

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Deputy Speaker,
Honourable Members of the Executive Council,
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature,
House of Traditional Leaders,
Provincial Secretary of the Ruling Party, Mr Lucky Ndinisa,
Representatives in Business,
Representatives in Civil Society
Distinguished guests,
Comrades and friends,
Ladies and gentlemen**

1. Honourable Speaker, allow me to take this opportunity to **acknowledge and applaud all our women** as we celebrate and honour our mothers; partners; sisters and our daughters in the month of August.
2. It saddens me that as we show our gratitude for your care and the unconditional love that you give us, I must also concede that, in return, we continue to abuse you through **domestic violence and rape** - showing no appreciation for the love that you bestow on us.
3. Honourable Speaker, statistics indicate that in South Africa in 2011, only 28 % of urban African children shared households with both parents - a serious reflection of missing fathers.
4. Further to this, statistics provided by SAPS, we can note that there is a reduction of at least 3% in rape statistics - though minimal, this should

be seen as a step in the right direction and we hope to see more reduction in both domestic violence and rape.

5. Please join me as we pay tribute to all those women who laid the foundation for our freedom by marching to the Union Buildings on **09 August 1956** in protest against the extension of the pass laws to include women. Today we are enjoying this freedom through the contributions and sacrifices they made.

The Mandate

6. Honourable Speaker, the African National Congress has again received an overwhelming mandate to continue to lead this province. It is indeed an honour bestowed on us but which we would prefer to share with all of you in this august house.
7. Together we stand as a beacon of hope for the masses of this province who expect us to improve their current state of poor socio-economic conditions by satisfying their basic needs in terms of education; employment and housing.
8. In the past two months since I stood before this honourable house, our office has used the process of crafting a new MTSF, based on the ruling party's manifesto, as a basis for reflecting on our performance and on our role as an office that is ***professional, positioned and proactive*** in its delivery of coordinated support to our various departments.
9. Our strategic planning processes are in full swing and are guided by the core mandate of the Office of the Premier, which includes

- Supporting the Premier to execute the executive functions of the province in order to achieve ***integrated social development and economic growth***;
- Supporting the ***executive decision-making processes*** of the Premier in Executive Council to inculcate ***good governance and effective public service delivery***;
- ***Monitoring and evaluating the performance*** of all provincial executive functions and strategic programmes for provincial growth and development to enable the Premier to be accountable for the overall executive performance of the province.
- ***Coordinating strategic alignment and integration*** of sectorial and sub-sectorial strategies, policies and programmes to facilitate social transformation, development and economic growth.
- Supporting the Premier to implement ***provincial public service transformation, reform and service delivery improvement*** to build the capability of the provincial government to fulfil its Constitutional obligations.

10. Our core mandate, as an office, provides us with the necessary foundation to ensure that we function optimally and serve as an example to our fellow departments and institutions in the administration.

11. As such, in the coming year we have prioritised an organisational design assessment of our current structures, capacity and operations with a view to improving our efficiency and effectiveness – we are asking the question, “***are we fit for purpose?***” and we are prepared

to take any and all reasonable steps to ensure that we can answer this confidently in the affirmative.

Policy & Planning

12. In our on-going work to translate the manifesto priorities into reality, we cannot shy away from our organisational and operational challenges, and it is our undertaking that as we continue to prioritise **macro-planning and policy development**, as well as **performance monitoring and evaluation**, we will do so with an eye on ensuring that we deliver the **level of service** that our citizens and colleagues deserve.

13. Central to building operational capacity is the strengthening of our **Human Resources functions** and developing approaches to stabilising the senior management services in the department so that strong institutional memory and learning can develop.

14. In 2013/14 we achieved our target of **all HODs having signed performance agreements**, whilst **87% of our senior managers had done the same**.

15. Our commitment to the 100% target in 2014/15 remains unchanged, and the development of a true learning organisation that drives our centre of excellence is at the heart of the Organisational Development programmes that we will initiate in this financial year.

16. It is proper that we should also note the institutional development achievements recorded during the 2013/14 financial year:

- During the year under review, the Programme implemented its proposed plans and reduced the **vacancy rate** by 94%.

- The status of appointment of **People with Disabilities** is 3.7%, which is above the national norm.
- As part of promoting the **culture of discipline**, the Programme succeeded in dealing with all **23 disputes** referred to them.

17. Honourable members, we firmly believe that the strength of efficient and effective management practices lies in their ability to leverage improved service delivery and increased accountability.

18. We will continue to assess and reflect on our systems, capacity and operations in order to determine if we are “fit for purpose” and we will respond accordingly in areas where we feel improvement is required.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

19. Responding to our core mandate also means broadening and deepening our engagements with our primary stakeholders in government and business and engaging meaningfully with our communities through targeted public participation platforms.

20. Of course we will continue to prioritise the needs and aspirations of our most vulnerable citizens by providing strategic leadership specifically in the areas of youth development and issues affecting our esteemed older citizens.

21. Honourable Speaker, the **Monitoring and Evaluation function** is central to the overall mandate of the Office of the Premier.

The generation and analysis of valid data and information provides the basis for sound, evidence based decision making, whilst enabling us to be accountable for the overall performance of the Province.

We are pleased to report that our **M&E Policy Framework** has been reviewed and finalised and that it now incorporates all relevant policy imperatives emanating from the National Government Wide M&E Framework as well as the National Evaluation Policy Framework introduced by the DPME.

22. In addition, we finalised the **Mpumalanga (Province Wide) Monitoring and Evaluation System**, which includes a comprehensive roadmap for roll out across all provincial departments. The implementation of this process is underway, and a consultative approach has ensured that all of our departments are on board.
23. It must be noted that the intensive work done to develop an M&E system that speaks to the needs of the Province also revealed some of the areas where additional efforts are required in order to ensure that this system operates optimally.
24. Following a capacity scoping and readiness assessment, we have developed a plan to increase the institutional readiness of our departments and inculcate best M&E practice across our institutions prior to the acquisition and implementation of an M&E IT System.
25. Progress in the area of **institutionalisation** will determine the appropriate timeline for the procurement of the M&E IT System, thus ensuring that when the time comes, our funds are well spent on a tailor made system that is accessible, functional and truly adds value to the work of our colleagues.
26. Honourable Speaker, we must state plainly that last year we fell short of our target of supporting the completion of two provincial priority project evaluations.

27. Supporting the practice of developing evaluation concepts and ensuring that evaluations yield reliable evidence for improved implementation requires intensive technical and capacity development support.
28. As the Office of the Premier, we took our lead from the DPME and provided on-going support to departments to institutionalise the practice of programme evaluation, based on the National Evaluation Policy Framework and its related guidelines.
29. This year we have adopted a more proactive approach to the development of the Provincial Evaluation Plan – whilst our capacity development support to departments is on-going, the Office of the Premier will now lead, rather than just facilitate, the completion of three provincial programme evaluations.
30. These evaluations will speak to provincial priorities and will assess our performance and propose improvements in the areas of service delivery and socio-economic development.
31. The Office of the Premier continues to employ the DPME’s Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) and the Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Tool (FSDM) as a means to assess the effectiveness of government service delivery in the Province.
32. This year the results of the MPAT Cycle 1.3 provided us with some sobering insights regarding management practice challenges in our department. Whilst we work to improve the application of the assessment tool, we will also utilise the constructive analysis it provided to strengthen our efforts to shape the Office of the Premier into the **centre of excellence** that its function demands.

33. The application of the FSDM Tool has enabled us to get a first-hand picture of the level of service that our citizens can expect from our colleagues operating on the frontline. We conducted site inspections at 16 institutions and provided feedback designed to ensure the continuous improvement of these facilities and the service delivery processes designed to support our people.

34. Honourable Speaker, whilst our focus remains the institutionalisation of these vital M&E Tools and building the capacity required to implement them effectively and efficiently, we will also be looking towards ensuring that the facts and figures that they generate are put to good use – our objective, therefore, is to ensure tangible and observable improvements in our service delivery performance based on the information that these tools afford us.

Rebranding

35. Honourable Speaker as has been mentioned on various occasions and platforms, Mpumalanga Province will be undergoing a process of **rebranding** that aims not only to market us as a destination of choice for tourism and investment, but also to make us more identifiable and accessible to our citizens.

36. A **single provincial brand** bears testament to our on-going efforts to provide an equal and uniform standard of service delivery excellence to our people.

37. Mpumalanga means “Place where the sun rises” and this simple phrase informs the way we speak about the brand. We are a bright warm province, bursting with natural resources and talent. We should therefore use the words to reflect this phenomenon. Bold striking

headlines that grab the imagination, empower our audience and boast the beauty and value of Mpumalanga.

38. We use vibrant words that capture people's enthusiasm and our headlines should be alive with excitement, after all this is where the sun rises. Indeed, in the South African context, Mpumalanga is already rated as one of the country's most popular tourist destination.

Public Participation

39. Honourable speaker, in 2013/14 we coordinated **fifteen public participation programmes** as part of our commitment to delivering effective and relevant services to our citizens. In this regard, we will continue to utilise both the print and electronic media to keep the public informed about our programmes and activities in the Province.

40. In addition, we will continue to monitor the implementation of the **Provincial Communication Strategy**, and undertake to bolster its effectiveness by emphasising the importance of recording and reporting on data against which the impact of public participation can be assessed. This, in turn, will enable us to articulate more clearly what effective public participation in the Province should entail.

41. Part and parcel of this is our on-going programme of taking government to the people through our **Executive Council Outreach** visits. These occasions for interaction with our communities provide invaluable information that assists us to bolster and focus our service delivery efforts.

42. Honourable speaker, 2014/15 is earmarked as a year in which the Office of the Premier embraces **information and communication technology** to add value to our core functions. We continue to work

on the development of a viable funding option for a fully functional and resourced **Provincial Call Centre** to deal with service delivery issues across the Province.

43. In the meantime, we will continue to utilise the **Presidential Hotline** as an avenue through which to communicate with our public regarding their concerns.

Target Groups

44. Our women, our children and youth, our older persons and our citizens who live with disabilities have their struggles with poverty and unemployment aggravated by the vulnerabilities associated with their special circumstances.

45. In line with the pronouncements at National level, our Province will now place the interests and aspirations of our children and people with disabilities in the hands of our department for Social Development.

46. The Office of the Premier will continue to take the lead, however, in issues pertaining to the socio economic development and upliftment of our women, our youth and our older persons.

47. In response to the provincial status quo on women's access to work opportunities we are planning to facilitate a collaborative summit involving critical stakeholders in the economic sphere including SEDA, dti, IDT, DFEDT, DED and representatives of "big business" operating in the Province.

48. The summit, which will take place before November this year, will expose our women to a myriad of available economic opportunities through presentations, focus group discussions and exhibitions.

49. The summit will provide a platform for launching further engagements and potential inclusive business partnerships and projects specifically aimed at providing bursaries, training, internships, funding and jobs for women in the province.

50. Honourable speaker, we have established a dedicated **youth unit** and an office on the rights of **older persons** within the Office of the Premier.

51. South Africa's youth has been referred to as "*the perfect storm waiting to happen*" as a result of the dismal status of youth employment, education and training in the country.

52. As at July 2014, 44% of South Africans aged between 20 and 24 years have no personal income. In Mpumalanga, the youth make up 38.2% of our population and securing a brighter future for our Province is inextricably linked with creating a better future for our youth.

53. In April this year we hosted the two-day **Mpumalanga Youth Development Summit** in collaboration with a number of strategic partners from both the public and private sectors. Our aim was to discuss and localise the many challenges faced by our youth with a view to opening engagements across sectors that provide solutions for the many challenges that our young people are facing.

54. The Summit focused on the **key pillars of youth development** i.e.

- Job creation and youth employment
- Entrepreneurship and SMME development

- Education and skills development and the
- Eradication of social ills

55. Following two days of intensive and lively engagements, the Summit produced a set of resolutions aimed at guiding youth development support in the Province.

56. The Office of the Premier, through its **Youth Development Unit**, will lead and monitor the implementation of actionable resolutions as it continues to elevate and address the issues of Mpumalanga's youth. We trust that our fellow departments and private sector partners will follow suit.

57. As we provide strategic direction for the socio economic well-being of our youth, our focus is also on protecting the rights and livelihoods of our older persons, particularly in our rural areas.

58. The establishment of the **Office on the Rights of Older Persons** in the Office of the Premier allows us to concentrate our efforts on generating programmes and projects that speak to the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons, whilst at the same time ensuring that they are afforded an opportunity to continue their meaningful social and economic contributions to our society.

59. The advent of the **Older Persons month** in October provides us with an occasion to give our older persons a voice and cement our efforts by creating tangible, results oriented projects in partnership with our public and private sector partners.

60. In 2014/15 we will continue to coordinate the mainstreaming and monitoring of Gender, Youth and Older Persons (GYO) issues in government programmes and policies by implementing capacity

development initiatives and supporting advocacy and lobbying strategies.

61. Honourable Speaker as the Premier, together with the Head of the Office of the Premier, being the Director-General, I have an important obligation to ensure, inter alia, the **monitoring and co-ordination of the functions and responsibilities** of Members of the Executive Council, Provincial Departments and Heads of Department.

Rapid Implementation Unit

62. These obligations stem directly from the Constitution (1996), as well as the Public Service Act (1994). In order to give **practical effect** to the provisions of particularly section 125(2)(e) of the Constitution, and as announced last year during my 2013/2014 budget speech, we deemed it appropriate and necessary to establish, in consultation with the Executive Council, a **Rapid Implementation Unit** within the Office of the Premier.

63. The main purpose of this Unit is to assist the Executive Authority, as well as the other Members of the Executive Council, to effectively and efficiently co-ordinate the functions of the Provincial Administration and its various Departments in order to accelerate service delivery in selected areas of intervention.

64. The RIU does not assume any function or power of any other Provincial Department, but it utilizes available expertise within the Provincial Government and shares best practises in terms of accelerating service delivery through the rapid implementation of priority projects.

65. In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into between the relevant Departments and comprehensive and detailed service level agreements were duly entered into with the respective service providers.

66. The establishment of the ***Rapid Implementation Unit*** also contributes positively to improved governance practices as it provides a mechanism for the Director-General to fully exercise and perform her powers and functions as contemplated in section 7(3)(c)(ii) of the Public Service Act, 1994.

67. In other words, the RIU allows her to effectively and efficiently ensure the intra-governmental co-operation between the Office of the Premier and the various Provincial Departments, including the co-ordination of their actions and legislation so as to improve and enhance service delivery.

68. To date, the RIU has made significant progress addressing housing backlogs (5031 houses allocated), hospital and clinic refurbishment, road construction and school renovations.

69. In the 2014/15 financial year, the RIU will continue to identify and respond to bottlenecks and blockages in the implementation

Inter-governmental Relations

70. Honourable Speaker, I would like to continue, if I may, to speak of our efforts at fostering an effective, efficient and cooperative government.

71. In 2005, the ***Inter-governmental Relations Framework Act, 2005***, was passed to make sure that the principles in Chapter Three of the Constitution on cooperative government are implemented.
72. The Act seeks to set up mechanisms to coordinate the work of all spheres of government in providing services, alleviating poverty and promoting development. The Act also establishes a line of communication that goes from Municipalities to the Provinces and directly to the Presidency.
73. The ***President's Coordinating Council*** (PCC) is the main coordinating body at National level. It consists of the President, the Deputy President, key Ministers, Premiers and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). The PCC meets regularly to oversee the implementation of national policies and legislation, and to ensure that National, Provincial and local development strategies are aligned to each other.
74. At National level, each Department has an ***Inter-governmental Forum*** where Ministers meet with MECs and SALGA. These forums are called MinMECs and are also attended by Heads of Department, as technical advisors. The purpose of MinMECs is to consult, coordinate implementation and align programmes at National and Provincial level.
75. The Premier in each Province is responsible for coordinating relationships between National, Provincial and Local Government in such Province. Section 16 of the *Inter-governmental Relations Framework Act, 2005*, provides for the establishment of a Premier's inter-governmental forum in each Province.
76. The Premier is the chairperson of such forum. In Mpumalanga, similar to the position in a number of other Provinces, this Premier's

inter-governmental forum is known as the **Premier's Co-ordinating Forum** (PCF).

77. The PCF in Mpumalanga consists of the Premier, the MEC responsible for local government matters, being the MEC for COGTA, other designated MECs, District Mayors, other Mayors and a representative of Organized Local Government in Mpumalanga.

78. This PCF meets regularly and consults on broad development in the Province, as well as on the implementation of National and Provincial policy and legislation. It also seeks to coordinate the alignment of Provincial and Municipal development planning and strategic planning. The PCF reports through the Premier to the PCC.

79. PCF meetings are usually preceded by technical support meetings where Provincial Heads of Department, under the chairpersonship of the Director-General in the Office of the Premier, meet with all municipal managers.

80. The main objective of the PCF is to **promote and facilitate inter-governmental relations** and cooperative government between Provincial Government and Municipalities to ensure integrated, effective and efficient service delivery.

81. Honourable speaker, as we all know water and sanitation has become a priority in our service delivery efforts, to capacitate our municipalities, we have partnered with Rand Water who is assisting with water reticulation and sanitation. These efforts are bearing fruits and a number of municipalities benefiting from this partnership.

82. For example, in Bushbuckridge, we planned to start with 25 villages and already 21 of them have running water. Four of these are in the process of being reticulated. We will be moving with speed to make

sure that all our people have clean water during the next coming five years.

Strategic Partnerships

83. Honourable speaker, it is a fact that success in growing the economy and creating sustainable jobs in this province depends on the healthy relation the government has with both local private sector and foreign direct investment partners. In light of this fact, the office of the Premier has entered into MOUs with a number of institutions. Some of these are beginning to bear fruit.

84. Through our partnership with **BHP Billiton Energy Coal South Africa**, a building in Emalahleni will be donated to the province and this will be used as a central hub for the teaching of **Maths, Science and Technology**. The Department of Education has started with the implementation of this project.

85. The Office of the Premier is currently leading a process towards the promotion of local entrepreneurs and cooperatives within the **mining sector**.

We believe that through this engagement, new jobs will be created and our SMMEs will benefit through **industrial parks** that will be established alongside mining towns.

86. We are working with **SASOL** to rejuvenate Secunda Town and transform it into a **smart city**. A strategy to guide the development of the smart city will be aligned with the provincial Human Settlement Master plan that is currently being finalised.

87. On the international front, Honourable Speaker, the province entered into a number of MOUs, with provinces in a number of countries. Some yielded positive results such as with North Rhine Westphalia in Germany and the province of Alberta in Canada. Most of these MOUs have lapsed. The province is in the process of reviving some of these MOUs with the aim of increasing investments in the province.

88. The province is currently in the process of finalising an MOU with the **Sultan of Oman**. The main focus of the MOU will be on the supply of agricultural produce to the Sultanate of Oman.

Much work has been done in this regard. A study on demand and supply is being conducted and its outcome will clearly indicate the size of the market and type of fresh produce to be exported to Oman.

Anti-Corruption

89. Honourable Speaker, **fraud and corruption** are deplorable practices tantamount to stealing the food from our own citizens' mouths

90. We are often accused of being soft on corruption. Nothing can be further from the truth.

91. The **Integrity Management Unit** in the Office of the Premier, is leading the implementation of the Provincial Anti-Corruption Strategy and our record on dealing with issues of corruption, maladministration and mismanagement speaks for itself. In the 2013/14 financial year, 699 fraud and corruption investigations were investigated and finalised.

92. A total of 41 employees were charged. These cases are at various stages and some of them will soon be finalised. Through the full implementation of the strategy, better systems will be in place which will lead to early detection and the reduction on fraud and corruption cases.

Conclusion

93. Honourable Speaker, while we applaud the promotion of tourism in the province through a number of events organised by the private sector, we deplore activities during such events that are used to divide our society.

94. We strongly believe that such events should be used for the promotion of social cohesion and unity in the spirit of the founding Father of our Democracy, Tata Nelson Mandela. The singing of Die Stem during the recently held **Innibos** Festival is therefore deplorable and should be condemned by all peace loving South Africans.

95. We hope the organisers of this event will, in future, guard against elements who hijack such events for purposes of dividing, rather than uniting us.

96. Finally, let me also call upon all the people of the world to condemn, in no uncertain terms, the **killing of innocent women and children in Gaza.**

97. The bombing of schools which are used as rescue centres and safe havens is an abominable act beyond our understanding. This must stop with immediate effect. We will continue to support the efforts of our President in trying to bring peace between Israel and Palestine.

98. In conclusion, whilst we will leave no stone unturned in addressing the basic needs of our people we need to be mindful of the fact that we are working with limited resources. We therefore call upon all our officials to do more with limited available resources.

99. Honourable speaker our journey towards addressing the legacy of apartheid is a very long journey. We need to take stock and learn from women of 1956 who marched together in unity regardless of race colour creed or political affiliation against a monster called apartheid. I therefore call upon this august house to join hands and work in unity towards the elimination of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

100. Honourable Speaker, in light of the responsibilities that I have outlined, I therefore request this august House to approve the budget for the financial year 2014/15 of two hundred and five million three hundred and seventy-two thousand rand, **R205 372 000.000**

101. Let me conclude by appreciating the work and the contributions of the staff under the leadership of the Director General. We also extend a welcome the two special advisors who have recently joined my office.

102. I thank you