

Budget Review

2003

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Foreword

South Africa enters 2003 with considerable grounds for optimism – a strengthening currency, robust investment growth, rising business confidence, a moderate recovery in employment, and an upward growth trend set to continue into the next three years, despite adverse global conditions.

The 2003 Budget, our tenth presented to a democratically elected Parliament, reaffirms our commitment to realising the benefits of the freedoms won in 1994 – a commitment made manifest in our investment in the delivery of social services and in both, the productive capacity of its peoples and the economy. Our driving force is respect for the poorest of the poor and the claim of all South Africans to their social and economic rights.

Fiscal policy remains expansionary, within the sustainable framework provided by sound management of the state finances, and stewardship of the economy. Significant allocations are made to infrastructure development and to social transfers targeted at those most at risk. While we open the economy to the benefits of global integration, our attention remains firmly fixed on measures to address the legacy of poverty and inequality that remain deeply entrenched in South Africa.

The Growth and Development Summit planned for later this year provides a forum for strengthening strategies that seek to co-ordinate the instruments and capacities at the disposal of the South African people to achieve our stated goal of a better life for all. The plans and projections set out in the 2003 Budget are one important aspect of Government's contribution to this dialogue.

The compilation of the Budget requires the dedicated efforts of Treasury professionals, and colleagues across national and provincial departments, in the South African Revenue Service, Statistics South Africa, the Financial and Fiscal Commission and the SA Reserve Bank. A big word of thanks to them and their families, and to the Ministers' Committee on the Budget, the Budget Council and to Cabinet for their leadership.



Maria Ramos
Director-General: National Treasury

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