



**Keynote Address by Minister for the Public Service and
Administration Mr Senzo Mchunu, MP, on the launch of the
Integrated Government Programme during the 2019 Public Service
Month**

The Ranch, Polokwane, Limpopo Province

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Programme Director

The Premier of Limpopo, Mr Stanley Mathabatha

Deputy Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Ms Sindisiwe
Chikunga

Executive Mayor of City of Polokwane, Cllr. Thembi Nkadimeng

The Director-General of the Department of Public Service and
Administration, Professor Richard Levin

Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Adv. R. Sizani

Directors-General

Senior Managers

Public servants at large

All Government officials present

Ladies and gentlemen, Good morning, Sanibonani, Molweni, Dumelang, Goeie more, Lotjhani, Avuxeni, Ndimatsheloni

Let me start by thanking the Government of Limpopo, under the leadership of Mr Stanley Mathabatha, for hosting us and providing resources to make today's event a success. This is true testimony to the spirit and letter of co-operative governance.

It is important to share with this forum an incident where Government launched a massive project in the Eastern Cape, under Mhlontlo Municipality, where former President, Jacob Zuma, launched a R12,45 billion Mzimvubu water project in 2014. The project would see the construction of two massive Ntabelanga and Laleni dams. It later transpired that there is no budget allocated for the project, after so much fanfare and raising hopes.

While campaigning in Giyani, as an ANC NEC delegation, we were stopped by angry members of the community in Giyani, demanding construction of a road after a bridge was built, with no connecting road. What comes out clearly in both matters is the fact that public servants, both elected and unelected, must now sharpen their approach when it comes to issues of service delivery. We must stop making commitments when we have not allocated budgets for projects.

We must also make sure that whenever there are commitments at a political level, they must have been thoroughly discussed with the administrative leadership and there are follow-ups by officials to ensure service delivery takes place during the period planned for and are within the budgeted amount.

On behalf of Government, today we are launching Public Service Month, one of the most important months on the Government calendar, as it is a period where we also observe a variety of other themes, such as tourism, and heritage.

During the Public Service Month, we will be celebrating the value and virtue of service to the community. It is also about celebrating those public servants envisaged in the Batho Pele Principles. At this stage, it becomes crucial that we remind each other of the Batho Pele Principles, which are Consultation, Service Standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.

Today marks the launch of an Integrated Government Programme under the auspices of the 2019 Public Service Month under the theme: ***“Khawuleza, Taking Public Service to the People. Batho Pele: “We Belong, We Care, We Serve.”*** This theme is based on aspirations of the 6th Administration as pronounced by His Excellency President Ramaphosa during his State of the Nation Address.

This integration brings together the celebrations of the Heritage, Environment and Tourism, since all these falls within the September Month.

This Integrated Public Service Month is important, firstly because it serves as a reminder just as it acquaints the public servants with the governance systems and practices that guide their conscience for optimal performances of their responsibilities. Secondly, it is timely because of the huge expectations from our citizens and communities for public servants to deliver the much needed public service.

This year's celebration of the Integrated Public Service Month will amongst others, reflect on the achievements made in the last 25 years of democracy. Above all the focus will be to rededicate public servants to the noble calling of being a public servant of note and to adhere to the principles of *Batho Pele* by promoting the Public Service Charter.

Furthermore, the overall goals of the celebration is to instil and rebuild good ethics and professionalism in how public servants executive their work, recommit and rededicate public servants to the principles of *Batho Pele*.

The citizen-centric service delivery is at the heart of our transformative agenda for socio-economic development and youth empowerment. Central to this is our Constitution, which is regarded as the best and widely admired globally.

The primary policy in this regard, includes the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service and its resultant implementation mechanism, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, *alias* the Batho Pele White Paper.

The Batho Pele White Paper provided a strategy to ensure a more efficient, effective and equitable provision of services by the Public Service. This ground breaking policy is underpinned by eight principles for the transformation of service delivery that are aligned with the Constitutional ideals which seeks to:

- Promoting and maintaining high standards of professional ethics;

- Providing service impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;
- Utilising resources efficiently and effectively;
- Responding to people's needs and encouraging citizens to participate in policy making;
- Rendering an accountable, transparent and development orientated public administration.

The Batho Pele Belief Set has been summarised by this slogan: “**We Belong, We Care, We Serve.**” Batho Pele aims to ensure that all public servants put people first, and adhere to the following overarching framework:

- **We Belong:** we are part of the Public Service and should work together and respect fellow colleagues,
- **We Care:** caring for the public we serve - our customers
- **We Serve:** all citizens will get good service from public servants.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

One of the key question to drive today's discourse remains, “*What are our citizens experiences when interfacing with our frontline service delivery institutions; these include; issues raised by frontline service delivery officials; optimising decision making processes; promotion of change management engagement programs?*”

To practically and honestly respond to this question, South Africa needs a Public Service that is ethical, value-driven free of corruption. Corruption is a cancer, as it steals from the poor, undermines service delivery and stifles economic growth, which promotes employment and distribution of wealth.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has also observed, (*I quote*):

‘Corruption has steadily eroded the state’s capacity to meet people’s needs, and is worsening a trust deficit between government and the citizenry.

We find ourselves at a tipping point, where worsening economic conditions threaten to erode our hard-won gains.’ (close quote)

We therefore have no choice, but to turn the tide on corruption and ensure that it does not become rewarding, by putting systems in place to punish all those involved, both in the public and the private sectors.

Members of the public also have a role to play by ensuring that they do not give ‘cold drinks’ to government officials (be it at Home Affairs, SASSA, police etc), who are employed to do their job. An active citizenry has always been a missing link in this whole scenario.

Since the advent of democracy, although we have had a civil society that stood up to wrongdoings, but on overall the public has slowed down in terms of holding government to account.

To demonstrate how far we have come, the Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown back in 1955, stipulates, among others, that:

‘All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country;

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex.’

In keeping with this spirit, President Ramaphosa launched the *Thuma Mina Campaign*, whose aim is to galvanise citizens to take an active interest in unlocking bottlenecks to service delivery, by ensuring there is intervention in service delivery issues such as social services, environmental activities and land expropriation, among others.

Even the first President of the democratic South Africa, our very own Dr Nelson Mandela, observed, **(I quote)**:

“None of us acting alone can achieve success. We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world.” (close quote)

The Constitution outlines the values that should be embraced by our Public Service, which include a high standard of professional ethics, development orientation, responsiveness and fairness, and encouraging public participation.

These values are the steering mechanisms for the achievement of a professional and effective Public Service that is transparent and accountable, as also envisaged by the Public Service Charter.

The increasing expressions of dissatisfaction by citizens in the form of petitions and service-delivery protests are not only about service delivery - they are also about the failure of public servants to remain accountable and responsive to the needs of the very people that they are meant to serve.

- Public servants are expected to use public resources effectively and economically, and services rendered to citizens should be without discrimination.

- The Public Service Charter calls for the setting up of service standards by departments for the services they render to the population. It is aimed at ensuring that citizens are able to hold the Public Service accountable and to encourage citizens to participate in their own development.

- Public servants are expected to be innovative and use public resources effectively and economically, and services rendered to citizens should be without discrimination. Innovation should be at the centre of service delivery to positively impact on the lives of all South Africans. It should be allowed to thrive within the public sector and that civil servants can no longer treat it as an “optional extra”, but must institutionalise it in order to deliver services better, faster and more efficiently.

It is also against this background that we take a dim view on the outcomes municipal audit results recently released by the Auditor-General for the 2018/19 financial year.

Although there are municipalities that consistently managed to achieve clean audit statuses, it is disturbing to note that there is an overall decline in audit results. This places a serious need on us public servants to ensure that we assist this sphere of Government, which is at the coalface of service delivery, to improve governance.

The fast-tracking of the promulgation of the Public Administration Management Act (PAMA) therefore becomes an urgent necessity.

We are therefore calling upon all civil servants to stand up and be counted so that they can be of service to the populace. We are not expecting them to be active only around this month, but throughout the year, 24-hours and seven days.

The Public Service Month serves as a reminder of what it means to serve communities and to also look at the impact the government has, especially around issues of service delivery. As part of the Public Service Month, public servants are expected to:

- Roll up their sleeves and spring-clean their service delivery points;
- Visit schools, hospitals, police stations, courts and many other government institutions, talk to citizens, mediate the delivery of services and getting things done;
- Unblock the bottlenecks and red-tape in the delivery of services;
- Ensure the systems and infrastructure are working and use public resources efficiently to the benefit of the citizens; and
- Recommit themselves to belong, to care and to serve the people.

Members of the public depend on us to render good quality services to them. As public servants, we often shoulder a lot of blame from the public, complaining that we do not do our jobs properly.

They also complain that we do not care, we are corrupt and not deserving the positions we occupy. As Public Service, we have a huge responsibility to ensure that we debunk all the myths and stereotypes that exist about us.

As this 6th Administration, we have set ourselves seven priorities, which are Economic Transformation; Education, Skills and Health; Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services; Spatial integration, human settlements and local government; Social cohesion and safe communities; A capable, ethical and developmental state; A better Africa and the World.

Building a capable developmental state requires public servants who are able to master the basics of Public Service and Administration. It also requires a social compact between the state and the people - one that

guarantees the uninhibited pursuit of the public good and optimal participation by an active citizenry in people-led growth and development initiatives.

At this juncture, it is important to note the recent incident in which a patient shot and injured a nurse before turning the gun on himself. It is important that in the Public Service, we ensure the safety of our patients and employees as they lead to disruption of services and sometimes litigations, which further drain the already stretched public coffers.

In that regard, the NDP highlights the need for well-run and effectively coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and capable of delivering consistently high-quality services, while prioritising the nation's developmental objectives.

To achieve the aspiration of a capable and developmental state, the country needs to upgrade skills and improve coordination. A professional Public Service is one where people are recruited and promoted on the basis of merit and potential, rather than connections.

We are ready to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution as it has the power to change the economy positively. We have to be aware that the technologies can have negative results if we do not think about how they can change us.

As indicated earlier on, as Government of the Republic of South Africa, we also promote tourism during the month of September, with the focus on the importance of tourism to the economy of South Africa. Tourism Month provides the tourism industry with an opportunity for a heightened focus on the importance of tourism and its symbiotic relationship with

local economic development and job creation, which is the most crucial aspect.

The 2017 World Economic Forum (WEF) Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report confirmed that the South African tourism economy is the most competitive in sub-Saharan Africa and is ranked 53 out of 136 countries.

We also use this as an opportunity to promote domestic tourism and create a culture of travelling amongst South Africans, as we encourage locals to travel domestically to get a better understanding of the affordable, exciting and world class attractions that are available on their own doorstep.

The focus is normally on lesser visited provinces, to give them an opportunity to showcase their tourism facilities and attractions. This year the focus will be on the Free State, with activities planned in Bloemfontein and Parys, in the Free State.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to encourage you to take time, make those short left sojourns and explore tourism sites around our country so that you experience what the country has to offer and in turn become tourism ambassadors.

Tourism currently sustains **700 000** direct jobs and **1,5 million** jobs directly and indirectly. Within the 2018/19 financial year alone, tourism created **3 000** jobs.

Through the Department of Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation, we will also be celebrating Heritage Month, where we will be recognising aspects of South African culture which are both tangible and intangible, such as music, performances, our historical inheritance, language, the food we eat as well as the popular memory.

In South Africa we have a variety of Heritage sites that are named after liberation struggle icons, like The Sol Plaatjie Municipality in the Northern Cape; The Nelson Mandela Museum in the Eastern Cape; Luthuli House in Gauteng; King Shaka International Airport in KwaZulu-Natal; Tshwane Municipality in Gauteng and Steve Biko Memorial in the Eastern Cape.

South Africa is also home to eight of the **981** World Heritage Sites, which are recognised by the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation as places of outstanding cultural and historical importance.

These sites are Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape, here in Limpopo; Robben Island in the Western Cape; Cradle of Humankind in Gauteng; the Cape Floral Region in both the Western and Eastern Cape; Vredefort Dome in the Free State; uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park in KwaZulu-Natal; Isimangaliso Wetlands Park in KwaZulu-Natal; Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape in the Northern Cape.

The sites offer a diversity and abundance of cultural and natural values that encapsulate the value systems of the country.

Our heritage gives us a sense of identity and belonging, while also opening opportunities in jobs and skills, providing platforms for performers, crafters and subsidiary industries. It is also important to

take advantage of our rich liberation heritage to draw visitors to South Africa. We must also protect our common heritage and advance a national heritage, which is inclusive of cultural diversity.

As an inclusive Government, we have also ensured that we use our heritage, given our past, to promote social cohesion, nation building and reconciliation. It therefore becomes important that we talk openly about all the places that make us a unique and proud country.

It is also important to salute all those who keep us safe, hence every year on the first Sunday of September the South African Police Services commemorates the men and women in blue who sacrificed and ultimately lost their lives in execution of their duties.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

September is also regarded as the Environment Month as part of the Integrated Government Programme. The NDP indicates that South Africa is not only a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions – it is also particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change on health, livelihoods, water and food, with a disproportionate impact on the poor, especially women and children.

While adapting to these changes, industries and households have to reduce their negative impact on the environment. This will require far-reaching changes to the way people live and work.

Protecting the environment, for instance through mainstreaming environment into development plans and implementing environmental

legislation such as the National Environmental Management Waste Act and other environmental measures, is important for human development, poverty reduction and long term economic growth.

As public servants we should know that environment plays an important role in the healthy living of human beings. It matters because it is the only home that humans have, and it provides air, food, and other needs. Humanity's entire life support system depends on the well-being of all the environmental factors, which also regulate air and climate.

Government, through the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, will further strengthen this Programme by raising awareness on the National Environmental Management Waste Act (2008). The awareness will be promoted through various activities, including a summit on Waste Management and Secondary Asbestos Remedial Plan and hosting of the International Coastal Clean-up Week on 16-21 September 2019 in KwaZulu-Natal.

The month of September therefore becomes one of the most important months on the South African Government calendar as there are various activities that give us an opportunity to serve our people, while showcasing our capabilities to the outside world.

It is crucial that we all work together as three spheres of Government towards a common goal of growing our economy, which is currently facing so many challenges and is the backbone of ensuring that we deliver good quality services to the people.

Over the past 25 years, as a country we have demonstrated so much potential and commitment to make Project South Africa a success. Let

us continue to work together so that we overcome whatever challenges that we have gone through over the past few years. It is possible.

Today's launch realises the directive given by the Joint Cabinet Committee on 13 August 2019 that all government programmes within the month of September must be integrated to maximise impact.

I urge and encourage all public servants to take full advantage of this integration by participating in all activities as outlined in the Programme.

In the near future, service delivery challenges will be a phenomenon of the past, Cabinet approved the new District Based Service Delivery Model, as an important innovation in the implementation of service-delivery programmes. The model will ensure coherence and integration in planning, budgeting and implementation of service delivery projects in all districts by all three spheres of government.

The President will be the champion of the model, supported by Deputy President and the entire Executive. Provincial Premiers and their Executive and local and district Mayors, together with their EXCO, will be part of the implementation of this district-based service delivery model.

This also an effort to integrate all our energy and resources in the provision of public service to our communities.

Join me in proudly saying our Public Service Value Statement, ***“We Belong, We Care, We Serve.”***

Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to take this opportunity and officially launch Public Service Month.

I thank you!