



**MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, MR THABANG  
MAKWETLA ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES BUDGET (VOTE 18)  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, CAPE TOWN  
20 MAY 2015**

Honourable Chairperson of the House,

Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Honourable

Advocate Michael Masutha,

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Distinguished guests in the Public Gallery,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

## **Introduction**

The debate this afternoon on vote 18 seeks to reaffirm our commitment as the ANC led Government that we will continue to strive for the realisation of the South African dream as eloquently articulated in the renowned Freedom Charter which, to quote the inspirational legend of South Africa's Freedom struggle, Walter Max Sisulu, was adopted by *"the most historic multiracial assembly (ever in SA), based on the demands of the people throughout the land"*.

*"Whilst we made progress in transforming the state in terms of its representativity, orientation and its role,"* argues the ANC in its strategy and tactics document, adopted in Mangaung, *"We continue to have challenges of state capacity, strategic coherence, the orientation of the public service and the capacity to effectively implement policies of change and monitor and evaluate such implementation, thus impacting on our ability to decisively effect broader, social and economic transformation."*, unquote.

An ongoing priority of the Department of Correctional Services which will characterize its work over this Medium Term Strategic Framework period, is the endeavour to

realize the Vision of the White Paper on Corrections as adopted in 2005.

This new vision advocates for the positioning of the Department as an establishment of centres for rehabilitation, community corrections and the successful reintegration of ex-offenders back into their communities.

In the intervening period the department has made courageous efforts to strengthen strategies to -:

- i. break the cycle of crime;
- ii. Strengthen security risk-management
- iii. Provide an environment for controlled and phased rehabilitation endeavors;
- iv. Provide guidance and support to offenders within the community;
- v. Provide corrective and development opportunities to offenders;
- vi. Enhance the productive capacity of offenders;
- vii. Promote healthy family relations;
- viii. Assert discipline within the correctional centre environment; among others.

As the preamble to the White Paper correctly and patiently explains, *'the main challenge of the Department of Correctional Services is to translate the vision of the white Paper on Corrections into operational activities, pertinent financial programmes that are appropriately financed'*. This is critical work in progress as the department continues to fine-tune these programmes, and develop a structure that is fit-for-purpose but which is also appropriately funded. The current budgets for rehabilitation and community corrections and reintegration are still woefully inadequate.

## **1. Information management systems**

Honourable Members,

One common impediment to attaining efficient business management in all organizations, is the absence of requisite information management systems. The Department of Correctional services is one of the relatively big entities within our government administration. By its very nature, because it deals with human lives and safety and security, its business relies on volumes of information which must be reliable, accurate and available in real time for decision-making.

The department has identified the urgent need in this financial year to prioritize among its support processes, the design and deployment of smart technologies for its information management systems. At a push of a button we must be able to establish as to which township in Soweto has the biggest number of inmates in our prison, the categories of crimes they have been sentenced for, their age profile and the period in which those crimes were committed. This will go a long way in assisting partnerships in crime prevention and community corrections.

## **2. Re-engineering remand detention**

Honourable Members,

At the top of our intra-department business value chain resides the Remand Detention function. One of the key indicators of the efficiency of the criminal justice system is the proportion of remand detainees to sentenced offenders. Experts acknowledge that when the ratio of remand detainees, versus those serving sentences is high, the poorer is the functionality of the criminal justice system. In this regard South Africa is on the right track, with remand detainees constituting 27% of the 159 163

inmates in our custody, which is below the global average of 32%.

With the resources constraints at hand, the department has commenced the implementation of the policy dictates of the White paper on Remand Detention Management.

The department has commenced the roll out of a special uniform for Remand Detainees.

Thus far 56 remand detention facilities have the requisite uniform. This initiative is the first in the history of corrections in Southern Africa.

The remaining 59 remand detention facilities will receive uniforms during the three-year rollout programme to ensure that security risks and hygiene challenges are eliminated.

The Department has also introduced a risk classification tool in selected remand centres. The results of risk profiling remand detainees will assist in ensuring that the detainees are properly housed and that vulnerable persons are better protected.

Furthermore, we have great appreciation for the continuous reduction of remand detainees who have spent two years or more awaiting trial due to regular referrals to the Judiciary.

### **3. Taking safe and humane custody to the next level**

Chairperson,

Our mandate is to ensure safe and humane custody for inmates. There are clear indicators for our success or failure in this regard. Rates of overcrowding, unnatural deaths, violence including gang activities and escapes are some of these indicators.

### **4. Facilities**

One important area of our work which is crucial in determining the incarceration landscape in South Africa because it decides the extent to which human rights of inmates can be observed and the extent to which rehabilitation and correctional intervention are realised, is infrastructure roll-out. Infrastructure delivery is decisive in ameliorating chronic over-crowding in our correctional centres. Regrettably this programme continues to underperform due to a malady of managerial deficiencies

and irregularities straddling both the Department of Public Works as the implementing department, and the Department of Correctional Services as the customer.

Six contractors appointed by the Department of Public Works on major Department of Correctional Services projects have been liquidated since 2012 causing massive delays and cost overruns affecting no less than 1,366 bed spaces, which by now should have been at the disposal of the Department of Correctional Services;

(ii) contractor competence was in certain instances overlooked in favour of lowest bidders in spite of the complexity of the projects;

(iii) several large contracts were awarded to the same contractors;

(iv) lengthy implementation timelines wherein projects initiated in 2009, in some cases, are still not implemented in 2015,

(v) Tenders are allowed to lapse, in some instances twice or thrice, etc...

Chairperson, the South African dream will not lie in ruins. We dared to dream because as a people we are a product of a protracted, tenacious and selfless struggle for freedom. We

were never delusional, we knew too well that the march to conquer the next summit ahead, will be just as tough and brutal as the one before.

Ever so often the detractors of the governing party opportunistically seek to blame every wrong in our government bureaucracy on the ANC. Please indulge me to read an extract from its seminal document, the Strategy and Tactics of the ANC adopted in Mangaung, about the ANC's view on the matter, and I quote, *“poor conduct on the part of sections of the ANC ..., including new expressions of corruption and greed, which not only result in the wastage of public resources, but also undermine confidence of our people in government and in our movement must be uprooted.”*

We intend to build internal capacity to manage our capital expenditure programmes efficiently. Both head office and the regions will receive additional human capital to better manage existing partnerships, build new ones while also planning better to address our immediate, medium and long term infrastructure development. Following our joint meeting with Department of Public Works, the Service Level Agreement signed with the Department of Public Works

about three years ago is under review, using our experiences and lessons learnt, we will plug the numerous gaps in the current framework.

Honourable Members,

## **6. Arts and Culture for rehabilitation and social reintegration**

Offender education and training is the cornerstone of rehabilitation. There is a notable increase in the enrolment for Adult Education and Training. The pilot Art and Craft Gallery established in Goodwood – Western Cape, has helped in selling offender art and craft to the public and in generating some revenue for supporting their own families and assisting in after-care services.

This Art and Craft Gallery model will be implemented in other places this year in partnership with local municipalities. Training of 900 elderly female offenders in beadwork will continue utilizing the trainers that graduated last year at Witbank Correctional Centre. We have also partnered with reputable agencies such as ESP Africa in the Western Cape to organize workshops to impart musical, arts

and cultural skills for inmates as part of their rehabilitation and successful reintegration upon their release.

## **7. Collaborative partnership is the way to go**

Honourable members, The Department will convene a conference of ex-offenders in July to help understand the challenges faced by this community and to mobilise them to play a more positive role in crime prevention and crime combating. We have numerous cases of successful reintegration including businesses that are run by ex-offenders who gained critical positive life skills while in custody, who have in turn helped other parolees with jobs and other opportunities for personal growth and development. We need everyone's hands on deck.

## **8. Strengthening Judicial Oversight**

Chairperson,

We will commission a review of the current capacity of JICS to ensure that their capacity is enhanced in all respects to provide judicial oversight and accelerate the transformation of correctional services. A preliminary assessment has shown

a number of gaps, which include institutional and administrative capacity, as well as the legal framework. JICS must ideally mirror the Department of Correctional Services' footprint, particularly in respect of its regional offices. For greater impact the Independent Correctional Center Visitors (ICCVs) should be augmented and be employed on a permanent basis. The review will also help engage all key players including this August House on the requisite legislative and policy amendments to enhance the professional independence of JICS.

## **9. Conclusion**

These programme's frameworks and performance targets are aligned to the National Development Plan-Vision 2030. In ensuring that the national outcome of safety and security is achieved, DCS will continue to step up the provision of opportunities for offenders' rehabilitation and successful re-integration into society. The department will ensure that offenders leave correctional centres with a more positive outlook on life and with better skills, which will reduce repeat offending and increase their chances of successful and sustainable reintegration into society as law-abiding citizens.

To quote Oliver Reginald Tambo, the father of South Africa's liberation struggle, *"We will create a South Africa in which the doors of learning and culture shall be open to all. We shall have a South Africa in which the young of our country shall have access to the best that mankind has produced, In which they shall be taught to love their people of all races, to defend the equality of the people, to honour creative labour, to uphold the oneness of mankind and to hate untruth, obscurantism, immorality and avarice."* unquote

Madam Chairperson, allow me to conclude by acknowledging all employees of the Department of Correctional Services who are serving the community and our country with humility, dedication, courage and respect. May I invoke Madiba, Tata Nelson Mandela's legendary injunction he left us with *"It is in your hands."* Indeed the attainment of South Africa's life long dream is in our hands, especially those with the struggle tradition.

I THANK YOU.