

*2013/14 BUDGET SPEECH OF THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL
LEGISLATURE PRESENTED BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER, SUPRA
OBAKENG RAMOELETSI MAHUMAPELO ON THE 23rd MAY 2013 IN
THE NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE*

Deputy Speaker,

Tonakgolo, Mme Thandi Modise,

Honourable members of this august house,

Delegates from the National Council of Provinces,

Councillors

Dikgosi

Baruti,

Business leaders,

Members of the Provincial Executive Committee of the African National
Congress,

Leaders of various political parties,

Management and staff of the North West Provincial Legislature,

Badiredi puso ya Bokone Bophirima,

Members of the media,

Distinguished guests,

Comrades and friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

1. Honourable members, I wish to thank my family for the support they give me in performing my duties as the Speaker of this legislature. I wish to thank honourable Philly Mapulane, the Deputy Speaker of this house, for his unwavering support, and the fact that I can always rely on him to assist in carrying out the arduous tasks bestowed upon me and my office by this house. I also thank the African National Congress, for the confidence they have in me, and finding it fit to deploy me as a leader of this house. I should also thank the staff of the North West

Provincial Legislature for their hard work and dedication in serving all of us, and making our load much more bearable. The portfolio committees that do most of the work, processing issues brought before this house.

2. Deputy Speaker and honourable members, allow me to present to this house the budget of the North West Provincial Legislature for 2013/14 financial year. The budget allocated to the North West Provincial Legislature is R217 142 000.00.

This budget has been distributed to the programmes of the legislature as follows:

Programme 1: Administration R91, 746, 000.

3. An amount of R91, 746, 000 has been allocated to the programme during the current financial year. The aim of the programme is to provide members with support services to enable them to fulfil their constitutional obligations.

Programme 2 Statutory Payments : R26, 226, 000

4. This programme has been allocated an amount of **R26, 226, 000**. The aim of this programme is to allow us to meet the legislative imperative of the NW Provincial legislature towards its members as prescribed annually in the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act.

Programme 3: Legislature Operations: R99, 169, 000

5. This programme ensures that the legislature operates effectively and efficiently by exposing Members of the Provincial Legislature to parliamentary systems and legislatures of other countries. It also enables to undertake public hearings and oversight visits, and engagement on National Council of Provinces activities.

The budget allocation for this programme is **R99, 169, 000. 00**.

Hon members, let me reiterate the budget as allocated to this Legislature for the MTEF period;

Programme	Budget 2013/14	Estimates for outer years	
		2014/15	2015/16
Administration	R91, 746, 000. 00	R94, 508, 000. 00	R98,452, 000. 00
Statutory	R26, 226, 000. 00	R26, 226, 000. 00	R27,668, 000. 00

Payments			
Legislature	R99, 169, 000. 00	R107, 336, 000. 00	R112,323,000. 00
Operations			
Total budget and estimates	R217, 142, 000.00	R229, 513, 000. 00	R239, 716, 000. 00

5. I should state Deputy Speaker, that the budget that has been presented is far from what is required in terms of our constitutional mandate. The North West Provincial Legislature has over the years not been provided with enough financial resources to enable it carry its mandate of oversight, public participation and lawmaking fully. This is probably because those who decide on the allocations do not fully understand the nature of the work of the legislature, because it is mostly intangible. I wish to implore on the members, particularly the executive that oversight, public participation and lawmaking need to be adequately funded. The legislature's efforts to ensure that public funds go to where they should and do what they must, should not be compromised by lack of funds.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, allow me at this point to quote Noam Chomsky who said;

“when people wanted enough freedom that they could not be enslaved or killed or repressed, new modes of control naturally develop to try to impose forms of mental slavery so they could accept a framework of indoctrination and won’t raise any questions. If you can trap people into not noticing, let alone questioning crucial doctrines, they are enslaved. They will essentially follow orders like there is a gun pointed at them.”

6. Hon members, painless oversight is not possible. Those on whom we perform oversight will always find reasons to be agitated and to feel like they are unfairly targeted. There is very little that we can do about this if we are to ensure accountability. However, oversight should be carried out with utmost responsibility as irresponsible oversight can only breed instability.

7. Hon. Members, even after nineteen years, we are still grappling with the creation of a best model to conduct oversight. The legislative sector has adopted the Sector Oversight Model. We customised this model for the province, and trained members on the model and the various tools that can be used to conduct meaningful oversight. One thing is very clear, we need lot of resources, mainly human, to enable proper oversight. We also need to harmonise our processes to ensure that the model is implementable. For an example, the Treasury regulations direct that the Annual Performance Plans should be submitted at least ten days prior to the tabling of the budget of the particular department. This creates a problem and a conflict for the legislature that want to play a proactive role so far as oversight is concerned. The Annual Performance Plan should inform the budget, and any scrutiny of the budget should be informed by the Annual Performance Plan. It becomes a problem when we discuss the plan after we approved the budget. It means that there are no changes that can be made to the plan, if they have an impact on the budget, which will be already in operation. These are some of the problems that we should address if we are to play a meaningful oversight. The model, speaks of the legislature entering into a contract

with the department regarding certain deliverable in the annual performance plans, this cannot happen if the plan can only be discussed after the budget.

8. The same issue of accountability applies to the municipalities. Municipalities account to the legislature through submission of annual reports. There are some municipalities that have outstanding reports dating back many years. Those that submit reports are called to the legislature to account, but the legislature does not have mechanisms to force them to implement the resolutions of the house on their reports. The submission of reports, appearance before committees becomes just a repetitive process which in the end does not yield results so far as improved service delivery is concerned. The legislature can make a difference in the lives of our people. Our role does not end with us being the voices of the people, or summoning so and so to appear before us. We are empowered to ensure that the promises made to the people of this province, documented in the annual performance plans, budgets, Integrated Development Plans, Service Delivery Implementation Plans, growth and development strategies bear fruits. We have the power to

ensure that the budgets passed by this house bring about a better life to all our people.

9. We must ensure coordinated oversight across the province. This means that we should enable the ward committees, as well as non executive members of Council, to play a role in ensuring that even at that level, those entrusted with governance are held accountable. In this regard, we are going to function directly with portfolio committees as part of joint oversight with Municipal Speakers.

10. Hon members, the masses of our people are this legislature's strategic partners. As we do our work, which they have elected us to do, we should ensure that we carry them along. As we entrench the culture of accountability, we should ensure that the quarterly reports on budget implementation that are presented are communicated to our communities. Key to the process of budgeting is community participation. The process of community participation should begin

with the budget development. The people should not only be brought in at that final phase when the budget has already been prepared. We should find creative ways to ensure that the budgets presented in this house are truly people's budgets. In this way our people will understand the hard choices the government has to make to meet the competing needs of our society.

11. We should also ensure that the conduct of the North West public representatives is beyond reproach. In this instance we have established an ethics committee made up of esteemed members of our society. We will find ways to ensure that the work ethics committee is duplicated in municipalities, and that on a yearly basis, they publish a report on ethical conduct of public representatives including Councillors.

“do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step”. Lao Tzu, Ancient Chinese Philosopher, 400 BC.

12. Honourable members, in the previous year, we have continued discharge our mandate of oversight, law making and public participation. We introduced O re bone re go bone programme, through which we interacted with the communities of Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality and Taung Local Municipality. This programme allowed members to conduct oversight in various areas of the municipality and interact with our stakeholders. This has allowed our constituencies to understand how the legislature operates.

13. The North West Provincial Legislature hosted a Youth Parliament, under the theme “Education and learning to address youth unemployment, poverty and inequality”. The event attracted youth from our entire province to discuss issues that affect them, and ensured that youth issues occupy the centre stage in the legislature process.

14. We similarly hosted parliament for the People with Disability, which despite the problems encountered managed to highlight the issues

affecting our people who live with disabilities or are differently abled. We held the Older Persons parliament, under the theme, “recreational opportunities for the Aged, in enhancing the quality of life. We also hosted the women’s parliament and ensured that we send a provincial delegation to participate in the national event.

15. We conducted six public hearings on seven bills, and conducted 29 oversights. We are finalising the establishment of the call centre and the district offices. The Accounting Officer is currently working on the details of these two projects, including staffing and office space.

16. Deputy Speaker, and honourable members, we can do more to improve our oversight, public participation and law making. This year, the legislature will continue to give the people a voice through North West People’s parliaments. We have increased these parliaments from five to 18 going forward. We will investigate ways to ensure that the parliaments do not become talk shops. We will give them formal recognition in the rules, make provision for their procedures, powers

and functions, and for the formalisation of recommendations to be submitted to the relevant committees. In the same vein, the sectoral parliaments cannot only serve to raise people's expectations, and feedback is only delivered twelve months later. Feedback should be provided with speed to the attendees. This means that in addition to the sectoral parliaments, we should also organise feedback sessions for our people.

17. There will also be Kgotleng people's dialogues, which are the debates that the legislature organises in the community. This we do to capture the unheard voices of our people, and to rebuild hope which normally turns to despair when there are perceptions of distance between the people and their government.

18. The Kgotla magazine will be published on a monthly basis in order to inform our people of the good work that members are doing.

19. We also plan on increasing the number of people who attend the North West Provincial Legislature sittings, and shall embark on joint “O re bone re go bone” programme with the Executive, which aims at increasing interaction with the communities and resolving their problems on the spot. We will also establish a call centre to ensure that people’s problems are resolved speedily.

20. It is important that we maintain hope, and spread the message of hope, as it is clear that it will take a long and painful revolution, to tackle the crises of poverty, underdevelopment, global warming and economic deprivation. The malaise of corruption and immorality that has inflicted our society has made our people to vent out their frustration and anger at their own liberators, and the only government that has a plan to create a better future for them. We therefore need these discussions, everywhere, in groups large and small, amongst the poor and the rich, the educated and the ignorant – they should all talk to one another, and we will be creating this platform.

21. We are continuing with our Ore Bone Re Go Bone programme. This financial year the program will take a different approach, wherein focus will be on petitions with the aim of resolving them and reduce the backlog. The new approach will include a joint meeting of the legislature committees the Executive, municipalities and representatives of national government where petitions will be addressed on the spot.

22. Honourable members, the legislature discontinued the committee on quality of life and status of women. In hindsight I think that was an error as it has left the legislature with no structure to assist in tracking down the impact of the efforts of our government in improving the lives of our people. As a result we find it difficult to report on the progress so far as the reduction of poverty, gender equality and other progress in attainment of the millennium goals is concerned. We are also unable to do oversight on these matters.

23. Honourable members, in the past year, we had to deal with a few staff issues. There has been some changes at the top management level. We parted ways with the Secretary of the Legislature, and we are in the process of finding a replacement. The Chief Financial Officer has also

resigned, and we are also in the process of finding replacement. We had to deal with a number of staff grievances, which we are sure we will be able to resolve without having to go through legal routes. We will speed up the filling of the top management position in order to create stability at that level, and hopefully in the entire institution.

24. There is no doubt that we come from a traumatic past. There is a lot of anger amongst our people, the society and the organisation. This need attended to. As the legislature we should support the idea of reconciliation and healing, to help heal the wounds of the past, unite and reconcile our communities.

25. Honourable Deputy Speaker and members, 19 years have passed since we started this journey and yet our objective remains unchanged, which is the democratic transformation of our country. We should not lose sight of this objective, as the people we represent demand that apartheid should be eradicated in all its forms, and replace it with a truly

democratic, just and equal society. The achievement of this goal has become the site of our new struggle, a national democratic revolution.

26. The road towards the transformation of our society is fraught with many challenges. Each stage has its own unique challenges, presented to all spheres of government. One such challenge is the issue of skills, the capacity of our people to create and take up economic opportunities, and to enter the job markets. We should push hard to ensure that we bring levels of unemployment down, and create a nation of entrepreneurs.

27. Hon. Deputy Speaker, the time has come for the province to revisit the issue of its name. North West is a direction, a pointer for a traveller moving from a certain point. I have already made suggestions in various public platforms that we should rename this province, I think the time to begin the process is now.

28. Hon members, across the world, communities are torn apart by conflicts fuelled by intolerance and ignorance. Such conflicts often results in disturbing human rights abuses, especially against women and children. They also exacerbate the human suffering inherent in the current socio-economic order. Just nineteen years ago were such a society. We were riddled by racial intolerance, abuse and ignorance. Just nineteen years ago, we took a decision as a nation that we should build a nation characterised by equality, justice, rule of law and human dignity. That society is gradually taking shape. We are shedding the image that made us the scorn of the world. We have committed ourselves that never ever shall our country experience the kind of conflict and human suffering that was characterised by both colonial and apartheid rule.

29. It is this that led us to say, that in our kind of democracy, every view shall count, and that each life shall have equal worth. This is because we know the price and pain of intolerance. We know that to be a force amongst nations, tolerance and inclusivity is key. We acknowledge that

that each talent, and combined energy of all the 51 million of us should be galvanised to make South Africa the best nation, we all want it to be.

30. Throughout the 19 years since its inauguration, members of this house have listened to one another, counselled one another, and guided our province to achieve its potential. Together we have rejoiced in various victories and lamented our failures and short comings. We have embraced our responsibilities with dedication, and integrity, and have sought to represent our constituencies to the best of our abilities. We have given a voice to the otherwise voiceless masses who had been silenced through worst forms of repression for over 300 years. Amongst ourselves we had to deal with the difficulty of learning to accept and deal with different perspectives, different views or even the idea of a different opinion, for we came from a history where another view was not tolerated, and was brutally silenced. This house recognised that dialogue was the most mature, and times the only way to build a new nation, and a new democracy.

31. Honourable members whilst we congratulate police for the hard work, criminals are still on the loose. They are seeking to deny our people the freedom they fought hard for. Women and children bear the brunt of most cruel forms of inhumane acts. The criminal mind seems to be at work at all times. It is a pity that we cannot timely determine what is in the mind of each of us, otherwise it would have been easy to detect such crimes before they happen. The law enforcement of our country should be congratulated and encouraged in ensuring that perpetrators of crime are brought to book. As members of the legislature, we should mobilise our constituency to help in fighting crime working with the police and within the law. We cannot surrender our freedom to the rule of criminals. Our freedom is just too precious to just let go, we should mobilise our communities to say no to crime and to report criminals to law enforcers.

31. Honourable members, this quarter started on a sad note for us in this house. We lost two of our esteemed members, Hon. Kasienyane and Molotsi. I should take this opportunity to thank the funeral committee

and all the members for their active participation in ensuring that the two members get a send off befitting a member of the house. May the souls of the departed comrades rest in peace.

I thank you.