



NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

BUDGET APPROPRIATION SPEECH 2024



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**ADDRESS TO THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE ON THE OCCASION OF
TABLING OF THE NORTHERN CAPE SECOND ADJUSTMENT APPROPRIATION
BILL, 2024 AND THE 2024 NORTHERN CAPE MAIN APPROPRIATION BILL, BY
MR A VOSLOO (MPL), MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM**

- **HONOURABLE SPEAKER & DEPUTY SPEAKER,**
- **HONOURABLE PREMIER, DR ZAMANI SAUL,**
- **HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,**
- **HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE,**
- **EXECUTIVE MAYORS, MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS,**
- **DIRECTOR-GENERAL, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS & MUNICIPAL
MANAGERS,**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,**
- **COMRADES AND FRIENDS,**
- **MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA,**
- **OUR LISTENERS AND VIEWERS,**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

Goeie môre

Introduction

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, it is with great sense of humility that I stand here to deliver the last Budget Speech of the 6th Administration under the leadership of the **Honourable Premier**, Dr Zamani Saul, and to further provide account of our fiscal choices since we assumed office in 2019, but most importantly to provide details on the 2024 Medium Term Expenditure Framework for the province.

Honourable Speaker, as we are about to conclude our term, allow me to briefly reflect on what we inherited as the 6th Administration. We inherited provincial debt of about **R850 million**, which we reduced by **R500 million** with the 2021 Finance Bill. This more than halved the provincial debt at the time to about **R350 million**.

Honourable Speaker, as the 6th Administration, we were most unfortunate as we had to contend with a huge reduction of about **R5.2 billion** when we took office and a further reduction of **R1.6 billion** in the 2024 MTEF as we close off this term. We are however not complaining, but merely stating facts. These huge reductions did not deter us as the collective of the 6th Administration. We created opportunities amidst all these fiscal challenges with our ambition firmly embedded in our Vision of a Modern, Growing and Successful province.

Honourable Speaker, due to the energy, imagination and ambition of the Premier, today the Northern Cape has a solid footprint in the national discourse. We are leading in the green energy space, with the Northern Cape accounting for over 50 per cent of all Independent Power Producers (IPPs) in operation; the Namakwa Special Economic Zone has been designated by Cabinet; we have developed a green hydrogen master plan for the province; to mention just but a few. We have furthermore significantly improved our Inter-Governmental Relations collaboration and are in constant engagements with various sectors at a national level in pursuit of mobilising additional funding for the province.

Honourable Speaker, as a direct consequence of these efforts, the province successfully concluded a loan agreement with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), amounting to **R600 million**, in line with the Borrowing Powers of

Provincial Governments Act, No 48 of 1996. This is in an effort to drastically reduce our housing backlog. The province will contribute an additional amount of **R400 million** to bring the total project cost to **R1 billion**. This will be the very first of its kind in the country. We are made to understand that other provinces are following suit. We are now trendsetters and others are following. Indeed, Honourable Premier, this is the legacy that you spearheaded as the captain of this ship – this is leading with ambition and imagination.

Honourable Speaker, whilst we receive the smallest share of the nationally collected revenue, our ambition is not confined to our limitations but rather innovation and ambition as we turn policy into action.

This reminds me of what Nelson Henderson said and I quote:

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit”

Indeed, the people of the Northern Cape will after 29 May 2024, continue to benefit from your leadership and efforts, **Honourable Premier**. We have articulated a clear vision and coupled with that, a developmental road map that will change our economic landscape forever.

Honourable Speaker, let me at this point also provide a summary of the aggregates and rationale underpinning this fiscal framework for the 2024 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). The transfers to the province in respect of the Provincial Equitable Share (PES) reflect both fiscal consolidation reductions and additional resources to cater mainly for the carry-through effects of the 2023 wage agreement, more specifically focussing on the Health and Education sectors.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, as a result of weak economic performance coupled with a high debt burden in a muted economic growth environment, tough decisions had to be made to balance the budget. It must also be noted that in spite of these huge reductions, both National and Provincial Treasuries provided some cushioning to ensure sustainability in the delivery of core services.

Honourable Speaker, the spending reductions announced in November 2023 during the Provincial Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (PMTBPS) have now materialised and form part of this budget framework for the 2024 MTEF period. Fiscal Consolidation and reducing the fiscal deficit remain key features of this fiscal framework which should result in a sustained reduction of debt by the end of the decade.

The province will lose an amount of **R525 million** in the 2024/25 financial year which totals to **R1.6 billion** over the next three years due to fiscal consolidation. This is attributed to national government efforts to reign in and stabilise debt which is projected to reach 74.2 percent of GDP in the 2024/25 financial year. Despite this scenario, this debt outlook is a much improved position compared to the 2023 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) where it peaked at 75.8 percent of GDP.

Honourable Speaker, we have repeatedly indicated that these budget cuts must have minimal impact on the delivery of services in the Health and Education sectors. Having said this, we also demand a commitment from these two departments to deal decisively with fiscal leakages and to address the inefficiencies in the system that we know runs into significant amounts of money. If not Honourable Members, this cushioning will not help much.

On a more positive note, **Honourable Speaker**, the province received additional allocations amounting to **R873 million** in the first year of the 2024 MTEF and R2.7 billion over the next three years, specifically to deal with the carry through obligations of the wage agreement.

Honourable Speaker, we have identified the following three areas that should help the province deal with any anticipated fiscal shocks in the near future:

- Building adequate fiscal buffers;
- Improving and optimising own revenue; and
- Leveraging more on increasing revenue by generating interest.

Honourable Members, this will result in a stable fiscal framework that will ignite pivotal enablers towards funding our key priorities in the province.

Honourable Speaker, since the beginning of the 6th Administration, the province has witnessed the remarkable journey in provincial audit outcomes transitioning from the two (2) clean audit opinions in 2019 to a remarkable five (5) in 2023. This improvement is a testimony to our unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. notably is the decline in qualified opinions which underscores our dedication to addressing previous deficiencies and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. Moreover, the absence of disclaimer opinions highlights our diligence in providing comprehensive and reliable financial information. As we celebrate this achievement, we remain steadfast in our pursuit for excellence knowing that sustained success requires ongoing vigilance and dedicated efforts in all aspects of our processes.

Economic Outlook

Honourable Speaker, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects that global output will grow by 3.1 percent in the current year, which is the same as the estimated growth of 2023. Global economic growth is projected to remain fairly constant in 2025 at 3.2 percent. The economic growth rate of Emerging market and developing economies is expected to remain above that of Advanced economies with estimated growth of 4.1 percent in 2023 and growth projections of 4.1 and 4.2 percent in 2024 and 2025 respectively, opposed to the estimated 1.6 percent that the Advanced economies grew by in 2023 with forecasted growth of 1.5 and 1.8 percent in 2024 and 2025 respectively.

Honourable Speaker, if we focus on the greater geographical area of Sub-Saharan Africa, which is closer to home, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates growth of 3.3 percent in 2023, with projected growth of 3.8 percent in 2024 and 4.1 percent in 2025. The South African economy is unfortunately experiencing lower growth rates than Sub-Saharan Africa, with estimated growth of 0.6 percent in 2023 and growth projections of 1.3 percent in 2024, 1.6 percent in 2025 and 1.8 percent in 2026 according to National Treasury forecasts. High living costs, widespread power cuts together with operational and maintenance failures in freight rail and at ports led to the low growth estimate for 2023.

Honourable Speaker, according to the National Treasury, inflation is expected to slow down from an estimated 6.0 percent in 2023 to 4.9 percent in 2024 and 4.6 percent in both 2025 and 2026 in light of the continued decline in fuel and food inflation.

Honourable Speaker, when considering our unemployment levels, we, as a country, find ourselves in a slightly better position with the unemployment rate 0.6 of a percentage point lower than a year ago at 32.1 percent. The number of employed people increased by 789 000 while the unemployed increased by 142 000. On a quarterly basis, we are however a little worse off, with the unemployment rate increasing by 0.2 of a percentage point – this is accompanied by a 22 000 person reduction in the number of employed people together with an increase of 46 000 people who were unemployed.

Honourable Speaker, although we as a province are still better off than the country as a whole, provincial employment deteriorated in the fourth quarter of 2023, with the unemployment rate increasing by 0.6 of a percentage point from the previous quarter and 4.8 percentage points from the fourth quarter of 2022. The latest unemployment rate of the province stood at 26.9 percent, compared to the 29.4 percent. Annually, about 9 000 jobs were lost, accompanied by an increase of 25 000 in the unemployed population. From the previous quarter, a total of about 2 000 jobs were lost, while the number of unemployed people increased by approximately 3 000.

Honourable Speaker, community and social services remained the largest employing industry in the province, providing about a quarter of the employed people in the Northern Cape with employment. This was followed by agriculture, employing almost 18 percent. Compared to the previous quarter, the province gained jobs in agriculture, mining, trade, transport and finance, while the remaining four industries shed jobs.

Municipal Finance

Madam Speaker, we need to accept that when it comes to the local sphere of government, there are no easy solutions and the current economic challenges are not helping either. The number of municipalities that failed to comply with the submission timelines for annual financial statements as prescribed by the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) is concerning.

For the 2022/23 financial year, 6 out of 31 municipalities failed to submit their annual financial statements on time (i.e. by 31 August 2023). Furthermore, the financial statements submitted by some municipalities are of poor quality and often subjected to material adjustments, in some cases with no supporting documentation. This is evident given the alarming number of municipalities in the province who have remained stagnant on Qualified and Disclaimer audit opinions for a number of years. Consequently, this gross non-compliance does not only impact on the ability of municipalities to perform their functions within the accountability framework, but also on the oversight role of Provincial Treasury as well as the ability of the Office of the Auditor General to exercise its Constitutional mandate.

Honourable Speaker, this perpetual behaviour has prompted Provincial Treasury to enforce the preparation of quarterly interim financial statements by all municipalities in the Province, to ensure preparedness, and proactively correct all errors/misstatements. This move will assist in the timely submission of quality Annual Financial Statements at financial year-end and reduce the high reliance on consultants accordingly.

Honourable Speaker, taking the queue from the announcement of the **R2 billion** conditional grant funding for smart pre-paid meters in municipalities as announced in the 2024 budget speech, the province will augment this initiative from National Treasury through a revenue enhancement project that will allow municipalities to improve internal controls to enhance revenue.

Honourable Speaker, the anticipated expansion of mining activities in the Northern Cape will prompt municipalities' service delivery and budget implementation plans to be responsive to the expected growth in the affected towns. Therefore, increased emphasis will be placed on tightening the municipal budget adoption processes, increasing oversight on budget implementation and ensuring that municipalities have adequately provided for infrastructure upgrades. The province will aggressively support municipalities that have adopted unfunded budgets with the implementation of budget funding plans to promote compliance with MFMA.

Honourable Speaker, the work has started whereupon after a long time all municipalities were successfully engaged on mid-year budget and performance. We

are confident that these engagements have given us a clear picture of where our municipalities are at and which areas collaborative support can be channelled to.

Honourable Speaker, Provincial Treasury has identified gaps on contract management, bid committees, and Framework for Infrastructure Delivery Procurement Management (FIDPM). Unfortunately, these gaps result in increased irregular and negative audit opinions. To address these, training sessions will be rolled out to relevant municipalities to build capacity.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, as part of our ongoing commitment to good governance, we have heeded the need to strengthen municipalities on Financial Recovery Services (FRPs) by supporting the compilation of new Financial Recovery Plans and supporting dysfunctional municipalities with Early Warning Systems and assessment of financial management issues. The organisational structure at Treasury has been revised to give effect to this much needed proactive approach.

The province has a number of dysfunctional municipalities and currently has 7 municipalities with financial recovery plans. We are working tirelessly on planned awareness and roadshows to these municipalities regarding the role that municipal leadership must play. We encourage taking ownership and institutionalising FRPs to improve overall efficiency and ensure proper reporting and accountability.

Procurement

Honourable Speaker, this august house will recall that the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) ruled in November 2020 that the Preferential Procurement Regulations of 2017, promulgated by the Minister of Finance, were inconsistent with the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act 5 (Procurement Act) and were thus invalid. The SCA suspended the invalidity of the regulations for 12 months, to provide the Minister with adequate time to make new regulations. The Minister subsequently released the revised Preferential Procurement Regulations 2022 which is currently still intact at this very moment.

Honourable Speaker, the National Treasury has embarked on a process to develop the Procurement Bill to serve as replacement for the Preferential Procurement Policy

Framework Act (PPPFA), 5 of 2000 with the aim to consolidate fragmented procurement regulation.

Honourable Speaker, the Bill was introduced in the National Assembly on 30 June 2023 and passed by the National Assembly in December 2023. The aim of the Bill is to regulate public procurement and to prescribe a framework within which preferential procurement must be implemented. It is important and necessary, considering the history of South Africa and the developments after the Constitution took effect, to have legislation that creates a single framework regulating procurement, in line with all applicable stipulations of the Constitution and that effectively addresses the socio-economic challenges of South Africa. The Public Procurement Bill is underpinned by constitutional imperatives and dedicates an entire chapter to preferential procurement policy.

The Office of the Procurement Officer at National Treasury is currently conducting parliamentary roadshows to clarify the comments received and how these were handled.

Honourable Speaker, once the Public Procurement Act is finally promulgated after all processes have been concluded, the Bill will assist greatly in implementing procurement strategies that will advance the interest of the people of the Northern Cape. The Bill will emphasize transparency in the procurement process, fair competition and support for Small and Medium Enterprises and historically disadvantaged individuals. The Bill will furthermore facilitate achievement of preferential procurement targets from designated groups including women, youth and people living with disabilities at a provincial and regional level.

Budget Aggregates: 2024 MTEF

Honourable Speaker, over the medium term, the province has a total budget of **R68.1 billion**. This can be broken down into **R22.5 billion** in the 2024/25 financial year, **R22.3 billion** in the 2025/26 financial year and **R23.3 billion** in the 2026/27 financial year. The budget grows at an average rate of 1.8 percent over this three-year period.

Direct national transfers remain the largest source of funding for the province, amounting to a total of **R65.9 billion** or 96.7 percent of the provincial budget in the

coming three years. This amount is split into equitable share of **R50.8 billion**, or 74.6 percent, and conditional grants of **R15.1 billion**, or 22.1 percent.

An amount of **R600 million** is provided for by means of provincial own funding through pledging. I will provide more information on this later on. Own revenue makes up the remaining 2.4 percent of the provincial funds at an amount of **R1.6 billion** over the next three years.

Honourable Speaker, the original baseline of the province on the provincial equitable share amounted to **R49.4 billion** over the 2024 Medium Term Expenditure Framework. This increased by **R315.5 million** due to the impact of new data updates to the formula by which it is calculated.

Honourable Speaker, despite the budget constraints that have become such a permanent feature of the fiscal framework, the equitable share further increased by **R2.8 billion** for compensation related matters, mostly in respect of employees employed in Education and Health. There was however a fiscal consolidation reduction of **R1.7 billion** and a shift of **R105.4 million** from equitable share to conditional grants to provide for employees who are employed within conditional grants. The netto effect of these adjustments is an additional **R1 billion**. This brings the revised equitable share allocation for the province to the **R50.8 billion** over the 2024 MTEF of which **R16.1 billion** is in 2024/25, **R16.9 billion** in 2025/26 and **R17.7 billion** in the 2026/27 financial year.

Honourable Speaker, after taking these adjustments into consideration, the average growth of the equitable share of the province is 4.8 percent over the 2024 MTEF. Conditional grants grow by an average of -1.9 percent over the MTEF due to negative growth of 7.3 percent in the 2025/26 financial year followed by positive growth of 3.6 percent in the 2026/27 financial year. The provincial own revenue is estimated to grow by an average rate of 2.9 percent over the medium term.

Honourable Speaker, Provincial Treasury remains committed to assist departments to implement the Provincial Revenue Enhancement Strategy to fast-track and optimise own revenue collection in the province. The province will take over the motor vehicle licence renewal function once the contract with the South African Post Office (SAPO) comes to an end. The Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison is allocated

additional resources in this framework to build adequate internal capacity in anticipation of this development.

Infrastructure

Honourable Speaker, as Provincial Administration, we cannot over emphasise that infrastructure remains a catalyst to grow the provincial economy and we will therefore continue to provide and plan for the effective delivery and management of our infrastructure, to ensure that our service delivery objectives are realised.

The total provincial infrastructure allocation for the 2024 MTEF amounts to **R8.8 billion**, of which **R3.2 billion** is appropriated for the 2024/25 financial year, **R2.8 billion** for 2025/26 and **R2.9 billion** for 2026/27.

Honourable Members, you may notice that the outer years reflect a decline in allocation, however this is due to the Performance Based Incentive Grant System (PBIGS) processes that allow Education and Health to access additional funding when they perform well in infrastructure reporting and overall achievement.

Honourable Speaker, the Budget Facilities for Infrastructure (BFI) will remain a source to augment our infrastructure budget, which we will utilise more effectively to ensure that our applications make it through the approval process. New reforms in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Framework space would further allow us to leverage private sector funding in the delivery and management of infrastructure in the province. In addition, the province has been the first in the country to venture into the newly introduced frontloading and/ or pledging reforms. This has realised an allocation of **R600 million** towards addressing the backlogs in the housing sector with the construction of 2 500 houses in the 2024/25 financial year, and with the project management team from the DBSA and technical officials in the province, we are confident that we will be able to deliver on this target. As I indicated, the province will contribute an additional **R400 million** to bring the total project cost to **R1 billion**.

Honourable Speaker, it is envisaged that through the portfolio of projects identified by our infrastructure sector in the province, we will continue to contribute to job creation and the socio-economic upliftment of our people.

2024 MTEF Allocations

Honourable Speaker, as I alluded to earlier, the provincial budget has been cut by **R1.7 billion** as a result of fiscal consolidation. To cushion departments against this, the province made **R840.2 million** available over the next three years, which has been allocated in order to stabilise our provincial public finances, thereby lessening fiscal risks to the departments, encouraging provincial economic growth, as well as providing support to the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Honourable Speaker, our total consolidated spending is expected to increase from **R22.2 billion** in 2024/25 to **R22.5 billion** in 2026/27 at an average growth of 0.8 per cent, with conditional grants projected at **R15.1 billion** over the MTEF.

Social sector

Honourable Speaker, the social sector continues to drive spending in that **R49.7 billion** or 75 percent of the budget is allocated to social sector departments over the MTEF. This is in line with the 6th Administration's apex priorities to expand quality of and access to education and skills development, moving towards universal health coverage and mainstreaming gender, empowerment of youth and persons with disabilities. Included in this allocation is an amount of **R1.5 billion** to cover the carry-through cost in respect of the wage agreement.

Honourable Speaker, Education is allocated **R25.3 billion** over the 2024 MTEF of which **R3.1 billion** is in respect of conditional grants and **R741 million** is in respect of the carry-through cost of the wage agreement.

Our intervention in Education continues into the medium term and to this end, we make available an amount of **R90 million** for the software online system specifically for the Afrikaans version for grades 10,11 and 12. Furthermore, an amount of **R60 million** is also set aside to assist with the continuation of our matric intervention programmes.

Over the next three years, **R20 billion** is allocated to the Department of Health. **R5.7 billion** is in respect of conditional grants, while **R657 million** will cover the carry-through cost of the wage agreement.

In our pursuit of ensuring that there is provision for comprehensive social protection services against vulnerability and poverty, while creating an enabling environment for sustainable development, an amount of **R3.1 billion** has been allocated to the Department of Social Development over the MTEF.

Sport, Arts and Culture is allocated **R1.3 billion** over the 2024 MTEF, of which R565 million is in respect of Community Library Services Grant to enable our communities to gain access to knowledge and information to help them to improve their socio-economic status.

Economic Sector

Honourable Speaker, an urgent priority of the government, is to safeguard positive economic growth that will inspire Small Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) development and stimulate equitable and inclusive growth, while providing further opportunities for employment, particularly for women, youth and people living with disabilities.

In order for us to achieve this, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism is allocated **R1.1 billion** over the 2024 MTEF. For the 2024/25 financial year, an amount of **R10.5 million** is allocated to provide support to the construction company, while **R15 million** is made available to provide for provincial economic recovery initiatives.

An amount of **R6 billion** is allocated over the next three years to the Department of Roads and Public Works. We continue with our efforts to improve the state of our provincial roads, and as such **R3.8 billion** is in respect of roads maintenance.

Honourable Speaker, the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Land Reform and Rural Development has been allocated **R2.3 billion** over the MTEF, of which **R395 million** will provide agricultural support to land and agrarian reform projects, which contributes towards food security and job creation and **R3.5 million** is allocated towards the cleaning and greening programme. This is a national call from the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, with the goal of achieving environmental sustainability and protection.

Honourable Speaker, we continue to build on the work that we have previously done in creating sustainable human settlements and refining the quality of life for all households in the province. To achieve this, an amount of **R3.2 billion** is allocated to the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs over the MTEF.

Honourable Members, we are serious in reducing the housing backlog in the province. Let me first indicate that the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs is administering the **R600 million** loan – that I previously referred to as pledging – secured by the province towards the construction of houses in all districts across the province. **Honourable Members**, we are adding an additional amount of **R100 million** from our own revenue towards provincial housing projects.

Honourable Speaker, whilst the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs will be responsible for the capital portion of this loan using future Human Settlement Development Grant, the Northern Cape Provincial Treasury will service the interest payments towards this loan.

Governance Sector

The Office of the Premier has been allocated **R950 million** over the next three years, of which **R32.3 million** will provide for the operational shortfall in goods and services and **R10 million** is allocated towards the communication strategy to improve our communication capabilities and bring government services and information closer to our people.

Honourable Speaker, over the next three years, Provincial Treasury will receive **R1.1 billion**. Of an amount of **R47 million** that has been allocated in the 2024/25 financial year, **R32 million** will cover the interest on the loan in respect of the Human Settlement Development Grant loan repayment and **R15 million** is allocated for the project management technical support between the Development Bank of Southern Africa and Provincial Treasury. It is in an effort to improve our project management and monitoring capacity that this amount is allocated, which will assist the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional affairs with project execution, management, monitoring and reporting.

Over the next three years, the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison will receive **R1.1 billion** of which R218 million is in respect of the Public Transport Operations Grant to assist commuter bus service and to ensure that the province meet its contractual obligations and provide services efficiently. An additional amount of **R10 million** is set aside to provide for the absorption of new traffic officers who will complete their training in December 2024.

Honourable Speaker, given that we are at the end of our term as the 6th Parliament, we are earmarking the baseline for the 2024/25 financial year in respect of the party political funding to be dispensed in April and May to assist the political parties represented in the Legislature with costs associated with the elections. Honourable Members, what this means is that the Provincial Treasury will make available a new baseline for the 7th Parliament based on the parties that will be represented in the Legislature.

Honourable Speaker, we have also made adequate provision in the framework to assist the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison to take over the motor vehicle licence renewal function from the South African Post Office upon expiry of the contract later this year.

Honourable Speaker and Members, I now turn your attention to the Northern Cape Second Adjustment Appropriation Bill, 2024

Honourable Speaker, the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (merSETA) entered into a partnership with the Office of the Premier on behalf of the provincial government to upskill young people in the manufacturing, engineering services and building. In line with this agreement, an amount of R2.3 million is made available in the 2023/24 financial year towards this priority.

Conclusion

Honourable Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying the following: we have set the agenda, the blueprint for our developmental landscape has taken national stage, we have made various commitments, of which some were met and others recorded significant progress, whilst a few are taking traction now. **Honourable Speaker**,

opportunities are in abundance and the foundation is firmly laid for this province to thrive.

Honourable Speaker, the hard work has been done, all that we need to do now as this collective, is to take this blueprint forward and change our fortunes forever as the people of the Northern Cape.

At this point, let me once more take this opportunity to express our greatest appreciation as the Treasury Team to the **Honourable Premier**, Dr Saul for his unwavering support during the past years. Myself, together with Cabinet Colleagues, have been fortunate enough to enjoy the front seat and actively witness firsthand your consistent daily commitment to service the people of the Northern Cape. We can rightly claim that the Tinswhalos of the Northern Cape are in safe hands under your leadership Honourable Premier!!!

It is only through this support and the Treasury Committee and Executive Council's appreciation of the difficult and sometimes painful decisions that we had to make that we leave this Administration in a much better position compared to what we inherited.

To the Portfolio Committee on Finance, as well as SCOPA, we say it was not an easy path. Your in-depth understanding of the sector and uncomfortable questions kept us on our toes. Indeed, this is the epitome of our democratic principles to enhance transparency and accountability.

Once again to the Treasury Team led by Dr Gasela, I say, continue to provide leadership to the province and remain steadfast in fulfilling your fiduciary responsibilities. Last but not least, to the Ministerial staff, thank you for your support and to my family, I am indebted to you for your continued support and understanding. It made a huge difference to me.

At a personal level, this has been a remarkable journey for me, sometimes painful and sad, but the grace and mercy of God sustained me and my family. A special word of gratitude and appreciation goes to my three girls, and broader family for their warm support over the last three years. I am forever indebted to you.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, I now table the following documents for consideration by this House:

- *The Northern Cape Main Appropriation Bill, 2024 MTEF;*
- *The Northern Cape Second Adjustment Appropriation Bill, 2024;*
- *The Northern Cape Estimates of Provincial Revenue and Expenditure (EPRE) 2024 MTEF;*
- *The Northern Cape Capital Estimates of Provincial Expenditure for the 2024 MTEF; and*
- *The Northern Cape Socio-Economic Review 2024.*

“ONS KOM TERUG” in the 7th Administration to build on the good work done over the last 30 years!!

I thank you.



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