

Statement on the Cabinet meeting of 19 February 2014

21 Feb 2014

1. Cabinet's position on prominent issues in the current environment

1.1. The 24th State of the Nation Address (SoNA) since the ushering in of democracy provided a critical end-of-term assessment on the implementation of government priorities for 2009-2014. The introduction of the outcomes system in 2009 enabled evidence-based and results-oriented monitoring of implementation to ensure that government delivered efficiently and effectively.

1.2. Following the State of the Nation Address and the Debate on the State of the Nation Address, the current series of Ministerial media briefings provides an opportunity for engagement with various Ministers who will elaborate on the President's Address. The end-of-term report for the period 2009 to 2014 will be supplemented by the evidence-based 20 Year Review Report which forms part of our 20 Years of Freedom celebration campaign.

All South Africans are called on to Play Your Part in reversing the legacy of apartheid by celebrating 20 Years of Freedom, which demonstrates that South Africa is undoubtedly a better country than it was in 1994.

1.3. Cabinet reiterates President Jacob Zuma's message on protest. Protest that threatens lives and property and destroys valuable infrastructure that is meant to serve communities, undermine the very democracy that upholds the right to protest. As South African we all have a collective responsibility to build a society that respects the rule of law, respects one another and respects life and property.

Cabinet assures the public that loss of life through negligence by the police in the course of dealing with the protests will not be overlooked or condoned. Likewise, protesters in possession of weapons or found burning public facilities or endangering the lives of others will face the full might of the law.

Government will work with communities to improve living conditions in all parts of the country. Communities are urged to engage with councilors in a bid to jointly and amicably resolve service delivery disputes.

1.4. Negotiations on wages between the platinum mines and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) are being mediated by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). The CCMA has appointed senior commissioners to facilitate the process.

Cabinet is confident that the parties will produce a mutually beneficial agreement that will protect the rights of the workers and protect the economy of the country.

1.5. Cabinet welcomes the registration of over 80% of all eligible voters as a result of the successful registration campaign by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). In the spirit of celebrating and commemorating 20 Years of Freedom, Cabinet commends the IEC, political parties and members of society whose combined efforts ensured that more eligible voters registered.

Cabinet further commends the active participation by those citizens who ensured that their names were on the voters roll.

Eligible voters who still need to verify their registration details and those still needing to register should visit with their local IEC office before the voter's roll closes. The voter's roll will close when the President proclaims (publishes in the Government Gazette) 7 May as the election date. All eligible South Africans are called on to exercise their right to vote during the fifth National Elections. Cabinet calls on political leaders to instill political tolerance within their parties and supporters. This is critical to secure a free and fair election and to uphold the values of our Constitution.

1.6. Cabinet welcomes the first round of the Human Papillomavirus Vaccination (HPV) vaccination drive, which will start on 7 March 2014. Vaccination against cervical cancer will be administered to girls between the ages 9 and 10. Parents and guardians of Grade 4 school girls aged 9 and 10 are encouraged to support this drive by giving their consent and discussing with their children the significance of this vaccination.

This public health milestone, which is in line with the World Health Organisation recommendation, is expected to contribute to the reduction of cervical cancer among women and reduce associated mortality.

1.7. Cabinet also welcomed the launch of the revised Contraceptive and Fertility Planning Policy and Service Delivery Guidelines on 27 February 2014 by the Minister of Health. (This will allow young women to complete schooling and pursue their dreams without the hindrance of unplanned parenthood. The Minister of Health will also launch a sub-dermal (under-the-skin) implant which is a new, long acting-contraceptive device for women.

1.8. President Jacob Zuma, as the Commander-in-Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), will attend the Armed Forces Day in Bloemfontein on 21 February 2014.

This annual event pays tribute to the selfless service of our men and women in uniform and honours those who have fallen in the line of duty. It also provides an opportunity for members of the public to learn first-hand about the work and responsibility of the SANDF.

Cabinet is pleased with the number of successful missions that the SANDF has carried out in the continent, like in Burundi which today has a stable government; the eastern DRC, where the SANDF has, as part of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), dealt a severe blow to armed groups, and its contribution to saving hundreds of thousand lives in the Darfur region of the Sudan.

Furthermore, Cabinet has noted the successful prevention of piracy encroaching the Southern Africa region by the SANDF deploying in and patrolling the Mozambique Channel.

1.9. President Jacob Zuma will undertake a working visit to the United Kingdom from 2 to 4 March 2014, during which he will attend the National Service of Thanksgiving to celebrate the life and work of former President Nelson Mandela in Westminster Abbey, London on 3 March 2014.

1.10. Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe will attend the 100-Year Anniversary of the Unification of the North and South of Nigeria in Abuja on 27 February 2014. Cabinet congratulates the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on this milestone event which takes place in the same year as South Africa celebrates 20 Years of Freedom.

1.11. Human Rights Month will be celebrated under the theme: "Celebrating 20 years of changing lives through human rights".

President Jacob Zuma will deliver the keynote address for Human Rights Day (21 March 2014) at the main event in Sharpeville.

Government's programme will bolster the 20 Years of Freedom campaign by highlighting issues that foster and promote social cohesion, nation-building and unity in our South African society.

1.12. The Economic Development Department, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Presidency will host the Presidential Youth Indaba on Jobs and Skills at Birchwood Conference Centre, Boksburg, from 28 February to 3 March 2014 under the theme: "Working together to empower and provide hope to the youth of South Africa."

Over the past 20 years government has implemented a multi-pronged strategy to deal with youth unemployment. The National Skills, Basic Education and Youth Employment Accords capture strong commitments by social partners, complemented by various Public Employment Programmes and legislation such as the Employment Tax Incentive Act No 26 of 2013.

1.13. Cabinet welcomes the convening of all social sector partners at the upcoming Expanded Public Works (EPWP) Social Sector Conference to assess the progress of the EPWP and how it can be further expanded.

The conference will be held under the theme: "United in action to accelerate employment creation through EPWP social sector."

The EPWP was launched in 2004 and remains a key government initiative that creates work opportunities for millions of South Africans in the short to medium-term.

1.14. Cabinet wishes the Bafana Bafana team well at the upcoming friendly international soccer match with the World Cup hosts Brazil at the FNB Stadium on 5 March 2014.

Cabinet calls on all South Africans to show our visitors a warm Ubuntu welcome, and to rally behind our national team.

2. Key Cabinet discussions and decisions

2.1. Cabinet approved the development of a National Career Development Service policy, implementation strategy and consultation process across all spheres of government.

A coordinated career development service is urgently needed to ensure that youth, students, under-employed workers and unemployed citizens have access to quality career information and career services.

This will enable them to make better and more informed career choices that deliver higher levels of employment and help to increase sustainable economic growth in the country.

2.2. Cabinet supports the implementation of the eDisclosure system in the Public Service from April 2014, which replaces the manual system of submission, processing and verification of the disclosures. eDisclosure is an electronic register to capture and manage financial disclosures of designated employees (SMS members) who are required to disclose their registrable interests to their relevant Executive Authority by 30 April of each year.

The e-Disclosure system is located on the homepage of the Department of Public Service and Administration website – www.dpsa.gov.za - and is linked to other relevant existing databases such as the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission, deeds registration offices and eNatis for verification and validation purposes.

The system aims to strengthen accountability in line with government's zero-tolerance of eliminate corruption.

2.3. Cabinet noted the hosting of the African Ombudsman Summit and related events in Gauteng from 24 to 27 February 2014. The African Ombudsman Research Centre will host the Summit under the theme: "Strengthening Good Governance in Africa through the Role of the Ombudsman".

The aim of the Summit is to explore the contributions Ombud institutions make to the consolidation of democracy and good governance, therefore contributing to peace and stability on the continent. It also provides a platform to engage on strengthening the concept of Ombudmanship in Africa.

The Summit comes at a time when more emphasis is being placed on clean governance, accountability and just service delivery to ordinary people in African states.

3. Bills

3.1. Cabinet approved that the Merchant Shipping Amendment Bill, 2014 be tabled in Parliament.

The Bill aims to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, No. 57 of 1951 which predates the Constitution, 1996 making it imperative to align to the values and provisions of the Constitution and also to align to current International Conventions.

The Amendment Bill also gives effect to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007. Both Conventions were adopted by the United Nations International Labour Organisation.

The alignment of domestic legislation to the Conventions provides South Africa with a global instrument to ensure global protection to the rights of seafarers and decent working and living conditions. This will enable South Africa to intervene in cases where foreign ships entering our ports have contravened the rights of seafarers.

Implementation of the Bill will also improve the operations and image of the maritime industry, which is imperative for international trade and the international economy.

4. Appointments

Cabinet approved the following appointments:

4.1. Ms Carlize Catherina Elizabeth Strydom - Chief Registrar of Deeds (DDG level) in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform

4.2. Mr Eugene Malcholm Southgate - Deputy Director General: Corporate Services in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

4.3. Cabinet also approved the re-appointment of Mr Mohammed Riaz Jawoodeen as a Non-Executive Board member of the Central Energy Fund (SOC) Ltd.

4.4. Cabinet approved the appointment of the following persons as regulator members to the National Energy Regulator of South Africa:

Part-time

a) Mr Jacob Rasethlake Daniel Modise (Chairperson)

b) Ms Maleho Margaret Nkomo (Deputy Chairperson)

c) Mr Fungai Khumbulani Sibanda

- d) Ms Khomotso Ramasela Mthimunye
Full-Time
- e) Ms Nomfundo Maseti

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