

TABLING OF THE 2020/21 PROVINCIAL BUDGET AND THE APPROPRIATION BILL BY HON. SEPARO SEKOATI TO THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE ON THE 10 MARCH 2020, LEBOWAKGOMO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

Speaker of our Provincial Legislature Honourable Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya;
The Deputy Speaker of the Legislature Honourable Jeremiah Azwindini Dingaan Ndou; Honourable Premier of our Province Ntate Chupu Mathabatha;
Honourable Members of the Executive Council;
Honourable Members of this august House;
Former Members of the Provincial Legislature present here;
Leadership of the ruling Party, the African National Congress present here;
Leaders of various Opposition parties present;
Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders Kgoshi Dikgale na Mahosi othe a rine; The Director-General of the Province and All Heads of Departments;
Members of the Boards and Chief Executive Officers of our various Entities present; Executive Mayors, Mayors, and All Councillors present;
Leaders and Representatives of our Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 Institutions present; Leaders of Organised Labour and Civil Society Organisations present;
Captains and leaders of various Industries;
All leaders of our Youth, Women, and People Living with Disabilities in our midst;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Madam Speaker, the 5th Provincial Administration was in the main inundated with the task of stabilising the financial standing of the Province and reigniting the spirit of patriotism amongst our people, as well rekindling the moral fibre within structures of our administration and its leadership.

Today we present the first budget of the 6th Provincial Administration whose main objective is to provide hope in the period of economic hardships our nation is currently traversing.

This 2020/21 budget is meant to realise the priorities as enunciated by the Honourable Premier during the State of the Province address – which are:

1. The building of a capable, ethical and developmental state;
2. The transformation of economy and job creation;
3. Education, skills and health;
4. The delivery of reliable and quality basic services;

5. The transformation of human settlements and the strengthening of local government;
6. Social cohesion, safe communities, and, above all; and
7. The building of a better Africa and a better world.

Honourable Premier, there is a saying by the community of People Living with Disability that says: Nothing about us without us.

Guided by this saying and realising that we possess no magic wand to turn the economic tide, I invited students and learners from various schools and our local universities to assist me in drawing a silver lining through this budget.

And I am pleased to acknowledge the presence of Kimberly Tinarwo; Shamaine Maphanga; Chanelle Chibururu; and Maletere Mametsa from Mathomomayo Secondary, a township school in Lebowakgomo and it obtained 100 percent in matric result last year.

I also acknowledge the presence of Mmapula Mabetlela; Claudia Mokgehle; Thabang Mphela; and Katlego Mafogo from Tswane University of Technology (Polokwane Campus) Faculty of Economics and Finance present in the gallery today.

The immense contributions of these learners and students made me believe in the silver lining that indeed the future of Limpopo looks bright and also reaffirmed my convictions that indeed the pillars of our democracy are too strong to be shaken by the current economic turbulences.

Madam Speaker, in recent years' global economy has been subdued causing it to exert pressure on gross government revenue collection and thereby compromising global fiscal sustainability.

These global economic tremors prompted governments to embark on policy adjustments - from monetary policy easing and expansionary fiscal policy, depending on the position of the business cycle.

The world economy is expected to grow to as much as 3.6 percent in 2021. This is a marginal improvement from the anticipated 3.0 percent in 2019.

The global economic growth estimate for 2019 and projection for 2020 would have been 0.5 percentage point lower in each year without the substantial monetary easing across advanced and emerging market economies in 2019. World economic momentum, low business confidence, has weighed down on full recovery of the GDP. Real GDP decreased by -0.6 percent in the third quarter of 2019 and recently Stats SA has released the fourth quarter GDP which has also reported a negative growth of 1.4 percent.

The National Treasury anticipates economic growth to pick up to 1.2 percent in 2020. While the International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects economic growth of 0.6 percent for 2019 and improving to 1 percent in 2020.

Limpopo's economy has contracted from 2.2 percent in 2017 to 0.2 percent in 2018.

Improvement in the global economy is dependent on a number of factors, which includes among others, cordial terms of trade between countries and averting unnecessary trade stand-offs, restrains of civil wars and containment of diseases outbreaks such as the recent corona virus.

These impediments if not averted or dealt with strategically will negatively impact on South Africa's export margins in the international markets and thereby suppressing the country's economic growth, hence increasing the current high unemployment and poverty rates, widening of income inequalities, and reducing the nation revenue collection potentials.

The poor economic growth has had an impact on revenue collection and the increasing government expenditure has in the recent past prompted National Treasury to seek finances in the market. The accumulated total government debt increased from R2.8 trillion in 2018/19 financial year to R3.1 trillion in 2019/20. This amount is expected to grow to R4.5 trillion in 2022/23 representing 71.3 percent of the national GDP.

This growth in debt will increase the amount government debt-service costs which will hamper the country's developmental agenda.

In an effort to achieve a 3 percent annual growth rate, the province will need to improve the growth performance of the local economy through industrialisation as envisaged in the Limpopo Development Plan.

For the 2020/21 financial year, the Department of Economic Development Environment and Tourism priorities have been set for implementation.

These priorities include economic transformation and job creation, Special Economic Zone Program implementation, SMMEs & Cooperative support, commercialization of the nature reserves, broadband and tourism transformation and marketing.

The province will continue to use the mining industry procurement and the revised preferential procurement regulations of 2017 to drive industrialization agenda of the Province.

It's of utmost importance to also focus on the rollout of LIBRA in municipalities and inspection and enforcement of business regulations, especially in the retail sector.

Honourable Speaker, the provincial economy needs reliable infrastructure to connect supply chain and efficiently supply goods and services, within and across borders. Infrastructure connects households across rural and urban areas to higher quality opportunities for employment, healthcare and education. The Province, therefore needs to deliver infrastructure at a rate which is acceptable to foster economic growth and create opportunities for the citizens of Limpopo.

The Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (DPWR&I) has been granted approval to set up Programme Management Support (PMS) that will assist in operationalising the Infrastructure Strategic Professional Hub as a shared service for the province.

The process to set up the PMS in Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure is at an advance stage and governance documents have been finalised for an agreement to be signed between the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure and Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC) of the National Treasury.

The Department of Health and Education has been given permission to set up an advisory professional service unit (Infrastructure Technical Resource) to accelerate infrastructure implementation in each department, such as the academic complex programme which includes Central Hospital, Pietersburg Hospital, Mankweng Hospital, Thabamopo Hospital, Medical School and 5 Regional Hospitals and the schools' sanitation backlog programme.

Limpopo Provincial Treasury will play oversight on the financial matters to strategically guide the financial planning of the District Development Model process, and also exercise control over implementation, therefore ensuring resource allocation efficiency to achieve maximum social and economic benefits.

Madam Speaker, EXCO approved a strategy to direct government procurement in the province in line with PPPFA Regulations of 2017 and we are using the strategy to give impetus to economic empowerment of designated groups in terms of our strategic objectives as a country to transform our economic landscape.

The Honourable Premier during his State of the Province address instructed that we give further insights on progress to date.

As of 31 December 2019 from the total procurement spend of R10 billion, noticeable spend achievements are as follows:

- Black-owned businesses = R5.4 billion or 54.5 percent of the spend;
- Black youth-owned businesses = R1.1 billion or 11.2 percent of the spend;
- Black women-owned businesses = R2.1 billion or 20.9 percent of the spend;
- SMMEs = R5.3 billion or 53.1 percent of the spend;
- Rural/Township Enterprises = R1.9 billion or 19.3 percent of the spend.

However, there is still a challenge with regards to the spend on businesses owned by the following designated groups which is receiving attention by the different departments and entities - Spend on Persons with Disabilities is R31 million or 0.3 percent spend from annual target of 7 percent, Black-owned cooperatives – R19 million or 0.2 percent of spend, annual target being 10 percent and Military veterans – R27 million or 0.3 percent of spend from an annual target of 3 percent.

Madam Speaker the long awaited Public Procurement Bill has been released for public comment by 31 May 2020, it will be essential that all private and public entities give comments on the bill in order to direct the reforms to the public procurement framework.

Madam Speaker, the South African government is faced with serious financial constraints for equitably sharing its fiscus amongst the three spheres of government to sustainably address the socio-economic needs of the citizenry.

These fiscal constraints emanate from weak economic growth, to poor fiscal and economic decisions.

Leaving the country with few options such as borrowing funds from the market which is expensive to maintain; to minimise spending on goods and services while investing in infrastructure development; and to strengthen mechanism to generate national, provincial and municipal revenue.

In an endeavor to increase provincial own revenue, the Province developed a revenue enhancement and retention strategy.

The Province is also investing in revenue enhancement projects, such as in state resorts infrastructure; health revenue systems, the planned construction of K53 testing facilities at Thohoyandou and Seshego traffic stations; and the upgrading Mampakuil weighbridge.

A further consideration must be the disposal of provincial non-core assets, including properties and investments, however in order to do this it will be necessary to consider rescinding the moratorium by this honourable house.

Provincial Treasury continues to apply section 18 of the Public Finance Management Act in monitoring and assisting departments and public entities in implementing their plans.

Quarterly Expenditure Bilateral and Performance monitoring sessions are conducted regularly.

Since the advent of this strategy, the Province spending and accountability has improved drastically.

In 2016/17 financial year, the province spending was at 87.9 percent by year-end, however by the end of the financial year 2018/19 the spending has improved drastically to 99.1 percent.

In line with the Mission statement of Provincial Treasury, we will continue to monitor the budget in order to reduce unwanted and irregular expenditures and ascertain that each department delivers efficiently and effectively on its mandate. Our concerted efforts with Office of the Premier in monitoring and supporting departments on budget implementation will continue without interruption.

Unemployment remains persistent, the recent publication by the Statistics South Africa shows that unemployment rate for South Africa at 29.1 percent while that of the province increased from 21.4 percent in the 3rd quarter of 2019 to 23.1 percent in the 4th quarter.

Limpopo provincial government remains unrelenting in the fight against poverty and unemployment. Provincial Treasury shall continue to ensure that we intensify our support of government efforts on EPWP, government internships, and labour reform programmes.

We will also continue to support private sector participation in the established Special Economic Zones, the revitalisation of Industrial Parks, and the support of small scale farmers and processors.

One of the common emphasis from the learners and students who helped me write this speech was the urgency of creating sustainable opportunities of employment and empowerment for our youth and women.

Through the Youth Empowerment Service (YES), we will, in support of the Office of the Premier, ensure that Limpopo contributes its efforts in the realization of the President's one million target of the youth who are offered paid work experience over the next three years, as part of placing the needs and opportunities for young people at the centre of inclusive economic growth.

All collaborative efforts of both government and private sector in creating the much needed jobs for our youth in the province will be prioritised.

Furthermore, we will provide a rigorous oversight on our special purpose vehicles such as Limpopo Economic Development Agency, whose primary purpose is to drive policy implementation through high-impact, catalytic growth projects that will result in inclusive economic development and the acceleration of sustainable growth of the provincial economy, thus creating the much needed productive and sustainable employment.

A review and possible restructuring of these provincial entities is underway to ensure that they live up to their primary objectives.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in Limpopo lies great and undervalued potentials of the green economy presenting an opportunity to make great and substantial advances.

The advantages of the province include among others:

1. The Perfect geographic location to develop a variety of green industries and economies of scale;
2. Invaluable mineral resource base for local beneficiation;
3. Unexploited biodiversity resources for green tourism and payment for ecosystem services; and above all
4. Vibrant young population to enthusiastically engage in new, innovative and developmental economic activities.

Allow me to quote Peter Evans's Essay "If a 21st century developmental state can promise a combination of high growth, broad based employment expansion and a higher ecological footprint, it's worth the prodigious effort required to create it."

Provincial Receipts

The Province derives its receipts from equitable share, conditional grants, and provincial own revenue.

A reduction to the planned spending levels across all three spheres of government were needed as a result of lower than projected national government revenues and the need to stabilise the growth in national debt while providing support to State Owned Entities such as Eskom and SAA.

As a result, the provincial equitable share allocation was adjusted downwards by R337.9 million and R845.1 million over the MTEF due to the impact of new and updated equitable share data and a 2 percent Fiscal Consolidation reduction on non-cost of employment respectively.

In addition, the equitable share allocation was further adjusted downward by and R289.6 million in 2020/21 and R307.9 million in 2021/22 on Compensation of Employees.

In total, these reductions have resulted in the provincial equitable share allocation being reduced by R1.8 billion over the MTEF.

The following additions were made to the equitable share:

✓ R12.8 million, R14.9 million and R15.7 million have been made available in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively for Department of Social Development to address the social and structural drivers on HIV, TB, STI's and gender based violence.

✓ Additional R32.7 million in 2020/21, R34.0 million in 2021/22 and R35.3 million has been allocated to Department of Education for the Sanitary Dignity Project.

✓ Department of Social Development has been allocated additional budget for Employment of Social Workers to deal with gender based violence, substance abuse and issues affecting children as follows: - R11.3 million in 2020/21, R13.9 million in 2021/22 and R14.6 million in 2022/23 financial year.

Despite these reductions the Limpopo Equitable Share allocation grows by 5.7 percent in 2020/21 to R62.3 billion, by 6.3 percent in 2021/22 to R66.2 billion and it is anticipated to grow by 5.6 percent in 2022/23 financial year to R69.9 billion.

The province is allocated conditional grants of R9.9 billion in 2020/21, R9.9 billion in 2021/22 and R10.4 billion in 2022/23 financial years. The conditional grant allocations increased by 9.2 percent in 2020/21 and 4.5 percent in 2022/23 financial years.

New grants include, the conversion of the National Health Insurance fund (Contracting) and the Informal Settlement Upgrading Partnership Grant.

The provincial own revenue for 2020/21 is R1.4 billion in 2020/21 and increases to R1.5 billion in 2022/23 supported by the provincial revenue enhancement strategies. The provincial own revenue grows by 5.4 percent in 2020/21 and 5.3 percent in 2022/23 financial years.

The total receipts available for the 2020/21 financial year amounts to R73.6 billion, R77.6 billion in 2021/22 and R81.8 billion in 2022/13 financial year.

PROVINCIAL EXPENDITURE

The provincial expenditure grows from R69.5 billion in 2019/20 to R72.8 billion in 2020/21 and further grows to R77.3 billion in 2021/22 and to R80.4 billion in 2022/23 financial years. The expenditure growth is 4.7 percent in 2020/21 and 5.3 percent in 2022/23.

Compensation of Employees (COE) for 2020/21 financial year is R50.8 billion or 69.8 percent of the expenditure budget which represents 3.3 percent growth and 4.9 percent over the MTEF. The province's allocation of compensation of employees is ring-fenced to curb the ever increasing COE budget.

As Limpopo has the highest percentage of its provincial budget spent on Compensation of Employees at 69.8 percent compared to the national average of 60 percent it will be essential for the Provincial Government to also consider appropriate mechanisms to curb the ever increasing wage bill, as announced by the Minister of Finance.

A total amount of R11.3 billion, R11.8 billion and R12.4 billion is allocated to goods and services for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively. Goods and Services budget grows by 12.4 percent in 2020/21 and 7.2 percent over the MTEF.

The increase is mainly influenced by classification of expenditure from transfers and subsidies to goods and services where services are rendered by NPO's and NPI's.

The provincial allocation on transfers and subsidies is mainly for transfers to Non-Profit Institutions and Organisations, households, departmental agencies and accounts and transfers to Public Entities and Municipalities.

Total transfers and subsidies is decreasing by 1.4 percent from R8.2 billion in 2019/20 to R8.1 billion in 2020/21 and increases to R8.5 billion in 2022/23 financial year.

The allocation for Payments for Capital Assets has increased from R2.0 billion in 2019/20 to R2.6 billion in 2020/21 financial year, payments for capital assets will further grow to R2.7 billion in 2022/23.

This classification includes allocation for construction of new infrastructure, purchase of office furniture, transport equipment and other machinery and equipment.

The budget allocation and appropriations for the financial year 2020/21 per department are therefore as follows:

Vote 1: Office of the Premier

The Office of the Premier receives a budget allocation of R450.2 million in 2020/21, R474.5 million in 2021/22 and R502.2 in 2022/23 financial years. The allocation increases by 4.3 percent over the MTEF.

The Office of the Premier will continue to play a leading role in the Limpopo Provincial Government. The office will promote sound intergovernmental and international relations, by ensuring alignment between different levels of government for better coordination and delivery of services in the Province.

Vote 2: Provincial Legislature

The Provincial Legislature receives an allocated budget of R385.1 million in 2020/21, R406.1 million in 2021/22 and R429.5 million in 2022/23 financial year.

The budget has increased by 2.5 percent in 2020/21 or 4.6 percent over the MTEF period. The legislature will continue to conduct oversight of all institutions in the province and strengthen its community outreach programmes.

Vote 3: Education

The Department of Education is allocated a budget of R33.9 billion in 2020/21, R35.6 billion in 2021/22 and R37.7 billion in 2022/23 financial year.

The 2020/21 allocation includes R2.8 billion for Conditional Grants and R626.9 million from own revenue.

The allocation increase by 5.0 percent in 2020/21 and 5.8 percent in 2022/23 financial year. In an endeavour to improve school's infrastructure in the province, the Education Infrastructure Grant is increased by R206.2 million or 19.6 percent in 2020/21 financial year.

During the 2020/21 financial year, the Department of Education will direct its budget to putting more emphasis on areas that will contribute directly to the Department's core mandate, which is the delivery of quality education through ensuring that schools function efficiently and by reducing schools that are underperforming in the province

Vote 4: Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development will receive a budget allocation of R2.0 billion in 2020/21, R2.1 billion in 2021/22 and R2.3 billion in 2022/23 financial year.

Included in the allocation for 2020/21 is an amount of R323.6 million for Conditional Grants. The budget increases by 4.1 percent over the MTEF.

Included in the departmental allocation, is an amount of R50 million ring-fenced towards projects that are geared towards the Revitalisation of Agriculture and Agro-processing Value Chain in the province.

Vote 5: Provincial Treasury

The Provincial Treasury receives a budget allocation of R521.3 million in 2020/21, R529.0 million in 2021/22 and R559.7 million during 2022/23 financial year. The budget allocation is increasing by 2.9 percent in 2020/21 and by 5.8 percent in 2022/23.

The allocation includes an amount of R19 million for support to Municipalities on infrastructure programmes and a further R10.3 for the implementation of the municipal support hub.

Vote 6: Economic Development, Environment and Tourism

The Department of Economic Development is allocated a budget of R1.7 billion in 2020/21, of which R3.0 million is for a Conditional Grant and R762.9 million is for transfers to Public Entities.

The departmental allocation increases to R1.8 billion in 2021/22 financial year and to R1.9 billion in 2022/23 financial year. The allocation increases by 3.6 percent over the MTEF period.

Included in the allocation to Public Entities is earmarked funding amounting to R500 million over the MTEF period for capital projects in the Special Economic Zone, R110 million over the MTEF for recapitalisation of Great North Transport and R30 million in 2020/21 financial year for Tourism Marketing.

Vote 7: Health

The Department of Health receives an allocation of R22.1 billion in 2020/21, R23.6 billion in 2021/22 and R24.8 in 2022/23 financial year.

Included in the 2020/21 allocation is R3.7 billion for Conditional Grants and R548.8 million from own revenue.

The allocation increases by 6.6 percent in 2020/21 and 6.1 percent over the MTEF period.

As a result of good performance on conditional grants spending by the department during the 2019/20 financial year, the departments allocation of conditional grants is increased by R585.9 million or 19.1 percent in 2020/21 financial year.

These funds are earmarked for provision of better health services including on Comprehensive HIV, AIDS & TB grant and the Health facility revitalisation grant. The department will remain focused on increasing life expectancy, decreasing maternal and child mortality; combating HIV and decreasing the burden of diseases from Tuberculosis (TB); and strengthening the health system effectiveness.

Further attention will be put on strengthening primary health care and implementing the district health systems model.

Vote 8: Transport and Community Safety

The department is allocated R2.4 billion in 2020/21 financial year of which R404.0 million is for a conditional grant and R54.9 million is for transfer payments to the entity Gateway Airport Authority Limited (GAAL). The departmental allocation is increasing by 4.9 percent over the MTEF.

The Department of Transport and Community Safety will continue with its integrated transport planning as it is essential to rendering of transport services in an effective and efficient manner.

The Department will continue to provide scheduled subsidised public transport services for communities in areas with little productive economic activity to gain

easy access to economic activity and state services.

Vote 9: Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure

The department receives a budget allocation of R3.9 billion in 2020/21, R3.5 billion in 2021/22 and R3.6 billion in 2022/23 financial year.

The allocation includes R1.3 billion for conditional grants and R1.5 billion to be transferred to Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) for operational costs and roads maintenance and upgrades. The departmental allocation increase by 6.7 percent in 2020/21 financial year.

Included in the allocation of the department, is an amount of R10 million earmarked for programmes geared towards improvement of infrastructure delivery in the province. Furthermore, included in Roads Agency Limpopo allocation, is an amount of R400 million allocated from the provincial equitable share to address the over-commitment on roads projects.

Vote 10: Sport, Arts and Culture

The total allocation of the department amounts to R524.9 million in 2020/21, R527.9 million in 2021/22 and R557.6 million in 2022/23 financial year. The allocation increases by 2.4 percent over the MTEF period.

The allocation for 2020/21 includes conditional grants allocations amounting to R203.6 million.

Included in the departmental allocation is an amount of R20.5 million for the completion of the planning process of the Provincial Theater.

Vote 11: Co-Operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs

The Department is receiving budget allocation of R2.5 billion in 2020/21, R2.6 billion in 2021/22 and R2.6 billion in 2022/23 financial year.

The allocation makes provision for the delivery of quality housing through the Human Settlement Development Grant which is allocated an amount of R1.1 billion in 2020/21 financial year.

The budget allocation has reduced by 9.3 percent in 2020/21 due to the reduction the grant funding and increases by 5.0 percent in 2022/23 financial year.

The departmental equitable share allocation includes earmarked allocations of R15 million for the Provincial Kingship and Queenship and a further R50 million for construction and provision of office furniture in Traditional Council Offices.

Speaker, the Province will continue giving Municipalities all the necessary support so that they can continue delivering basic services to our people.

The Province will not allow any Municipality to adopt an unfunded budget, therefore the Province is working very closely with our Municipalities to ensure that they table and adopt the funded budgets.

Our governance structures are running effectively and therefore, the Office of the Premier, CoGHSTA and the Provincial Treasury and all other stakeholders are able to share all the necessary information with Municipalities to enable us in building the capable state as resonated/echoed by the Premier in SOPA and the President in SONA.

Vote 12: Social Development

The Department is allocated a budget of R2.4 billion in 2020/21, R2.5 billion in 2021/22 and R2.6 billion in 2022/23 financial year. The allocation includes conditional grant allocations of R139.7 million in 2020/21 financial year.

The allocation increases by 8.2 percent in 2020/21 and 6.1 percent in 2022/23 financial year.

Included in the budget allocation for 2020/21 is funds made available by the National Government of R11.3 million for employment of Social Workers and R12.8 million to respond to Gender Based Violence.

Madam Speaker, in order to strengthen the provincial governance structures, the Provincial Treasury has recently appointed new Audit Committee members to discharge their mandate as required by Regulation 3.1.10 of the Treasury Regulations.

To date the Audit Committee was able to advise the Provincial Executive on interventions that were needed to support the Departments.

The Committee has also been able to advise and report quarterly to individual Members of the Executive on matters affecting their respective Department's financial matters and performance.

In order to strengthen this interaction, Members of the Executive Council will now be invited to attend at least one quarterly audit committee meeting (per annum) for them to be engaged by the Audit Committee members.

Provincial Treasury is also in the process of establishing a provincial database of forensic experts in order to expedite the appointment of forensic investigators when a need is identified or alleged acts of corruption are reported.

Madam Speaker, in continuing to redress the spatial development patterns of the apartheid and homeland systems, economic transformation and development remains central in planning and executing the provincial budget.

Over the years, the provincial government, through its allocations, managed to provide many households with decent shelter; ensuring the safety of communities; building and maintaining roads; and supporting small and emerging farmers, SMME's and cooperatives as means of job creation and contributing to economic growth in the Province.

However, more must still be done to ensure an inclusive development and a prosperous Limpopo Province.

Our challenges are not insurmountable, our problems are not without resolve, and the economic tide we are traversing is not endless.

Our spirit and resilience as a nation has seen us through many difficult periods, and these economic turbulences shall indeed pass too.

All we need is to steadily steer our ship, follow the manuals, and obey instructions of the captain.

Honourable Premier, let me thank you for your guidance during this budget process, and members of the Executive for your support.

To Honourable Rudolf Phala, the Chairperson and member of the Portfolio Committee on Treasury, your relentless scrutiny keeps us on proper checks and balance at all times, I sincerely thank you.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank my wife, Mme Sekoati and our children for your endless support. The task at hand is not easy, but your prayers strengthens me.

Let me also thank the support of the HOD and the hardworking staff of Provincial Treasury. As we say: We are the best in what we do.

Let us continue to lead the way in good governance and sound public resource management in Limpopo.

To my special guests, thank you very much for your valuable contributions and wisdom to this first budget of the 6th Provincial Administration. Indeed, the future of Limpopo looks bright in your hands.

Madam Speaker allow me conclude by quoting a stanza of a poem by the legendary Maya Angelou titled: Still I Rise
"I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide. Leaving behind nights of terror and fear, I rise. Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear, I rise Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise"

It is my conviction that the budget delivered today will lead the province to leaving behind nights of terror and fear, and rise into a daybreak that is wondrously clear. Madam Speaker; Honourable Premier; and Members of this august house, I therefore table herewith:

- The Limpopo Appropriation Bill, 2020;
- Estimates of Provincial Revenue and Expenditure 2020;
- Overview of Provincial Revenue and Expenditure 2020;
- Socio-Economic Review and Outlook 2020; and
- Supporting gazettes.

Ndo Levhuwa Na Khensa
Ke a Leboga Baie Dankie Ngi ya thokoza. Thank you.