

Speech by Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba at the Opening of the RISIMA Housing EXPO,
The Ranch Resort, 18 September 2025

Programme Director
MEC for LEDET Mr Tshitereke Matibe
MMC for Housing in Polokwane Municipality
Chairperson of the LEDA Board Mr Chris Lithole
Chairperson of RISIMA Mr Charley Nkadimeng
Heads of Department
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning!

Today, we gather at the RISIMA Housing Expo in the heart of Polokwane, a vibrant show to both our traditions and our aspirations for a modern, inclusive future. We stand on sacred ground, where the spirit of our ancestors meets the ambitions of our children. It is here, amongst our people, that we find the embodiment of what it means to nurture homes, communities and dreams.

In traditional African societies, the concept of home was not merely a physical structure; it was a sanctuary of peace, a cradle for our children and a reflection of our collective identity. We understood that a home is built on more than bricks and mortar - it is built on a foundation of security, comfort and dignity. As the Freedom Charter boldly proclaims: "There shall be houses, security and comfort!" This conviction remains our guiding star, illuminating our path toward equitable housing for all.

As we embrace the modern economic realities that shape our lives today, we recognise that the matters of housing remain pivotal across our nation. Limpopo, predominantly rural in its identity, boasts an astonishing growth in urbanisation - over 90% of our settlements now reflect urban characteristics.

This transformation, however, does not mean we have solved all our housing challenges; rather, it opens new avenues for us to explore and innovate.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa enshrines the right of every citizen to adequate housing, an imperative that we take to heart as we align our efforts with the Housing Act of 1997, the National Development Plan 2030, and the Breaking New Ground Policy. These frameworks not only guide us, but they also empower us to build integrated, inclusive and sustainable human settlements. Through our commitment to these principles, we have seen our human settlements programme continually surpass its targets, attracting vital financial resources that further our mission.

Today, we celebrate RISIMA, a pivotal arm of the Limpopo Economic Development Agency (LEDA). RISIMA has stood as a beacon of hope for those who find themselves in housing limbo—those public servants who do not qualify for RDP housing yet are also not in a position to approach banks for financing. Over the years, RISIMA has exhibited consistent growth, sound financial management and a commitment to accountability

that earns its clean audits. This should be protected at all costs so that it doesn't fall in wrong hands.

We are still making an appeal to our partners in commercial banks to continue supporting us as we build this institution.

But our aspirations do not end here. RISIMA must grow and it must generate its own revenue to expand its mission - a mission that is vital in uplifting our people, especially public servants. RISIMA must boldly elevate its voice, reaching out to every corner of our province. It must welcome clients with open arms and promote the diverse services it offers.

As we reflect on our success, we recognise the potential for even greater achievements. The more we increase our customer base, the greater our access to capital will be. We need to diversify our offerings, moving beyond loans to include services like valuations, rental management, the Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) and even insurance.

Why not consider extending our credit offerings to encompass motor vehicles and contractor loans? We can become leaders in property management, housing development facilitation, and renewable energy.

To realise this vision, RISIMA must adopt a bold approach. We must step out of our comfort zones and aggressively pursue opportunities, reaching into every province and mobilizing funding in the market based on the strength of our balance sheet. If constraints exist, let us confront them. If policy and legislative adjustments are needed, we stand ready to carry those discussions forward.

Together, we will forge partnerships across the spectrum - government subsidies for low-income households, social and community housing projects, public-private collaborations that ensure developers, municipalities and financial institutions unite in building our future. Our empowerment programmes will continue to uplift local contractors, particularly youth- and women-owned businesses, igniting job creation and stimulating our local economies. Housing delivery isn't just about providing shelter; it is a vital thread in the fabric of economic inclusion.

As we embark on this journey together, let us carry the spirit of our ancestors with us, embracing the wisdom of our past while seizing the possibilities of our future. May our collective efforts create homes that reflect the dignity and pride of our people.

Thank you and let us move forward together in unity and purpose!