

**THE 2026 STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PREMIER  
OF GAUTENG, PANYAZA LESUFI, AT NASREC, JOHANNESBURG 23  
FEBRUARY 2026**

Madame Speaker, Honourable Morakane Mosupyoe;

Deputy Speaker, Honourable Nomvuyo Mhlakaza-Manamela;

Members of the Executive Council;

Chief Whip of the Governing Party, Honourable Lesego Makhubela;

Honourable members of the Legislature;

Leaders of Political Parties;

Minister of Electricity and Energy Dr Kgosientsho“Sputla” Ramokgopa;

Former Premier and Deputy Secretary-General of the ANC, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane

Co-Convenor of the ANG Gauteng Provincial Task Team, Mr Amos Masondo;

Members of the ANC Gauteng Provincial Task Team;

BOSA President Dr Mmusi Maimane;

Rise Mzansi Chief Whip Makashule Gana;

Leaders of Political Parties in the Government of Provincial Unity;

Executive Mayors and Council Speakers;

Our guest of honour, Mama Sophie De Bruyn;

Traditional and Religious Leaders in Gauteng Province;

Tonakgolo ya kgoro ya ga Lesufi, Ntate Notlo Tau Lesufi;

Kgoshigadi Ramadimetsa Mahlako Phasha бага Nkwana Traditional Authority;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Leaders of the Business Community and Labour Movements;

Gauteng Provincial Commissioner, General Tommy Mthombeni

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media;

The People of Gauteng

### **INTRODUCTION: TONE SETTING AND CONTEXTUALISATION**

About twelve months ago, we stood before this august House to deliver the 2025 State of the Province Address. In that SOPA, we announced bold commitments in pursuit of our renewed electoral mandate to drive socio-economic transformation in our province.

We are honoured to stand before this House on this occasion of the third SOPA of the 7th Administration of Government of Provincial Unity to report back on these commitments.

It remains an honour to lead and be the face of this province of ours. Where I erred or misrepresented our province, I sincerely and honestly apologise, as I always take my responsibilities seriously. The African proverb tells us that ***“the hands that make mistakes belong to those who work”***.

This evening, we are joined by an outstanding and powerful woman who led during the most difficult period in our struggles against apartheid. She is a worthy recipient of the iSithwalandwe/ Seaparankwe, an honorary doctorate from the University of Johannesburg and a string of awards both locally and internationally. As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Women's march held in our province, we are honoured to accord her a welcome as a special guest of our government. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Mama Sophie de Bruyn, the lioness of our people. Mama, we are your children, and you remain our mother. We love and cherish you, ***imbokodo!***

This House convenes here at NASREC where the last sitting of the G20 Leaders' Summit took place, and members unanimously adopted the Leaders' Declaration that paves the way for solidarity, equity and sustainability. Our choice of this venue is nothing more than a token of appreciation to our President, the residents of Gauteng and global organisers for entrusting our province with the hosting of this historic first-ever global summit on the African continent. The success of this event was the result of intensive and coordinated work between the provincial government, the national government and all municipalities.

During his delivery of the State of the Nation Address, our honourable President, Cyril Ramaphosa, reaffirmed the three national priorities as contained in the Medium-Term Development Plan. These are:

- Driving inclusive economic growth and job creation;
- Reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living; and
- Building a capable, ethical and developmental State.

These remain the priorities of the 7th Administration of the Gauteng Government of Provincial Unity.

## **G1: Water**

### **People of Gauteng;**

On 27 January 2026, we were hit by an unexpected water shortage. There was a huge explosion at the Rand Water plant. After the explosion, fire hit our transmission machines, followed by a huge burst pipe. Immediately thereafter, our water supply was deeply affected. We then went into emergency mode. The area affected by the explosion was rectified within 72 hours, the fire extinguished, and the burst pipe repaired. However, the water levels were badly affected.

The President sent a Ministerial team to camp in our province, and our Water emergency team went on overdrive. This resulted in the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Honourable Pemmy Majodina, giving an extraordinary proclamation to allow Rand Water to immediately extract more water from the Vaal River Integrated Water System.

- The first suburban area to be hit hard was Midrand. Lately, we can declare that water has been fully restored in the Midrand and surrounding areas
- In Soweto, we have made great progress, except for Meadowlands Zones 3 and 4 and areas receiving water from the Doornkop reservoir. Our engineers have assured us that this will be addressed urgently;
- In the West Rand, water in Kagiso and the surrounding areas has been restored.
- Besides Bedfordview, Tsakane, and parts of Kwa-Thema, the Ekurhuleni water supply is now stable, including Tshwane, Sedibeng and West Rand.

There are areas where residents have a full supply but might be affected by pressure at night due to nighttime throttling. Night-time throttling reduces pressure to allow system recovery. Area affected include Kensington, Bezuidenhout Valley, Bruma and Berea. Other areas that are still experiencing instability are those supplied through the Commando System and the Brixton Towers.

However, the areas that remain stubborn and difficult include parts of Westdene, Coronationville, Sophiatown, Melville, Emmarentia, and sections of Doornkop.

To permanently resolve these issues, a R760 million massive infrastructure investment upgrade is underway in COJ over a phased approach:

- Construction of a new ground reservoir and a tower in Brixton is underway and will go live by this Saturday to improve the supply.
- In response to this crisis, we built an emergency boosting pumping station, which will go live next week, to ensure that these areas are covered with water.
- The permanent solution will be realised once the construction of the 5km pipeline is concluded at the end of the year.

Furthermore, the national government is assisting us in realising the return on investment made, so that the people of Hammanskraal, Bronkhorspruit, Kokosi, Fochville, Kwa-Thema and other areas can have their dignity restored.

But let me be clear, the challenge is not water availability, but the interruptions caused by infrastructure failures, leaks and high-demand peaks. We are working as the three

spheres of government to fix the water challenges in our province. We are about to conclude the expansion of our water infrastructure so that we can be ready to receive additional water from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, thus cementing our water security permanently.

To avoid the sporadic shortage of water, together with Mayors and the National government, we prioritised the need for investment in water storage. In Midrand, we are building a new water storage facility to house 20 million litres. The private developers matched this investment with a donation of 10 million litres of water that will be available to the people of the Midrand. Similar investments are rising in Ekurhuleni, Tshwane and the West Rand municipalities.

Even though we are making good progress, the water challenges in our provinces need constant monitoring and support. We once more sincerely apologise to our residents that went and still go through the inconveniences caused by this unfortunate situation. Be assured of our commitment to permanently resolve this challenge

We continue to appreciate the support given by our President, Honourable Cyril Ramaphosa, Minister Pemmy Majodina and her Deputies, MECs, Executive Mayors and our hard-working engineers and staff members. We thank you. A special thank you to the three (3) developers in Midrand for putting their money where their mouth is.

**Madame Speaker;**

## **ECONOMY AND JOBS**

As the economic heartland of our country, Gauteng should never be allowed to stop beating, for the consequences would be too dire for all of us.

Our approach to economic growth is firmly grounded in the reindustrialisation of Gauteng and the deliberate inclusion of township and local enterprises in the mainstream economy.

**Madam Speaker;**

We are clear that to grow the economy of Gauteng, we must:

- (i) Defeat crime, corruption and lawlessness;
- (ii) Improve our infrastructure;
- (iii) Fix local government and accelerate service delivery;
- (iv) Bring the private sector to the centre of economic revitalisation.

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

Towards the end of 2025, South Africa's labour market showed modest improvement, with national employment rising by almost a quarter million due to growth in the infrastructure and services sectors.

Our province outperformed the national trend, reaching a record 5.24 million employed and accounting for nearly 70% of national job gains over the past year, with growth strongest in construction, finance, community and social services.

### **Investments in Gauteng**

#### **The People of Gauteng;**

Gauteng has managed to attract R27 billion in Foreign Direct Investment from a diverse set of countries, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Australia, Cyprus, the USA and the UAE, underscoring international confidence in this province as South Africa's primary investment and industrial hub.

In our SOPA last year, we committed to attracting new investments to create sustainable jobs. We did as promised. Here are the investments that have been signed, sealed and packaged:

1. We attracted R312 billion investments in our **Inaugural Gauteng Investment Conference**. Today, R73 billion is now moving from commitment to implementation, creating 114 000 jobs across multiple sectors;
2. Last year, Gauteng secured the largest share of the **Presidential Investment Conference** amounting to over R180 billion, and we expect nothing less of our performance in this year's Presidential Investment Summit;

3. **The City of Johannesburg**, with its Netherlands partners, secured a R7 billion waste-to-energy project;
4. Through the assistance of our dynamic Minister Sputla Ramokgopa, all major electrical appliances and equipment will now be made in Ekurhuleni with an initial investment of R2.2 billion, creating 3000 new jobs. To Minister Ramokgopa, I say thank you, Motokwa;
5. We brought **Chery International** Car Manufactures to our shores to build their cars here rather than bringing them to our province as finished products. This intervention will also bring new jobs and also protect 700 jobs affected by Nissan's repositioning;
6. **Heineken Global** has started construction of a R1.9 billion investment in Midvaal. This is not about malt but about farmers and job seekers;
7. **Microsoft** invested a R5.4 billion data centre expansion in the Midrand–Centurion corridor, positioning Gauteng as Africa's digital gateway;
8. In our last SOPA, we indicated the urgent need to bring a player into the steel sector. We successfully brought in **Chung Fung Metal**, a R2.5 billion investment that opened its factory doors last month and created more than 1000 jobs. This new steel factory has brought the latest technology in steel manufacturing to our shores;
9. The proposed DRI (Direct Reduced Iron) steel plant located in **Lesedi Local Municipality** represents a major industrial investment with the potential to create more than 1,000 permanent employment opportunities once fully operational.
10. **The Gauteng Dry Port** is moving towards reality, representing a projected investment of approximately R50 billion. Once fully operational, it will create approximately 50 000 permanent jobs;
11. **The Tshwane Automotive SEZ** has secured R1.61 billion in confirmed new investments and remains on track to achieve the 4,000 construction jobs committed for Phase 2;
12. **The Vaal SEZ**, which has recently been gazetted for comments by Minister Parks Tau, is expected to contribute over R10 billion to the Gauteng economy.
13. **Lanseria Smart City** has secured R4 billion for Cradle Film Studios, which is set to become the largest film production facility on the continent. The project is expected to create 15,000 jobs, including 10,000 in film production;

14. **The Tambo Springs SEZ** is projected to deliver significant and long-term economic benefits to Gauteng, underpinned by an estimated R23.6 billion capital investment. During the construction phase, the project is expected to contribute to and support about 50 000 jobs and enable over 1000 new MSMEs.
15. **Haier-Kwikot** is investing approximately R2.4 billion in Benoni as part of one of the most significant industrial investments in our province in recent years. This investment secures more than 700 existing jobs.

All these investments are ready and capable of assisting us to defeat unemployment in our province totalling just 250 000 jobs, especially for the youth.

**Madam Speaker;**

### **Action Labs**

The Gauteng Economic Growth and Development Plan is our roadmap for economic development. We are pleased to announce the resumption of our action labs for our 12 high-growth sectors, such as Manufacturing, Green Economy, Transport and Logistics.

We will formally launch the action labs on 19 March 2026, which brings together government, the private sector and critical stakeholders to convert sector plans into bankable projects, attract foreign direct investment, and drive job creation in our high-growth industries.

**Madam speaker;**

On the **tourism** front, Gauteng moved international arrivals from 2.6 million in the previous year to 3.8 million international arrivals this year. This surge translated into a record-breaking R41 billion in international tourism revenue, far surpassing the target of R29 billion.

We will continue to intensify the **VISIT GAUTENG: ZWAKALA** campaign, projecting to generate R23 billion in revenue from both foreign and domestic sources, contributing directly to provincial economic growth and supporting jobs in hotels, restaurants, transport, entertainment, and associated sectors.

## **Gauteng Air Access**

In support of international tourism growth, Gauteng set a target of opening four new air routes during this financial year. To date, three routes have been secured, namely FlyGabon, Qantas Airlines, and United Airlines. These routes provide access to three strategic markets, including Central Africa, North America, and Australasia.

**Honourable Speaker;**

## **Infrastructure Development**

### **Transnet**

With the potential gas cliff due to Sasol's possible reduction in this space, Transnet has entered into a partnership to construct and operate South Africa's first Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import terminal at the Port of Richards Bay, which will transport gas from Richards Bay to Gauteng for the first time. The converted pipeline will make imported gas available to industrial users across Gauteng, thus wetting Gauteng to ignite our economy. A wet Gauteng propels economic development.

### **e-Tolls**

To ease morning and afternoon traffic congestion in our roads, which affects the economy, the Gauteng EXCO has now finally adopted the Transport Master plan which will open the new roads in our province. The Provincial Government took a deliberate decision to assume responsibility for the e-toll debt to relieve residents of the financial burden and open our roads for maintenance. To date, the province has paid over R9 billion towards the total e-toll debt of R20.086 billion.

## **Integrated Transport Master Plan (ITMP)**

We welcome the adoption of the Integrated Transport Master Plan that begins to shift planning to action, using corridor-based investment and stronger integration of rail, bus, taxi and non-motorised transport.

## **Gautrain expansion**

Those who came before us in 2012 saw the need to go to the private market to secure funding for R27 billion to build the Gautrain. By the end of March this year, the private sector will handover to us the R52 billion infrastructure fully owned by the people of Gauteng. To maximise this investment later this year, we will resume the process to expand Gautrain to Soweto, Mamelodi, Springs, Atteridgeville, Fourways, etc. We are finalising the concessionaire for the Gautrain expansion for the next 15 years.

## **Gauteng- Limpopo Provincial Rail Link**

The Gauteng- Limpopo speed train has taken an impressive turn. Over 30 investors have raised their hands willing to bankroll this project. With the undivided support of our President and the Minister of Transport, this dream is about to be realised in our lifetime

## **Bulk Infrastructure Agency**

We highlighted in the 2025 SOPA that bulk infrastructure is a catalyst for development and yet remains uncoordinated. To this end, Gauteng will be establishing a Bulk Infrastructure Agency that will coordinate and manage the provision of bulk infrastructure in the province with the assistance of all our municipalities.

## **FIXING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

### **Madam Speaker;**

Let us face it; local government is the backbone of service delivery, and yet this is exactly where we are most challenged as government.

### **Ekurhuleni:**

The developments in Ekurhuleni over the last few days have brought coalition governance into sharp focus. In our discussions with the leadership of the municipality, we have been assured that these governance challenges will be resolved without further delay.

We welcome the decision to bring to book those who were implicated in the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry.

Last week, this region unleashed investment in a new fleet that will strengthen service delivery, especially in areas like refuse removal, road maintenance, and law enforcement.

The municipality demonstrated its commitment to reclaim hijacked buildings. Both Pharo Park and Airport Park have been reclaimed through eviction and municipal enforcement operations.

### **Tshwane**

We welcome the decision taken by the Tshwane Mayoral Committee to reimburse workers for their long-outstanding benefits. This firm resolution demonstrates the willingness of this municipality to respect bargaining council resolutions and expose those who were running the municipality before, for lacking empathy on matters related to workers.

Over R1 billion in backdated salary increases will be returned to workers. Despite expecting an unqualified audit, the qualified audit status that they attained is an indication that they are on course to clean their books that were left in a mess by the previous administration.

To date, they have no outstanding payments owed to Eskom and Rand Water. We congratulate them for their funded budget.

### **Sedibeng**

It is public knowledge that the governing party is proposing changes in some municipalities under its control. Furthermore, a motion of no confidence was tabled by the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania against the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng.

These developments create governance challenges in the region. Discussions with the leadership of the affected municipalities are scheduled for later this week, in which all these matters may be resolved.

Last week, **Emfuleni Municipality** unveiled 145 new fleet vehicles to accelerate service delivery. This includes vehicles for traffic and bylaws, waste, electrical and road maintenance.

Let us take this opportunity to congratulate **Midvaal Local Municipality** for continuing to be the shining municipality in our province, but most importantly for their strong belief in Integrated Governmental Relations and participation in provincial programmes.

We are also excited that Savanna City, a multi-billion-rand development, is entering a new phase of development that will deliver over 18,000 homes and support the accommodation of more than 70,000 residents. It is estimated to create over 54 000 temporary jobs during construction and over 12 000 permanent jobs.

I want to thank **Lesedi Local Municipality** for leading on the Vaal SEZ and ensuring that bulk services are unlocked.

We must deal with the illicit trade that continues to cripple our economy. Recently the British American Tobacco (BAT) announced its intention to completely close its manufacturing plant in Heidelberg, placing livelihoods at risk. The company attributes its decision largely to the persistent growth of the illicit cigarette trade in the country, which has significantly eroded its market share and revenues. Together with the police, we are intensifying the protection of our manufacturing and retail sectors. Already, we have confiscated counterfeit goods valued at R250.2 million last year.

The Vereeniging Main Taxi Rank was practically completed on 29 October 2025, promising to deliver a safer, more functional and commuter-friendly hub with upgraded waiting areas, paving, circulation routes, lighting and sanitation and restoring dignity and reinforcing taxi ranks as economic anchors in township and urban communities.

## **West Rand**

We want to assure the residents of the West Rand that we are working with the municipality to resolve the ongoing difficulties caused by the sinkholes. Following the declaration by the national government, measures are underway to bring relief to this community.

Furthermore, we are excited for the R5 billion Leratong mixed-use development, which will open in October 2026 and will be anchored by its own shopping centre. The development is currently employing 495 workers from across 20 Micro, Small to Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Let's congratulate the **West Rand District Municipality** for attaining its second consecutive clean audit. This municipality is not only performing well but remains a candidate for future development in the local authority sector.

The might of the law was demonstrated recently in the **West Rand** when all spheres of government confronted Zama-Zamas who thought they could victimise and intimidate the community of Sporong. This was followed by a joint operation where 75 AK47 rifles and rounds of ammunition were recovered. This municipality remains the biggest beneficiary of the recently announced deployment of the SANDF. Le rona Re batho!

## **Johannesburg**

We welcome the Presidential Johannesburg Working Group intervention, which seeks to address service delivery failures, infrastructure decay and financial instability in Johannesburg. Joburg is making great strides; we look forward to the implementation of the Waste-to-Energy project that was announced as part of the investment secured by the City.

We reported in the 2025 SOPA that Gauteng has identified 13 plus key challenges which continuously devalue the social lives of residents. The majority of these challenges fall within the purview of local government. In this regard, the provincial government and municipalities have been working together through our IGR processes to address these challenges.

**Madam Speaker;**

**G2: Cable theft and vandalism;**

Let me share with you two messages I recently received regarding the level of terror that our residents and business communities are confronted with due to cable theft and vandalism. The first one says:

*“Good day, Premier*

*We are a cable manufacturer based in Aureus Randfontein. We are located right beside the main road going to Carletonville. Across the road is an open field where Zama Zamas are often seen mining on the surface in broad daylight. They obviously are mining underground as well. We had an armed robbery two days ago, where the security guards were tied up, and the Zama Zamas broke the locks and gained access to the factory and stole copper wire on a large steel drum. Our nightshift staff are refusing to work because of safety concerns”*

The second one says:

*“Good morning, Premier,*

*Kindly see the above request from our community patrollers regarding the issue of cable theft in the area. Cable theft has become a nightmare in Olieven... as the community is not enjoying stable electricity supply. Just last week, the community caught four cable thieves ....”*

### **Honourable members;**

This is a lived experience of many communities that requires our continued intervention. In the last SOPA, we committed to unleashing an integrated reaction unit comprising various law enforcement agencies and the private sector to safeguard and protect cables and public infrastructure.

To this end, we intervened through our Specialised Units deployed within the province to address these crimes. On 3 September 2025, a team comprising members of the Sedibeng Infrastructure Unit, Gauteng Traffic Wardens, and private security companies operationalised intelligence information which led them to a scrapyard in De Deur.

During this operation, they recovered copper cable worth about R3 million and arrested five suspects at the scene who were charged with possession of stolen

infrastructure, dealing in second-hand goods without a licence, and contravening the Immigration Act. We will continue to deploy law enforcement agencies to maintain visibility and the protection of critical infrastructure.

### **G3: Non-functional traffic lights**

**Madam Speaker;**

As you may recall, in the 2025 SOPA, we committed to the immediate replacement of traffic signals across our province and the resurfacing and upgrading of roads. To date, jointly with all our municipalities, we are standing at 4 786 functional traffic signals.

We have a mission to fix the remaining 699 non-functional traffic lights to complete the task. Unfortunately, our traffic signals are being vandalised, and this has become a vicious cycle; we fix them, and they get vandalised.

Together with the CSIR, we are piloting a new alternative technology to assist us with the eradication of theft and vandalism of traffic lights.

We therefore urge communities to report any suspicious acts of vandalism immediately. Let us work together as responsible residents to promote law and order.

### **G4: Potholes**

A recent post on X by a Gauteng resident said: “The Johannesburg Roads Agency has fixed every single pothole in Bryanston in less than 2 days, many of which have existed for years. Oh, there is by-election’, what a coincidence’.

This affirms that we are indeed fixing the potholes because we are fixing Gauteng. I guess democratic culture demands scepticism of its participants. But it does not stop us doing what has to be done!

Out of 31 000 identified potholes, to date, 26 000 have been repaired across the Gauteng City Region, demonstrating our commitment to providing safer road infrastructure in the province. In addition to fixing potholes, we are also resurfacing provincial roads, including K101 linking Midrand to the N1, the rehabilitation of K175 from P6-1 (K201) to Ekandustria (K14), and the upgrading of D1814 in Bronkhorstspuit.

As part of building the capacity of the state, to fix potholes in our province, the Provincial government will and our municipalities will pull our resources together to utilise the Asphalt plants owned by the CoJ and CoT to finally permanently remove potholes in our roads.

Going forward, we have appointed the three metros of Tshwane, Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni to fix potholes on our provincial roads within their jurisdictions.

#### **G5: Crime and Lawlessness**

When we introduced the 3 helicopters to fight crime in our province, our interventions were labelled gimmicks. When we declared that we would install almost 20 000 CCTVs, we were told it's pie in the sky. When we appointed, almost 10 000 young unemployed youth to fight crime, we were told we were campaigning.

When we said we have profiled 392 kingpins and have now arrested 101, we were told it would never happen. Today, all municipalities have joined together to fight crime and have signed an MOU to share resources across the province. Despite all the ridicule that we received, today we can report that, as per the crime stats released by the Minister of Police on Friday, crime in Gauteng is going down.

- Murder decreased by 11% year on year
- Sexual offences (including rape) decreased by 8% year on year
- while property-related crime recorded a 7.8% decrease

We are also pleased that our police have shown no mercy upon those who meant to harm them. During an armed confrontation with the police, 26 criminals were permanently removed from the face of the earth. It is within this context that 11 cash-in-transit kingpins were arrested

It is concerning that 21 of the top 30 police stations with the highest reported carjackings are found in Gauteng. This confirms why the new number plate system launched by the provincial government must be executed with speed.

We want to thank the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, together the current Minister of Police and the Public Protector, for paving the way for the gazetting of the almost 10 000 traffic wardens who are now formally accorded the status of peace officers, thus saving almost 10 000 jobs.

### **Illegal mining**

#### **Honourable Members;**

Illegal mining in our province has reached intolerable levels. Over 600 families, including women and children, fled from their homes in January 2026 due to the violence, threats, and attacks on the residents by marauding gangsters.

The ongoing Illegal mining affects the communities of West Rand, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Sedibeng Districts. Dangerous syndicates use high-calibre weapons such as AK-47s to conduct hostile takeovers of illegal mining sites. Government will put a stop to this terror and protect law abiding residents of this province.

We welcome the President's directive to deploy the SANDF to Gauteng to stamp out illegal mining and rising gang violence. We are pleased that these soldiers have already arrived in our province.

### **G6: Mushrooming of informal settlements**

#### **Honourable Members;**

We cannot allow our beautiful province to be reduced to a shanty town. Of late, major parts of our province are witnessing an abnormal rise in a number of informal settlements. To stop this:

- We have resolved that all law enforcement agencies and municipalities will not allow the building of new informal settlements in our province;

- We have established a multi-disciplinary team to attend to the mushrooming of informal settlements;
- The first informal settlement to be removed by this team was Plastic City in Ekurhuleni with over 2500 people;

We thank the Ekurhuleni municipality for leading from the front. This is not being against the poor and the homeless. We are against the ‘Mkhukhu’ mafias who are taking advantage of our people.

The next informal settlement was Plastic View in Tshwane. We went there with the SAPS, metro police and Home Affairs officials. However, we were not successful but we have agreed to return later this year.

Tomorrow we will be in Benoni at the Chief Albert Luthuli mega housing project where we will hand over 188 walk up units which will benefit people who were staying in the following informal settlements: Chris Hani, Gabon, Zenzele informal settlements, Daveyton old section, Benoni, Actonville, Crystal Park, Mayfield Ext.1, 6 & 7, Etwatwa, Barcelona, Emaphupheni and Wattville.

We have reported before that the government has identified Makause informal settlement in Ekurhuleni as a key focus area for development and relocation to improve the living conditions of its residents. I am pleased to report that we have since acquired 200 hectares of land to upgrade this informal settlement. The process of land transfer and registration to City of Ekurhuleni is underway.

In Tshwane, the city identified 33 municipal owned hijacked buildings. And to date, they have reclaimed 7 which have been put out to the market for sale. The remaining buildings will be put to market this year. Marabastad plays a crucial role in the history of our country and cannot be forfeited to illegal foreigners. It is within this context that 12 properties covering 2.7 hectares of land in Marabastad have been demolished and will be put out to the market in the next quarter.

### **Alternative Sanitation**

We are successfully piloting innovative alternative sanitation solutions in informal settlements. This will ensure that residents have access to clean, safe and dignified

sanitation services. These systems are quick to install, use minimal water, and do not require conventional sewer infrastructure.

We connected 620 stands in Nooitgedacht Informal Settlement to a solar-powered on-site treatment system and commissioned more than 1 000 yard-based toilet units in Soul City. In Bophelong Informal Settlement, over 200 units are already in use.

Building on this progress, we will expand this intervention to other informal settlements across the province, as part of our commitment to restoring dignity and improving the quality of life for our residents.

### **Madam Speaker;**

On 27 February 2026, we will be handing over 1 000 title deeds to residents at Obed Mthombeni Nkosi mega project in Ratanda, Lesedi Local Municipality. At the Impumelelo Extension 4 Mega project in Devon, we will allocate 132 units made up of 80 walk-up units and 52 stand-alone units.

### **Honourable Members;**

We welcome the rapid investment by the private sector in human settlements, with over R100 billion invested in reshaping our urban footprint. Developments such as Mooikloof Mega City, Lufhereng, Green Creek and the Waterfall City expansion are a testament to private sector confidence in our province.

As the public sector, we have constructed almost 7000 housing units in the current financial year. We continue to prioritise the elderly, persons with disabilities, and military veterans, as well as individuals who have been on the waiting list for several years. Our target is to construct 8 644 houses in the new financial year.

To improve housing delivery, we are focusing on providing fully serviced sites to qualifying residents who can build houses for themselves, as part of the groundbreaking Rapid Land Release Programme. We have released over 13 000 serviced stands since 2020, and in 2025 alone, we released over 3 600.

### **G7: Electricity**

## **People of Gauteng;**

Our efforts to eradicate loadshedding and stabilise energy provision have yielded positive results. We would like to thank the national government as represented by Minister Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, who is in our midst tonight. Together with municipalities, we have played our part by undertaking initiatives related to transformers, smart meters and renewable energy. We are now shifting from emergency expansion to long-term energy security

## **Waste to Energy**

Faced with the challenge of rapid landfill airspace depletion in our province, we are undertaking Waste to Energy Projects in Gauteng.

We are undertaking an **Integrated Waste Management Facility** to service the 3 metros, focusing on the areas of Midrand, Tembisa and Centurion. The project will entail several waste diversion technologies, including clean material recovery facilities, Composting, Biogas, combustion of waste material and Green Hydrogen. This project is estimated to cost R10 billion to develop.

## **G8: Gender-Based Violence and Femicide;**

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

The declaration of Gender-based violence and femicide as a national disaster demands urgency and coordination. In response, we have:

- Rolled out 152 active green doors to provide victims with much needed safe place, counselling and advice on opening cases against perpetrators;
- Reached over 270 000 households through the GBVF Brigades Outreach Programme within our TISH Communities;
- We will strengthen our multidisciplinary response, including the establishment of a Provincial GBVF Council.

As part of ensuring faster responses to GBVF incidents and assistance, we advise that our residents should download the **e-panic button** app which is freely available

on the App Store of many mobile phones. To date, over 170 000 residents have registered on the e-panic button application with about 60 000 having used it to call for help.

We are also grateful for the work of the GBV brigades, private security companies and private ambulance services for their continued support. As Gauteng, we must defeat GBVF once and for all.

### **G9: Drug abuse (Anti-Substance Abuse)**

#### **People of Gauteng;**

In our fight against drugs, we have removed over 7 million grams of dagga, over 94 000 grams of cocaine, and 702 million mandrax tablets from the streets of Gauteng.

Our “*Tswa Daar*” Anti-Substance abuse campaign was successfully rolled out across the province on 27 October 2025. On the day of the launch, more than 28 400 service users were admitted for substance use disorder, including in-patient treatment centres, while others were admitted to NPO-funded treatment facilities

We also agree with you, Honourable President, that as a country, we have an alcohol abuse problem. We will consult with the sector to drastically reduce the issuing of new liquor licenses and stamp out fraudulent liquor licenses without mercy. Together with the police, we have confiscated 540 thousand litres of alcoholic beverages from illegal taverns, nightclubs and other businesses.

#### **Madam Speaker;**

### **G10: Service at our hospitals and clinics;**

#### **Madam Speaker;**

It is generally known that our public hospitals have the best talent in terms of doctors, specialists and healthcare professionals. The problems we have in our hospitals are long queues, manual paperwork, old infrastructure and overcrowding. It's within this context that we have undertaken the following initiatives:

- **On Electronic digitisation:** Our efforts to digitise the health systems are yielding progress, with the following 10 hospitals completed and 5 more underway. These are:
  - Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital; Tembisa Hospital; Sebokeng Hospital; Thelle Mogoerane Regional Hospital; Steve Biko Academic Hospital; Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital; Leratong Hospital; Helen Joseph Hospital; Tambo Memorial Hospital and Jubilee Hospital;
- **On Queue management:** We are eliminating queues in our facilities using technology to enhance service delivery;
- We are piloting the implementation of the **forensic pathology management system** in facilities, starting with Carletonville Forensic Pathology Services;
- Finally, we will open the **Johannesburg Forensic Pathology Laboratory**, following years of construction delays. This will go a long way towards reducing the backlogs in DNA test results that are desperately needed by the criminal justice system;
- We have completed **27 major health refurbishment** projects in the last financial year, prioritising emergency units, theatres, maternity wards, clinics, and mental health facilities. Some of the projects included the Jubilee District Hospital and the Bertha Gxowa Hospital.

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

Encouraging work continues to be made in **cancer and radiology services**. By the end of December 2025, the 1200 patient backlog at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital (CMJAH) was reduced to 200 patients. We must make cancer treatment backlog history in our province.

We have also installed new MRI machines at Steve Biko Academic Hospital, Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital, and Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital, closing diagnostic gaps. Linear Accelerators for cancer treatment have been installed at Chris Hani Baragwanath and Dr George Mukhari hospitals

Gauteng bears the brunt of the cancer scourge with over 41 000 new pathology confirmed cases nationally, of which 37% were diagnosed in this province. Despite

this heavy burden, Gauteng remains the best positioned province to lead cancer system reform, research, and innovation nationally.

We are a generation that can kiss **HIV/AIDS** goodbye in our lifetime. We have resolved to be the first province to stock and distribute the HIV/AIDS defeating vaccine Lenacapavir (LV) when it's made available.

### **G11: Lack of schools (Education)**

#### **People of Gauteng;**

Education is a great equaliser. It accounts for the difference between poverty and social mobility.

I wish to take this opportunity to recognise and celebrate two exceptional young students from our province:

- **Nkateko Moyane**, a Grade 11 learner from Daleview Secondary School in Ennerdale, for his outstanding achievement on the global stage. Nkateko was awarded a Gold Medal at the 2026 Initiative for Research and Innovation at the STEM Global symposium held in India;
- **Tanya Jakeni**, has won the 2025 international debate in Finland, earning top speaker and researcher honours.

Allow me to also congratulate the matric class of 2025 on attaining 89.06%, the highest ever overall pass rate achieved by the Grade 12 cohort since the introduction of the NSC qualification.

We are proud that the investment in township schools is yielding dividends. In the last **Matric Exam**, 20 township schools gave us 100% matric pass rate, far ahead of the majority of former Model C schools.

Of these, four schools attained Bachelor pass rates of above 90% and above, a remarkable achievement that speaks to the resilience of our learners and the dedication of our educators. Honourable members, join me in congratulating all 20 of these school principals who are here this evening.

I want to single out these two township schools in particular.

- **Lufhereng Secondary School**, out of 182 learners 179 achieved Bachelor passes;
- **Siyabonga Secondary School**, out of 212 matriculants 197 obtained Bachelor's passes.

I want to thank Telkom for donating a full campus to teach our children **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. The world is accelerating at breakneck speed towards general AI and Artificial Super Intelligence. This evolution will remarkably change the world as we know it.

Through AI, the opportunities are boundless. Opportunities to monitor, design and implement water and electricity infrastructure; to protect our systems from cyber-attacks, corruption and fraud and to increase our capability to fight lawlessness.

As a result, Gauteng is considering the establishment of an AI office to engage and coordinate with the CSIR, state entities and the private sector, in line with our vision and mission to realise an AI-infused future for our province.

Our **school admission online registration** process will be improved and strengthened to ease pain and frustration of our parents. The online registration is an important transformation tool to ensure all our schools are accessible to all our children. To ease this pain, we are constructing 18 additional new schools.

In January, **we opened two new schools**, and next month we will open Ratanang Primary School in Hammanskraal. This top school features 28 classrooms, computer labs and a fully digitised teaching environment, sports facilities and learner-friendly combi courts. No one invests better in township school infrastructure than us.

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

The **tragic and traumatic scholar transport accident** that took place in Vanderbijlpark resulted in the loss of life of 14 learners. We must do so much more to ensure that the lives of our children are safe and sound. We are focusing on ensuring that all scholar transport in the province is safe and compliant.

This will be achieved by strengthening and monitoring the regulation. Let me also appeal to the scholar transport industry to comply with the regulation to ensure that our children are transported to school safely.

## **G12: Failing/distressed infrastructure projects and CBDs**

**Honourable Members;**

### **Government Precinct Development**

As part of revitalising the Johannesburg CBD, we are escalating the refurbishment of the 18 government-owned buildings. Valued at R8 billion, this 30-month programme will create over 2,500 construction jobs.

### **Skills Development**

As part of our commitment to reduce dependencies on tenders, we are building the capacity of the state. Today we will unveil 500 of the 2 500 young people who will be employed to fix broken taps, paint public paving, and fix broken toilets.

**Honourable Members;**

As part of our **Nasi iSpani programme**, on Friday, I joined the Minister of Employment and Labour, Ms Nomakhosazana Meth, in Atteridgeville, where we ignited the Gauteng labour market with a R1.5 billion investment, under the Labour Activation Programme (LAP); unlocking over 30 000 high-impact training and workplace opportunities.

## **G13 plus 1**

**Honourable Members;**

Please join me in acknowledging the process started in 2023 by the former Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, which has now culminated in the publication of the White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration, and Refugee Protection.

Gauteng bears the brunt of undocumented foreign nationals. Therefore, we will continue to participate in this White Paper process. We have already made submissions that influenced the content and final outlook of the bill.

### **G13 Plus 1: Disaster Management (Sinkholes, Climate Change, etc)**

#### **Residents of Gauteng;**

Sinkholes continue to be a major safety and infrastructure issue. Merafong Local Municipality successfully backfilled the open sinkholes on Sompane and Phabang road. Resettlement efforts are also underway, with a total of 39 out of 47 households successfully relocated from the red zone to the Khutsong.

#### **E-indigent**

Last year, we announced the development of the e-indigent register as a mechanism to ensure that subsidies are directed to the poorest and most vulnerable residents while those who have the financial means to pay for services are correctly identified. The e-Indigent Register has now been piloted in Mogale City, Rand West, and Merafong. We are working towards ensuring the full rollout of a fully fleshed and functional system in the foreseeable future.

With this system coming live later this year, the current challenges faced by the residents of Tembisa will be removed immediately. Those that cannot afford to pay for municipal services will benefit and those that can afford will be encouraged to pay.

#### **People of Gauteng;**

#### **Foot and Mouth disease (FMD)**

Gauteng is facing severest and prolonged Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in recent history, which began in April 2025 following the illegal movement of infected cattle into the province. By January 2026, 195 confirmed cases affecting 261 000 cattle had been recorded, with the likelihood of under-reporting.

In response, the provincial government has implemented a coordinated intergovernmental strategy, including strict livestock movement controls, quarantine

and vaccination measures, intensified roadblocks to curb illegal transport, and a unified communication campaign. To date, 286 000 cattle have been vaccinated, with additional doses secured, while farmers are urged to strengthen biosecurity and cooperate fully with veterinary authorities to contain and end the outbreak.

## **Social Cluster**

### **Madam Speaker;**

It's compulsory for us as the Gauteng government to protect the weak, poor and vulnerable members of our society especially children of the poor. Through our Bana Pele programme, we have distributed pro-poor basket services to our children as follows:

- 1 738 266 School nutrition programme;
- 1 360 889 Dignity packs;
- 203 653 Food parcels;
- 127 291 School uniforms;
- 238 000 learners access scholar transport.

### **Honourable Members;**

## **Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation**

Bidding for and hosting major events is one of Gauteng's most effective tools for driving economic growth, tourism, and social transformation. Over the past year, we successfully hosted a diverse portfolio of high-impact events that delivered tangible socio-economic benefits to our communities.

I am proud to announce that 54 top golfers in the world will land in our province as part of what is acclaimed as the World Cup of Golf. Our province has been asked to host the **inaugural LIV Golf South Africa tournament** from 19-22 March 2026 at Steyn City Golf Club, Johannesburg. This multi-year partnership is expected to generate significant tourism revenue, create thousands of jobs, and position Gauteng as Africa's premier sporting destination.

March will also see Gauteng host the **Basketball Africa League** at the Sunbet Arena in Pretoria from the 27th of March to the 5th of April. This NBA-supported continental tournament brings Africa's top club teams to our province, boosting tourism, supporting our economy and reinforcing Gauteng's position as a global sporting destination and the Home of Champions.

One such event for socio-economic benefit to our communities is the **Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs Derby**. While others see this just as a sensational Soweto Derby, we in Gauteng see it as an economic activity. In a single weekend, this event generates millions of rands through ticket sales, hospitality, and merchandise. It attracts over 80,000 fans, boosting tourism and hospitality sectors, while significantly benefiting informal traders and township-based entrepreneurs.

**Honourable Members;**

### **Traditional Leaders**

I am pleased to announce that the Commission on Traditional Leaders has finalised its report. Following consultation with traditional leadership, the report will be released.

### **ICT**

During the 2025/26 financial year, we expanded connectivity across the province by linking schools, clinics, hostels, and libraries through the Gauteng Provincial Network. This included new internet and public wi-Fi hotspots. These facilities offer residents daily access to online learning platforms, job portals, government services and entrepreneurial opportunities. We will continue with the rollout until we cover the whole of Gauteng with Wi-Fi.

### **TenderSwift**

The majority of reported corruption cases relate to human interference in tender processes. We are proud to introduce a paperless process coupled with non-human interference to further strengthen our open tender system. We have introduced the TenderSwift procurement system to modernise the manual tender processes.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **Honourable Members;**

This year marks the **140th anniversary** of the celebrated City of Johannesburg and the 50 years of the iconic **Market Theatre**, an artistic and cultural institution on whose stage some of the most creative minds in the history of our country demonstrated the evils of the racist politics of the apartheid state. Market Theatre remains the 'theatre of our struggle'. Our province is proud to be home to this world historical city and its incomparable cultural centre.

Gauteng will also host historic commemorations such as the **30th Anniversary of the Constitution**, the **50th June 16 Soweto anniversary** and the **70th anniversary of the women's march**. We will deliver a unified programme that celebrates our heritage, honours our struggles, and showcases the great sacrifices of stalwarts such as Mama Sophia De Bruyn, who is our guest of honour tonight. Our commitment is to ensure that no one in our province does not know her.

### **Madam Speaker;**

Let me take this opportunity once again to thank the political party that I have the honour to represent and the political parties forming part of the GPU for their unwavering commitment to making our province work. I am also thankful to the parties that are represented in the Legislature. Their role enhances the democratic ethos in our province.

I want to thank the MECS, Executive mayors, DG, HODs, staff in my office and the people of our province for working together to better our province.

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

Our province is the economic centre of our country. This puts huge responsibility on the shoulders of those of us charged with the responsibility to make meaningful change in the lives of the residents of Gauteng.

This is never easy and will never be easy. The journey is never plain sailing. However, we remain committed to overcoming. We will continue to do everything humanly possible to realise the Gauteng of our dreams.

**Madam Speaker; Honourable Members; Residents of Gauteng;**

President Nelson Mandela advised us that ***"Do not judge me by my successes; judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again."***

I thank you!