

SPEAKING NOTES OF THE MEC FOR COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, GAOAGE OAGENG MOLAPISI DURING THE NCOP PROVINCIAL WEEK, NORTH WEST PLROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE AUDITORIUM, MMABATHO

18 NOVEMBER 2025

Chairperson and North West Provincial Whip, Honourable Selinah Sithole

Honourable Premier Lazarus Mokgosi

Hourable Members of the NCOP

Fellow Members of the Executive Council

Head of Departments (HODs)

Senior Managers and Officials

Good morning.

Let me join the Honourable Premier by welcoming the visit by the National Council of Province for the NCOP Week. The Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs (COGHTSA) appreciate the continued oversight work in the province as an efficient mechanism to ensure accountability and strengthen governance.

In the recent months we have received oversight visits by the Joint Committee on Joint Portfolio Committee on Parliamentary Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Standing

Committee on Auditor General (SCOAG) and Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA). We also hosted the oversight committee by the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements, and the latest being the visit by your esteemed self; Honourable Chairperson for the NCOP Week. I must say as the province we value the hands-on monitoring and evaluation role by Parliament in the 7th Administration.

I must indicate forthright that both Head of Department, Dr Ben Bole and Head of Department for Human Settlements, Kgomotso Mahlobo will give practical details of the intervention we are implementing in ensuring delivery of service in general and implementing our mandate in particular.

Honourable Chairperson, I must indicate that since the start of the 7th Administration, the Department outlined a comprehensive strategy to strengthen service delivery across the province, focusing on improving local government, accelerating service delivery; and ensuring financial stability for our municipalities.

In our budget speech we outlined key priorities and strategies aimed at addressing systematic challenges impacting negatively on service delivery. To mention just a few, as the Department; we resolved to address issues related to institutional reform and good governance. This is a critical pillar of the strategy which involves professionalizing local government and ensuring stability.

The Department continues to drive the filling of vacant senior managers posts in municipalities. We can indicate that we have registered a great progress in this area; from the one hundred and forty-eight (148) senior managements posts across municipalities; one hundred and seven (107) have been filled. To advance the professionalisation of local government, we have also implemented the skills audit across our municipalities. The outcomes of the audit were shared with the municipalities.

To take the NCOP into confidence, some of the findings pointed to several critical factors; including gender disparities, a lack of staff retention strategies, insufficient capacity building programmes, and the incorrect placements of employees. To address findings, we have directed municipalities to use their workplace skills plans to close the identified gaps.

Honourable Chairperson, the Department is also continuing to roll out a training program on the Municipal Integrity Management Framework (MIMF) for councillors, officials, and community members. The MIMF sets high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour, guiding municipalities in conducting their services. This initiative aims to restore public confidence in local government, ensuring no one is left behind.

Honourable Members, another critical priority area which the Department of COGTA is addressing is the financial sustainability and revenue management in our municipalities. We are implementing debt relief programs for municipalities owing Eskom and Water Boards. Our records show that Eskom is owed R9.7 billion, 90% of which is overdue. Water

Boards owed over R3.5 billion. This issue has not been left unattended, we have secured payment arrangements for all municipalities, the painful truth is that the majority do not honour these agreements. Financial discipline is non-negotiable if we are to safeguard essential services.

In the area of service delivery, our expenditure of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant has reached 99% this financial year—the highest achievement rate in six years. We are making sure that the MIG and other related grants is used for its intent and purposes, which is to resolve challenge of water, sanitation, and access roads. The Department demands recovery plans from underperforming municipalities. We are also assisting our municipalities to adopt revenue enhancement policies, which align to adopting credible, and funded municipal budgets.

The department is driving a focused approach to deliver on its constitutional mandate for housing. We have identified project preparation and oversight as key areas of focus. We have used various platforms to emphasize this matter, including at the recently launched Human Settlements MUNIMEC.

The upgrading of informal settlements is also an important area which we have given our attention. Our department is working closely with municipalities to address this matter, which includes access to water, sanitation, and electricity. In the currently financial year, we have resolved to blocked, incomplete or stalled projects. We took a resolution to utilise 80% of the budget to unblocking stalled housing projects across the province. Only 20% is earmarked for new projects. HOD Mahlobo can

share more details on the work we are doing with municipality in respect of accreditation and other work in addressing housing backlog and challenges in the province.

To close my input Honourable Premier, I must hasten to say that our approach is respect to local and district municipalities as another sphere of government. We are collaborating with municipalities and not taking the big brother posture. It is municipalities that at their own council decide to agree on our interventions towards achieving service delivery.

We are institutionalising the District Development Model by effectively taking part in IGR forums, which include our MUNIMEC for COGTA and Human Settlements respectively. Through the interventions aligned to Section 154 of the Constitution we are also partnering with the Provincial Treasury and SALGA. We continue to work closely with the North West House of Traditional and Khoisan leaders to discuss issues affecting their communities.

Honourable Chairperson and Honourable Members, this is just but a brief input as requested. The HODs are present in this meeting if allows to detail some of the interventions, programmes and strategies implemented to achieve our mandate.

Thank you.