed classes inside any given country and also with the oppression of the people on earth by oppressors. He believed that people must discover themselves in order to understand their historic mission in their own oppression. From the onset, Rodney knew that the emancipation of the oppressed could be brought about only by the oppressed themselves.

In this context, as I present the budget vote on behalf of the Legislature, I am concerned about the fortune of the poor, the poverty they face and on how we should make current systems of government, which sought to address injustices of the past more biased and effective towards the poor. We have the solid belief that nobody can determine the future of our province except ourselves; we understand where we come from and where we want to take this province. The creation of various platforms for our communities to air their views will assist us in achieving our desired goals.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

We further remember one of our own, who met a catastrophic car incident recently, the late Deputy Minister of Health, Comrade Molefi "Companero" Sefularo, who served in various capacities with high distinctions to better the lives of the poor; for that reason he can't be easily forgotten, he will always be remembered.

Honourable Members,

In this similar occasion last year, we committed ourselves to a number of efforts to improve our performance in this institution. I am pleased to say that we have indeed done much to implement the commitments we made. However, and not unexpectedly, it is obvious that we still have outstanding work to do. As we reflect on the current budget vote for the legislature, let us do so, critically, but also with a heightened sense of urgency and prudence.

We have said Honourable Members must receive special programmes for capacity building in collaboration with the South African Legislative Sector and Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA), which is sponsored by the South African Legislative Sector, to implement our constitutional obligations. Indeed as we speak, training has kicked off. In addition to that, in January 2010, we had a successful workshop to further enhance our capacity which focused on: The North West Provincial Management Act, Standing Rules of Provincial Legislature, Money Bill Amendment Procedure Bill, Oversight Model, Members remuneration and benefits, Legislative review & Implementation of House Resolutions, Pension Funds and Members Enabling Facilities. This indicates that we have subjected ourselves to lifelong learning as a basic principle in life.

We have succeeded in supporting our Members with the necessary tools to fulfill their constitutional obligations i.e. IT support, Internet, laptops with 3G and printer, cell phones, faxes and landlines. We have further made a commitment to make an increment in respect of quota tickets, cell- phone allocation and daily allowance for accommodation. Indeed there have been substantial increments to that effect.

As a conscious effort towards inculcating a culture of prudent resource and financial management, we have succeeded in managing and reducing substantially on International trips, hotel accommodation, office telephone usage and issues which are outside the core function. Hotel accommodation decreased by 12.3%, overseas travel decreased by 10.3%, Telephone expenses decreased by 2.75%. It is clear that in spending our previous budget, the focus has been strictly on the core function of the institution, and the resultants spin-off in this regard, was an unqualified report our institution received, with points of emphasis on minimal matters. We are striving to ensure that our next audit report will be clean with no matters of emphasis.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

The Legislature has been declared a National key point and as a result of that we needed to upgrade our security system in the legislature precinct; we are pleased to share with you the huge progress made.

The Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), 98 static cameras have been installed inside the institution, covering all office passages, main office doors, and all corridors; Six (6) static cameras covers the main gate, officials and VIP gates; Three (3) Pan Tilt zoom cameras (PTZ) covers legislature perimeters and car parking; Six (6) mega pixels monitors public galleries to give additional protection to Members whilst the Legislature is in session. At this stage all cameras are fully functional and operational.

The Access Control is fully installed and switched on, boom gates are fully operational, the Intercom system is fully installed and working, Asset tracking is fully installed and is in operation, Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) is in full operation and of course these are monitored from the well established control room by SAPS Members.

Honourable Members,

Refurbishment of the Chamber remains a challenge. We have tried to lobby funds without any success. This Chamber needs complete electrical rewiring urgently. Currently it is a fire risk and not compliant with the Health and Safety Act. Carpets are more than 30 years old and are threadbare in places which could lead to injuries. Furniture needs to be replaced to be more accommodative of current and up to date information systems, as well as to accommodate persons with disabilities. Control rooms, media & press boxes must be upgraded with audio and video facilities and false floors in the control rooms must also be repaired as it is also not compliant with the Health and Safety Act. Currently the galleries are not accessible to persons with disabilities and the refurbishment should include the building of ramps to correct the situation.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

Accountability and representation lies at the heart of our democracy. The Legislature is the central institution of any democracy through which the will of the people is expressed, laws are passed and government is held to account. Addressing the needs and concerns of our people must become our fundamental objective.

We have recently tabled three Bills before this august House i.e. the North West Petition Bill, Political Party Funding Bill, the North West Provincial Management Amendment Bill. Principal amongst these Bills is the Petition Bill, being the initiative which without equivocation, presents clear

responsibilities before us in ensuring the realization of Section 17 of the Constitution which states that "Everyone has the right, peaceful and unharmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions". In tandem with the responsibility as stated above, is the effort to construct the framework that seeks to empower the political parties in carrying out their activities in the context of constitutional democracy, an effort which, in qualitative terms, gives us a prospect of reinforcing funding of political parties represented in the Legislature on an equitable and proportional basis, and to enhance multi-party democracy. The underlying values and principles of this legislation resonate with the constitutional values of transparency, accountability and distinguished norms of good corporate governance. It is important to also note that, we are currently in the process of reviewing the Standing Rules to the North West Provincial Legislature to further regulate the proceedings and internal arrangements of the institution.

Late tabling and poor quality of documents tabled in the House will be something of the past. We are going to ensure that time lines are adhered to, and quality assured documents are tabled in the House. Late receipt of Bills from the NCOP would be brought to halt soon with the improvement of communication between us and the NCOP.

Consistent with one of our constitutional mandates, i.e. law making, we have committed ourselves to provide a sound provincial law making framework, by appointing a head for the legal unit before the end of this financial year.

Honorable Members,

Public involvement in the Legislature and other processes is fundamental if democracy is to be strengthened and advanced. Section 118 of the Constitution makes it imperative for the Legislatures to facilitate public involvement in the Legislative processes. The public should be involved to influence decision making in relation to their lives. In this regard, Sectoral Parliaments remain central, which as an institution we normally embrace. Poor attendance by some MPLs, including Members of Executive Council has to be buried; feedback on issues which are raised from sectoral parliaments must be attended to. We are going to develop mechanisms which will ensure that feedback is given as soon as possible.

The public participation unit is continuously engaging our communities across the Province by conducting workshops on the petition system, symbols of government and the role of Provincial Legislature. This programme is intended to cover the whole sections of the Province; hence it's an all year round mode. Very soon the unit will design a programme which will target schools, especially the disadvantaged ones and institution of higher learning. We have also noted with great sense of urgency that this unit would require additional warm bodies to carry out their function without fail, because it is one of the cornerstones of democracy and must be strengthened and deepened.

Honourable Members,

On the 23rd February 2010, the Legislature launched its website to give the public access into our activities. It is informative; interesting and educational; it is one of the most useful and up-to-date websites in the legislative sector. The website is proof that, as the Legislature, we are committed to demonstrate transparency by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

As part of fulfilling our constitutional mandate of exercising oversight over the Executive and other organs of the state to account, Portfolio and Standing committees of the Legislature conducted several oversight visits across the province. Amongst others, was in Bojanala District Municipality by virtue of being the host municipality for the 2010 World Cup. Followed by the following visits:

- Assessment of SAPS efficiency on public safety.
- Assessment of the implementation of programmes dealing with women, children, youth and people with disabilities.
- Assessment on the conduct of nurses towards patients.
- Assessment on implementation of capital MAFISA and CASP. etc

In addition, public hearings were conducted over few municipalities in the province to give evidence to the questions which were formulated by the committee emanating from the Annual Report,

- Kgetleng Local Municipality;
- Mafikeng Local Municipality;
- Ventersdorp Local municipality and
- Greater Taung Local municipality.
- Division of Revenue Bill and the NW Appropriation Bill in four district municipalities. etc

This is a clear indication that, as an institution we are running with the necessary speed to implement our constitutional mandate.

We have noted with great concern poor attendance by executive management before portfolio committees, especially CEO's, Board members of entities and some Members of the Executive Council. We commit ourselves to drastically improve the situation in this financial year. Failure to attend to this tendency will compromise accountability.

We are planning to intensify the oversight function by developing capacity of Committees and enhancing communication between itself and its stakeholders (the executive, organs of state and the public). We have also embarked on having joint oversight visits so as to share resources and to save on time and costs.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

It gives me great pleasure to report that as per treasury prescript, the North West Provincial Legislature has just completed a 5 Year Strategic plan.

In this plan it is clearly stated that "the strategic thrust for the North Provincial Legislature for the next five years will be underpinned by the new vision of this institution which is 'An Activist Legislature Geared towards Political Stability through Participatory Democracy'." In doing so, we will lead in making appropriate laws that can contribute to the realization of the major priorities of our provincial and national government respectively for this mandate period. It is worth noting Honourable Deputy Speaker that, for the year 2010/15, this Legislature will focus on four key strategic goals namely:

- to provide a sound provincial law making framework;
- to promote public participation in legislative process;
- to exercise an oversight function; and
- to ensure business excellence in the legislature.

In addition, further emphasis is being placed on a well implemented strategy and good programme execution being the elements of high performance. The move to embrace a single, high performance culture is creating an environment in which all employees can make a real contribution and be recognized for their part in achieving the strategic objectives as set out in our strategic document. To this end, the NWPL has defined its main Programmes and sub-programme, on which the legislature will focus its resources.

- Administration.
- Office of the Speaker & Secretary.
- Finance.
- Corporate Services.
- Members' Interests.
- Parliamentary Operations.

Honourable Members,

The total budget tabled by the provincial treasury this financial year for North West Provincial government is R22, 1 14 378 bn. In this basket, for the current financial year, Legislature received R143, 156 m budget which constitutes 0.65% of the provincial budget. By comparison, the

allocations to provincial departments range from 1.37% to 41 % of the total provincial budget. We could not even make one percent (1%) of the provincial budget. Surely, Madam Deputy Speaker, this should be the subject of further consideration and debate.

Honourable Members,

I now wish to turn to the actual allocations for the 2010/11 financial year. The Legislature received a total allocation of R143, 156 m; this amount is divided into three programmes, namely:

Programme 1: Administration

An amount of R82 078 Million has been provided for this program which includes office of the Speaker, office of the Secretary, Corporate Services, finance and internal audit.

Programme 2: Member's salaries

An amount of R20 442 Million has been provided for statutory payments for Members salary.

Programme 3: Legislature operations

An amount of R40 636 Million is allocated for this programme which includes logistics for Members, Exposure to Parliamentary Activities, Proceedings, Committees, NCOP Liaison Support, Public Participation and Information Services.

Honorable Members,

In going forward, this budget allocation must be spent efficiently, transparently and effectively.

Legislature's accounting officer, in the person of the Secretary to the Legislature, must ensure that unauthorized, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure is prevented and that appropriate steps are taken where such has occurred.

Financial misconduct by any official of Legislature will be dealt with seriously and to the full extent of the provisions of the law.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

It is also important to emphasize that; under-spending could also be viewed as a result of bad planning and budgeting, or lack of capacity to spend effectively. In fact, under expenditure of public funds is viewed with the same seriousness as over expenditure, since unspent allocations could have been utilized for other purposes. I fully agree with President Jacob Zuma in his State of Nation address when he said 'We must continue our efforts to eradicate corruption and fraud in procurement and tender processes,' as an effort to translate the quest of this crusade into action. We commit ourselves to make this institution corruption free.

I have assumed full treasury functions and as a result, the appointment of Manager Treasurer in the Office of the Speaker will be done soon. In the meantime we shall utilize somebody in an acting capacity within the institution.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

As it stands, we have ten (10) portfolio committees including the chairpersons committee, six (6) researchers spread over three clusters i.e. Cooperative Governance Cluster, Economic Cluster and Social Cluster. It is clear that current researchers are over stretched, though we promised to deal with this situation previously, we couldn't due to serious budgetary constraints. We have recently advertised the position of 'Head researcher' as an intervention measure, of which we commit ourselves to appoint additional researchers before the end of this financial year, subject to securing additional funding; our objective is to have one researcher per portfolio committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

To ensure business excellence within the Legislature, work or assignments which are not completed on time; non adherence to working hours (late arrivals, early departures) by officials; inadequate team work; Leakages of information (poor information security practices); Inadequate telephone etiquette; Inadequate structural alignment; Inadequate role clarity or communication with regards to policy development review, we are going to bring an end to these ills by instilling the core business values throughout the Legislature.

An oath of secrecy will be signed by management and staff before end of June, team building interventions as an intervention to promote team work would be organized before the end of 2010. In terms of the working relationship between the staff and MPLs, I have reiterated that, there must be harmonious working relations between the two. Members must understand that, the Speaker is the only Executing Authority in this institution, as such the issues relating to administration, must be raised through the office of the Speaker to avoid unnecessary administrative hiccups. The same goes to staff; they must understand that, they are expected to provide professional support to Honorable Members in this institution so as for Members to be able to discharge their constitutional mandate. I have delegated certain responsibilities to the Deputy Speaker which include the following:

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).
- National Council of Provinces business (NCOP).
- Programming.
- Sectoral Parliaments.

It is also worth noting that, Speakers Forums have recently issued a directive that, our Deputy Speaker will be responsible for Sectoral parliaments of all the Legislatures and give a report back every time when the Speakers forum sits.

I would expect, the Deputy Speaker to without fail attend to these responsibilities having the support from all of us.

Honorable Members,

The Oracle system is also one of our nightmares that we need to overcome. Since the launch of this system in September 2007, various challenges have been experienced i.e. the Skills transfer to the end-users contract was not signed; the system standard reports are not user- friendly; the system is not well customised to accommodate the nature of our institution; the legislature must always request services of consultants when problems with the system are encountered which becomes very expensive. In addressing this, capacity building drive on the system particularly on self-servicing must be done as a matter of urgency to avoid the use of consultants; possible headhunting on database administrator and system/programme developers must be explored as a possible solution. However we have noted the successes of the system, amongst others, it has improved the turnaround time of claims for Members; Service providers are paid on time; leave of staff members are managed effectively and has huge information data storage.

Honourable Members,

In conclusion, let me thank the Portfolio Committee on Public Safety & Provincial Affairs under the leadership of Honorable Patrick Pelele for working together in ensuring that the Legislature becomes central to democracy, your goodselves as Members of the North West Provincial Legislature including EXCO, Executive Managers, Managers, and all staff of the institution for their hard work and the support that they have given me.

Special thanks to my family for their continued support and appreciation.

As we make final preparations to receive the world during the months of June-July for the FIFA World Cup, let us remember and show to the world that, certainly we are a country alive with respect, dignity, humanity and courage.

I thank you.