

REMARKS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE
HANDING OVER OF A HOUSE TO THE NETSHIONGOLWE FAMILY AT
HA-BEGWA VILLAGE, THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, VHEMBE
DISTRICT

17 OCTOBER 2025

Programme Director,

MEC for CoGHSTA, Mr Basikopo Makamu,

Executive Mayor of Vhembe District, Cllr Freda Nkondo,

Mayor of Thulamela Local Municipality, Cllr Sarah Rambuda,

Thovhele Gole Mphaphuli and members of the traditional leadership
present,

Councillors,

Faith-Based Organisations,

Members of the media,

Community members of Ha-Begwa,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Ndi Matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good morning, Goeie môre.

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of responsibility that we gather here today. We are here not merely to hand over a house, but to fulfil a constitutional and moral duty as government, to ensure that every South African has access to adequate shelter, protection, and dignity.

But beyond constitutional obligations, today is also a moment that touches our humanity and our conscience. Our Lord Jesus Christ once said in

Matthew 25: 40: “Whatever you do unto the least of my people, you do unto me.” Today, by standing with this family, we affirm a simple but profound truth that government exists to serve the people, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Programme Director, we are here to restore the dignity of the Netshiongolwe family, who endured challenges no family should ever face. Their two mud rondavels were destroyed by the devastating floods of 2018, leaving them homeless and exposed to the harsh conditions of nature.

We are so grateful that in the aftermath of that disaster, the municipality provided them with a tent as temporary relief. But as we know, tents are not homes. They are a stopgap, not a permanent solution. For years, this family endured cold winters, rainy nights, and health risks, five children sleeping in a crumbling rondavel while parents struggled to keep warm in a leaking tent.

As that was not enough, in 2024, another storm struck Ha-Begwa, compounding their hardship. The winds tore through the village and tested their resilience once more. Yet, even at their lowest moment, hope found its way. The Department of CoGHSTA, through its Disaster Management Unit, intervened and provided temporary relief in the form of a zinc shelter, better than a tent, but still not a home.

Today, that long journey of waiting ends. The Netshiongolwe family walks into a decent, safe, dignified home, fully furnished and built with love, care, and purpose. This house is not a gift; it is a human right fulfilled.

Ladies and gentlemen, housing is the foundation of family life. It is where children study, grow, and dream. It is where families build their memories. A

home is a sanctuary of dignity and identity. That is why this government continues to invest in human settlements because housing is not just a shelter; it is a tool of social transformation and economic empowerment.

As the 7th Administration, we remain committed to Breaking New Ground in the delivery of integrated human settlements. Our vision is not just to build houses but to build communities connected to basic services, roads, water, electricity, and economic opportunities.

Under the leadership of MEC Basikopo Makamu and the COGHSTA team, we are making steady progress. Out of the 4,555 housing units targeted last year, 4,469 were successfully completed, including 54 units allocated to our military veterans, our heroes who defended this nation.

This strong performance earned the department an additional R500 million allocations over the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years. The recent Stats SA report also confirms that Limpopo now performs better than any other province in the delivery of formal dwellings. This is proof that we are not making promises, but we are delivering.

However, Programme Director, as we celebrate today, we must also confront the reality that there are still many families in our province who are waiting for adequate housing. That is why we will not rest. Through CoGHSTA, our municipalities, and working with traditional leaders, we will continue to prioritise vulnerable groups, the elderly, people living with disabilities, child-headed households, victims of disasters, and military veterans.

We are also addressing related challenges here in Ha-Begwa and across the Vhembe District. One of these challenges is access to clean water. The water infrastructure in this region needs to be revamped.

To confront this, we have established a Water War Room in Vhembe that brings together engineers, planners, municipalities, and water authorities to accelerate solutions. Water is life, and we are determined to resolve these long-standing challenges.

Before I conclude, allow me to make a call to action. The Government cannot do this work alone. The need for dignified housing is still great. I call upon the private sector, business community, banks, construction companies, churches, NGOs, and all social partners, let us join hands. Let us adopt families in need. Let us build homes together. When we restore the dignity of one family, we strengthen the foundation of our nation.

Nga Tshivenda: Muthu ndi muthu nga vhanwe, let us build a South Africa where no child grows up without a home and no family is forgotten.

To the Netshiongolwe family, today marks a fresh beginning. This home is a symbol of hope and resilience. We urge you to take care of it and let it be a blessing to your children and future generations. May this be a place of peace, love, and progress. May joy never depart from this home. And may God continue to protect you.

I thank you.