

**SPEECH BY HELEN ZILLE
PREMIER OF THE WESTERN CAPE**

**STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**

**18 February 2011
10h00**

Honourable Speaker

Cabinet colleagues

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition

Members of the diplomatic corps

Leaders of political parties

Honourable members of the national and provincial parliaments

Leaders of local government

Director-General and Heads of Department

Religious leaders

Community leaders

Colleagues and friends

Citizens of the Western Cape

Namkelekile Nonke. Baie welkom aan almal hier vandag

It is always a profound honour to make this opening speech of the parliamentary session.

Each one of us was elected to represent all the people of our province, and we embrace this responsibility with dedication and humility. This House is the place where government is called upon to account for its actions, where every bill is debated and where the money we spend is scrutinised.

The often heated exchanges to which we have grown accustomed are generally a good thing. It shows that our democracy is robust; that there is space for differences and disagreements. And, as our democracy matures, it is essential to ensure that the

debate in this House focuses on alternative solutions. We cannot build a shared future if we remain trapped in the conflicts of the past.

Of course, the legacy of our tragic past is still with us, and will be for years ahead. This government is committed to redressing that legacy in the shortest possible time by the most sustainable means. Let us therefore accept each other's good faith. Let us move away from gratuitous insults and racial posturing. Let us make the issues the issue.

So, before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and her caucus. I also wish to pay tribute to the thousands of public servants who keep the wheels of government turning. Many of them embody the concept of public service in its best sense. The Western Cape would not be South Africa's best run province without them.

Speaker, forty seven years ago, in his famous statement from the dock, Nelson Mandela set out his vision of a free and prosperous South Africa. He said:

"I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

In those few lines, repeated so often in my family home as I was growing up, he captured the South African dream. Back then, in 1964, it seemed these words would remain a dream as decades of escalating racial conflict followed.

But we stand here today; celebrating freedom in a democratic South Africa – an immeasurably better place now than it was then. And we know now that the impossible is possible. That nothing is beyond us. That we can shape our own future. And so we recommit ourselves to realising the South African dream, articulated so clearly by the father of our nation, for future generations.

Speaker, Mario Cuomo, the former governor of New York State, once famously said, "You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose." And I suppose he was right. But I also believe that when you campaign for ideals you should govern to achieve them. Sifuna iPhondo liphumelele kuba sifuna umZantsi Afrika uphumelele. Ons wil dit regkry sodat ons van Suid-Afrika 'n sukses kan help maak.

That is why, notwithstanding the scale of the challenge, despite the constraints that beset us, and accepting our own frailties and failings, we must keep our eyes fixed firmly on the prize. Just as Nelson Mandela did through days long and dark.

And the prize for us is the Western Cape of our dreams. A place where children grow up taking their freedom for granted. Where every child is safe, sheltered, nourished and loved. Where learning opens the door to opportunity, and a growing economy the path to prosperity.

In the Western Cape of our dreams, every child can shape her own destiny and live a life she values.

In the Western Cape of our dreams, unemployment is a temporary condition, not a life sentence. Because risk-taking entrepreneurs have the space to drive innovation, invest their resources and create jobs. Because workers in factories and on farms are treated fairly and given chances to advance themselves and their families. And because skilled immigrants and investment capital are seen as an opportunity, not a threat.

The Western Cape of our dreams is a place where people easily connect with each other and the rest of the world through functional infrastructure and modern technology. Things work.

People recognise their duty to conserve the rich environment of our small corner of this blue planet, across which we all temporarily pass.

It is a magnet to tourists and investors. It is the gateway to the rest of our continent. It is a place where people want to live, work and relax.

It is a place where diversity is celebrated as a source of strength, and is not the cause of division. It is a place where all people feel welcome and at home.

It is a place that links effort and reward, where people are judged not by the colour of their skins or the strength of their political connections, but by the content of their characters.

Speaker, we must keep our eyes fixed firmly on the prize. We know that a gulf separates our dream from our reality. But we are not in public service to be hand-wringing victims of circumstance. We were elected to make a difference, not to make excuses. Or, in the words of Robert Kennedy, recently quoted by President Obama:

“The future is not a gift. It is an achievement.”

Die toekoms is geen gawe nie. Dis 'n prestasie. Ikamva ayisosipho. Yimphumelelo.

South Africans recognise this more than most. While the world hailed our first democratic election and negotiated Constitution as a miracle, we knew it was because we believed a shared future was better than a divided past. This sort of common sense is a South African attribute. It made the new South Africa a shared achievement, but it also requires us to build on these foundations together.

Government has a role. Our role is to extend to every person the opportunity to live a life he or she values. But citizens also have a part to play. It is to take responsibility for making the most of the opportunities on offer. Building a shared future requires each of us to understand our role and what it means to achieve the better life for all.

This is still a very distant dream, indeed a mirage, for far too many people in our province, particularly those trapped in extreme poverty. Poverty is the biggest challenge we face. Armoede is ons grootste uitdaging. Intlupheko yeyona ngxaki esijongene nayo.

The tragedy of the poverty trap is typified by the baby born to an unskilled, single teenage parent, who has dropped out of school and relies on a child grant. The young mother seeks out teenage pursuits and resents her premature burden of parental responsibility. Unprepared and under-parented, her child eventually goes to a dysfunctional school, where she falls behind from the start. She isn't taught the basics of literacy and numeracy, which makes mastery of the curriculum impossible.

Alcohol and drugs are easily available at the shebeen next door. At first they are an occasional diversion. Before long she cannot get by without them. Like her mother fifteen years previously, she gets pregnant and drops out of school, without the skills to get a job. Her baby's father moves on. She is powerless to enforce her sexual choices in a patriarchal environment. In time she tests positive for HIV, and becomes dependent on state sponsored drugs to stay alive. By her mid-20s she has several children.

She puts her name on the housing waiting list, along with hundreds of thousands of others. Ten years later she is still waiting for her house and living in desperate circumstances, probably in a shack and possibly without clean water, sanitation and electricity. Life is a struggle for survival. She joins a service delivery protest and demands: where is my house? Where is my job? What has the government done for me?

Speaker, this is an extreme example of the poverty trap, but by no means an isolated one. More people are sucked into this vortex than we would care to admit. Far too many children in our province are surrounded by despair. Far, far too many fall victim to alcohol and drugs. And even for those who don't, very often their childhood ends without the benefit of a decent education or the prospect of a job.

Speaker, poverty blights our democratic landscape and cheapens our freedom. It stands between us and the South Africa for which Nelson Mandela struggled; between us and the Western Cape of our dreams.

But there are other stories in our province. Stories that show us a way to overcome poverty and bridge the gulf between our reality and our dreams. I'd like to share one

with you. It is a true story about a child born into deep poverty in another province. His father disappeared when he was one month old. His mother brought him and his siblings to Cape Town in her struggle to survive. They live in a backyard shack.

His mother was determined to do her best for her children. She kept looking for work until she found a job at the fruit and veg section of a supermarket. She used her wages to nourish her children. Her son went to the local school, led by an outstanding principal and staffed by teachers, all selected on merit, by a governing body that recognises excellence and understands their children's futures depend on it. The partnership between parents and teachers is strong.

The school has the required facilities, including an internet-linked computer laboratory, a small library, a hall and a sports field. The garden is neat and the buildings are maintained.

This young boy begins to thrive in his new surroundings and develops his talent for science and mathematics. The school remains open late into the night so that the students can study in a safe and quiet environment. They download past papers on the internet and have access to newspaper study guides and exam tips. Their teachers finish the curriculum and leave enough time for revision.

He achieves 7 distinctions, including 97% for mathematics and the top award in the province for life sciences.

The young man in this story, Asavela Rawe, is now studying actuarial science at the University of Cape Town. His mother, Mrs Lungiswa Rawe, joins us as our special guest today. She symbolises the hundreds of thousands of mothers in our province, and the millions across our country, who are doing what they can to be good parents. Siyavuyisana, Mama. Siyazingca ngonyana wakho.

Of course, Asavela's story is an extreme example. He is a true outlier. But what interested me is that his school, Masibambane, that serves the poorest of the poor, achieved a 95% matric pass rate and 24 subject distinctions. It shows us what is possible when all role players understand what it means to create an opportunity and

to use one. And Masibambane is not the only school doing so. Watch places like Matthew Goniwe Memorial, Masiphumelele, Sophumelela, Zola Senior, Oval North and Worcester Sekondêr. They are replicating this story across the province. Leaving school with good results should open the door to the next opportunity, and then the next, in a cohesive society where we all understand our roles and fulfill them.

Speaker, a dream without a plan will remain a mere dream, however inspiring it may be. So I now turn to some hard-working prose.

Tabled before you today is our plan. It summarises our agenda for action and encapsulates our contribution to realising the South African dream in the Western Cape. We have deliberately called it a draft plan. We want to have an inclusive and honest conversation about it, and we want to learn from better ideas. We will look out for possible unintended consequences and adapt where necessary. When circumstances change, our plan will change.

Speaker, our plan is the product of much analysis, consultation and debate. It does not offer a quick fix or a silver bullet. But over time, as we work to implement it day-by-day, the people of our province will start experiencing the difference. It cannot all be achieved in one term. But it can all be achieved. If we stay the course.

Speaker, our purpose in government is to extend the hand of opportunity to the people of the Western Cape so that they can escape poverty, shape their own destinies and live lives they value.

That is why we have made a clear choice to put economic and employment growth at the front and centre of our agenda for the Western Cape. A choice for growth is a choice for the poor.

Speaker, there is only one way to overcome poverty and realise the dream of opportunity for all. Unless we ensure that everyone has the chance to get a job, the South African dream will never be more than a dream. A job is a passport out of poverty and the start of the path to prosperity.

So we are delighted that President Zuma agrees that jobs should be our number one priority. We will work towards the same goal to ensure we all succeed.

But identifying objectives and setting priorities is the easy part. The hard part is working out how to reach your desired destination. Otherwise good intentions sink into the quick-sand of political compromise and ideological contradiction.

Our policy for growth and jobs is clear. We understand and embrace the reality that government cannot create new jobs. Our national Minister of Finance tells us that the public sector wage bill has already extended beyond what our country can afford and beyond levels of productivity.

Growing businesses create jobs. Government's job therefore is to create an environment that attracts investors, encourages innovation and supports initiative. Because growing businesses hire people, train them and empower them to improve their lives.

And so we are crystal clear on our role as a provincial government. Let me set it out for you.

First, we must ensure that government is clean, efficient and effective. Corruption is stealing from the poor, those most in need of the state's assistance. It saps confidence and drives away investment. Corruption makes poor people poorer. And service delivery failure is a waste of good money and a breach of public trust.

Second, we must provide the infrastructure needed for growth and jobs. In the case of provincial and local government, that means roads, public transport, bulk services, schools, hospitals and clinics.

Third, we must get out of the way of people trying to start businesses and grow enterprises. That means designing a pro-growth planning environment that ensures sustainability. It also means efficient implementation of administrative processes. We

have to achieve an attitude adjustment, shifting citizens' experience from red-tape to red carpet.

Fourth, we must work with the private and higher education sectors to build a brand that attracts investors, tourists and students to our region. And then we must help to promote the region in partnership with all the key stakeholders.

Fifth, we must ensure a steady supply of healthy, well-educated people prepared to play their part in a dynamic, growing economy.

Let me outline our plan to implement this growth agenda.

Clean government

In the Western Cape, our commitment to clean, effective government is firmly established.

We have put a stop to lavish parties and unnecessary spending.

Last year, in this House, we passed the Business Interests of Employees Act to prevent government employees from doing business with the state.

In the coming weeks, we will finalise our new ministerial handbook which will ensure Ministers are held to high ethical standards.

And we have already strengthened our Forensic Investigation Unit to ensure that cases of corruption can be better detected, investigated and prosecuted.

Our commitment to efficient and clean government is reflected in last year's Auditor-General's report. It was the first time since our democracy began that a province received unqualified audits across all departments and public entities. A clean sweep! Our appreciation goes to all the public servants who made this possible. They are setting the benchmark for public financial management.

Effective government

Clean government is essential, but it is not enough. Government must also spend taxpayers' money effectively, and make a measurable difference to peoples' lives.

In the Western Cape, we are almost finished quantifying every outcome we wish to achieve. Next year, we will link each output captured in our Annual Performance Plans to our outcome indicators to ensure coherence between what we do and what we aim to achieve. It will also allow us to test our interventions for their effectiveness and improve them as we go along.

To ensure we can implement our policy agenda effectively, we have put in place a new transversal management system. Already, it is proving effective at getting departments to work together to achieve our outcomes.

And through our Modernisation Process we have made advances in improving our IT systems, our human capital management, our administrative processes and much besides in an effort to ensure that we deliver efficiently and effectively. This is beginning to pay off. In recent assessments by the Public Service Commission, the Department of Agriculture scored 90% and Human Settlements 86%. We are still awaiting the final outcome of other assessments, against the yardstick of core constitutional principles.

Infrastructure development

Speaker, central to our growth agenda is developing the right infrastructure in the right places. It is no good pouring money into infrastructure projects that do not support growth over the medium and long term. That is why we are completing a growth study to identify each area of the province that is growing, or has the potential to grow. It will serve as vital management information for decision-making on infrastructure investment.

We will also continue to reduce the road maintenance backlog as fast as finances allow and only build new roads where there is direct economic advantage in doing so.

A growing economy must connect people through transport and technology. We have to learn from places like Kenya where an ICT revolution is driving strong economic growth. To emulate this, we are developing a telecommunications strategy, based on a fibre optic network infrastructure that connects government, citizens and the economy to improve productivity and access to new markets. The World Bank has calculated that the economy of a developing country grows by 1.38% for every 10% increase in broadband penetration. We cannot afford to get left behind.

We will also continue to work with the City of Cape Town to establish an integrated public transport system that gives the people of the/city region access to economic opportunity. It is essential that the City assumes full responsibility for all aspects of public transport in the medium term, because fragmented authority leads to a fragmented system.

At the same time, we will continue to work with Metrorail, currently a national competency, to ensure that our rail system adds capacity and provides commuters with a satisfactory experience. We are engaging National Treasury about devolving the Metrorail subsidy directly to cities so that they can set performance standards, codified in performance agreements as a condition for earning the subsidy.

Speaker, the choice for growth and jobs means leveraging our existing assets as a platform for new growth. Our government sits on under-performing assets that should be available for development, attracting new investment, encouraging new businesses, creating new jobs, providing opportunities for well-located housing and generating an income stream to cross-subsidise projects for the poor.

And so, under the leadership of Ministers Alan Winde and Robin Carlisle, regenerating the city, in partnership with the private sector, will be a major focus for us in years ahead. The first phase of the “regeneration project” is almost ready to launch and we will be making a detailed announcement in the near future.

Speaker, the announcement of the sale of the Waterfront this week reflects the confidence that investors have in the future of the province.

Sold for R7 billion four years ago, it changed hands for R10 billion in a deal concluded late last year. In a global property slump this must be the highest return on a property investment anywhere in the world. Such confidence is the basis of future growth that benefits everyone.

The South African consortium who now own it has committed itself to investing a further R4 billion to redevelop parts of the Waterfront. We will liaise with these investors to ensure alignment with our own regeneration plans to maximise efficiency, growth and jobs.

From red tape to red carpet

Speaker, I spoke earlier about moving from a red tape to a red carpet environment for people trying to grow our economy. I should make clear that we believe in appropriate regulation to ensure competition and promote sustainability. But we cannot make it so difficult to do business in South Africa that investors prefer to take their skills and capital elsewhere. We have to achieve the right balance.

In some places, like New Zealand, it takes just 24 hours to register a business online. In Rwanda, it takes 72 hours. In South Africa, it takes 22 days, if you are lucky. I know of cases where it has taken years.

That is why Minister Winde will personally and anonymously track six applications for new businesses in the months ahead, step-by-step, to establish if and where blockages occur and whether the Provincial Government has the constitutional power to remove them.

Meanwhile, Minister Bredell's team in the Department of Environmental Affairs and Planning is in the process of synthesising the many planning laws and regulations into one overarching piece of legislation. We hope to get to a point where planning processes are quick, simple and frustration-free.

We are also in the process of establishing a unit in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism dedicated to identifying opportunities to cut red-tape. We will engage the City of Cape Town and other governments on establishing an intergovernmental team to cut back red tape. We hope to get together an external team from the private sector to critique our efforts and identify bottle-necks that we have failed to open up, because they know better than us what the frustrations are.

But the Province cannot cut out red tape alone. That is why I gave President Zuma a 70-page list of national laws and regulations that hamper service delivery. I was gratified that he gave it prominence at a meeting of the President's Co-ordinating Council and directed the Minister of Co-operative Governance to investigate each one, and amend legislation where appropriate. The Western Cape is assisting with this process. It is, in itself, bound up in red tape, and will take years. But we have to make a start.

I wish to emphasise again that we recognise that if growth is not environmentally sustainable, it will come to a halt once our natural resources are depleted. This is why we are paying special attention to the green economy – particularly renewable energy, water management, pollution reduction and nature conservation.

Our Green Cape initiative launched last year is a think-tank involving the province's brightest green thinkers. Its aim is to turn us into strong international competitors for the tens of billions of rands that will be spent in the renewable energy sector and to facilitate the move to a low carbon economy. The green economy has the potential to create many thousands of jobs.

Future Cape and the establishment of an EDA

Speaker, successful regional economies all have a strong brand that captures the unique characteristics and competitive advantages the region has to offer. If we are going to succeed in bringing investment and jobs to the Western Cape, we will have to market ourselves smartly. For this reason, we are undertaking a process involving

all stakeholders designed to position us attractively in the world economy. We are calling this initiative Future Cape.

At the same time, we are currently planning the establishment of a Western Cape Economic Development Agency. The Cape Town Partnership, under the stewardship of Andrew Boraine, has graciously agreed to consult with a variety of stakeholders and role players before presenting us with a plan for the new Agency. He will do so by the end of June. Provided all the relevant processes are properly completed in time, we hope to have the Agency up and running by the beginning of the 2012 financial year.

Speaker, we understand that a growth agenda is not just an urban agenda. Minister Gerrit van Rensburg and the Department of Agriculture have brought new focus to the task of assisting our agricultural sector to become more competitive. In particular, we wish to strengthen our research capability, already the best on this continent, and enhance our ability to help open foreign markets to our agricultural produce. Our recent engagement with Shandong Province in China is an example of this.

In addition, we successfully petitioned the national Minister to reintroduce the excellent share-equity based land reform schemes that were discontinued a year ago. The Minister agreed with our argument that they provide a sustainable way in which to implement land-reform and lifted the moratorium. Another way we are contributing to rural land reform is our project to provide fruit trees to emerging farmers, which has so far benefitted 3,070 people on 21 farms and creating over 200 jobs.

Education

Speaker, last year, the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report concluded that the biggest constraint on South Africa's growth is the state of our education, health and criminal justice systems. We have to release this brake if we are to drive growth and deliver opportunities for all.

Our economy would grow much faster if we had more skilled people. And far more people would get jobs if they had the right skills. This is why we are establishing the Provincial Skills Development Forum in which, through partnerships with other actors in the field, we will design and align skills development programmes to meet the demands of our growing economy.

But the foundation of any skills development programme must be our school system, where every child must learn how to read, write and calculate. It was gratifying to hear President Zuma mention the three Ts – time, teachers and texts – in his State of the Nation Address last week. This was my mantra when I was MEC here, ten years ago. We have now added two more T's – technology and testing, which are both vital in a modern education system. It is a great achievement that 1,222 schools in the province have been provided with internet-linked computer centres through the Khanya project, started by the DA provincial government in 2000. There are 245 schools left to go, and they will be wired by the first half of next year. This is the largest technology roll-out of its kind in Africa.

Minister Donald Grant is well aware that turning the education system around starts with dedicated and competent teachers and principals. For them, teaching is a vocation, not a vacation. They are in the classroom every day, present, punctual and prepared. Apart from a parent, it is a teacher that most shapes the lives of a child, for better or for worse. The thousands of dedicated and committed teachers are the real architects of opportunity in the new South Africa. I am delighted to see many more bright young people choosing careers in education. There is no greater contribution you can make to your country's future.

It is time to stop finding every possible excuse for failure and start rewarding effort and outcomes in education. Last year, this House adopted the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act. Now, for the first time, principals and deputy-principals can be held accountable for their schools' results. Those that underperform will receive intensive support, including compulsory training for teachers and principals.

Schools that consistently underperform despite this will face a range of interventions including, if necessary, being re-constituted with a new governing body, a new principal and new teaching staff. These are the kind of tough choices a government needs to make when it makes a priority of jobs and growth.

This tough love approach is beginning to bear fruit. Last year – our first full year in office – the matric pass rate increased for the first time in six years. More importantly, the number of candidates who passed also increased. It is no good improving your percentage pass rate every year if there are fewer and fewer learners progressing through the system. There is no point in fooling ourselves. The key measure of the success of an education system is whether there is universal access in grade one and whether we can keep learners in the system for as long as they can benefit from education and exit at the right point -- literate, numerate, skilled, socialised and employable.

Expanding access to quality schools means investing in school infrastructure. Ten schools are in various stages of construction, with a further 15 schools in the planning phase. The location of each has been carefully planned to secure opportunities for all.

Last month, for example, we opened the Claremont High School – the third Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics or STEM centre in our province, a concept started with great effect when the DA was in power briefly a decade ago. These schools seek out learners from diverse backgrounds that have shown an aptitude for science and maths, but who do not have the opportunities that Asavela Rawe had where they are. In a STEM school these young people are guaranteed the foundation they need to become the engineers, scientists, doctors and actuaries of the future.

This year, for the first time ever, anywhere in the country, every child in grades 2-7 will have access to their own maths textbook. We are also the only province to provide reading books for grades 1-6 in the 258 primary schools that serve our poorest communities. Last year, we increased the budget for text books by R101 million. Our goal, in the coming years, is to ensure that every learner has a text book

for every subject in every grade. And we are watching technological innovations with great interest. We look forward to the day when learners will be able to download all the necessary textbooks and study material onto affordable mobile devices.

Increasing wellness

Speaker, poor health, like a poor education, robs people of opportunity. Decent healthcare should not be the preserve of those with medical aids in private hospitals. Our goal is to deliver an excellent, value-for-money public healthcare system that prevents, treats and manages disease.

But we need to start with the main causes of ill-health in the province. We spend 80% of our health budget on treating conditions that could be prevented if people made different choices about their lives.

That is why our wellness agenda focuses so heavily on the “downstream” causes of the burden of disease. These include the spread of HIV and TB, domestic violence and road accidents, often fueled by alcohol abuse, as well as “lifestyle” diseases caused by smoking, a lack of exercise and poor eating habits.

Minister Botha and the Department of Health will lead a transversal programme, in which every department will be involved, to tackle each of these drivers of disease head-on.

Already, our ‘Safely Home’ campaign has increased the number of roadblocks to stop people driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. We have also opened another Safely Home Anti-Drunk Driving Operations War Room (or SHADOW centre) in George, to test blood alcohol levels, with a third due to be opened in Worcester soon. Since we started ‘naming and shaming’ drunk drivers, traffic authorities have reported a decline in drunk driving arrests, despite the increased levels of policing.

And from May last year we began implementing a comprehensive strategy to address drug and alcohol abuse. In addition to reducing drunk driving incidents, we

have succeeded in our partnership with the SAPS, in seizing illegal drugs transported on our roads. We have also increased access to treatment for harmful drug and alcohol use. We have opened two new drug treatment centres (one for youth) and a new school-based outpatient treatment programme in the eastern Metropole. And we have extended the availability of subsidised treatment services to nearly every corner of this province. We have increased the number of centres and programmes that we subsidise to provide free treatment to the public from 6 (mostly metro-based) in 2009 to 24 this year, reaching from the Eden District to the West Coast. As a result, the number of patients receiving treatment this year has increased by 25% from last year (from 3700 to 4400). We have also introduced drug testing into all treatment programmes to measure patient progress, and ensured, for the first time, that aftercare and follow-up services are available to everyone who receives subsidised treatment.

Given the scale of the challenge we face, we need to do much more, particularly for our youth. The sooner that drug and alcohol misuse are detected and appropriately addressed, the better our chances of preventing tragic consequences for everyone concerned. We are therefore restructuring the department of social development's services to align with our 49 education circuits in order to improve the availability of these services to schools. This coincides with our introduction of drug testing in schools, and a new partnership between Social Development and Education to mainstream drug and alcohol education programmes into Life Orientation for all learners in the province. As in many of our areas of service delivery, a major challenge to the expansion of our services in the field of drug treatment and interventions is a shortage of suitably qualified and skilled professionals. For this reason, we have forged a partnership with the Cape Higher Education Consortium and introduced undergraduate and postgraduate courses (and bursaries) to train professionals with expertise in drug and alcohol treatment at three universities. This partnership underlines just how valuable the Western Cape's quality higher education institutions are to the citizens and economy of this region.

Speaker, the fight against HIV/Aids continues. We have reduced the incidence of mother to child transmission to 3% -- the lowest in the country. Between March and December last year, we doubled the number of antiretroviral access points from 81

to 162. In the last year, we have increased the number of people receiving ARVs by 24,000 to just over 92,000. By the end of this financial year, we will have distributed 75 million condoms. In the second half of last year we have tested and counseled over half a million people.

But for all this, South Africa is still in denial about AIDS. Over the years, various campaigns have urged us to “talk about it”. Talk about what? We mostly talk about the wrong things, because it is too difficult to get to the point. The most important book I read during the recess was Helen Epstein’s *The Invisible Cure*. In it she demonstrates, scientifically, why multiple concurrent sexual partners are the real drivers of the AIDS pandemic. We must, of course, make treatment available, and the Western Cape pioneered this under a DA government ten years ago. We will continue to lead from the front. But we still have a long way to go as far as prevention is concerned. If we can prevent preventable diseases there will be so much more to spend on helping those with unavoidable afflictions and disabilities. People living with these conditions also deserve a better life. It is heartbreaking to read of a father who has to risk his life by rowing a boat around the coast from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town to raise money for the treatment his blind child needs so she can distinguish light from darkness.

Speaker, we must also make public health care more accessible.

This year we will complete the Khayelitsha hospital, with the Mitchells Plain hospital due for completion in 2012. New clinics will be built in Kwanokuthula, Malmesbury and Grassy Park. We want to get to a point, eventually, where every person in this province lives in the broad vicinity of a hospital or clinic. And we want to reach the point at which every person has access to chronic medication, even if they are house-bound. A new five year tender will be awarded soon to extend the Chronic Dispensing Unit’s service in urban and rural areas, and to investigate the feasibility of home delivery.

Increasing access to medication and healthcare facilities is crucial. But we also need to improve the treatment people receive once they are there. Last year, we established an Independent Complaints Commission to investigate complaints of

poor quality care at our health facilities. This is a start. But we aim to do more to improve the quality of care. In the second half of this year, we will launch our '2020 vision for healthcare' with a focus on the patient experience at its very heart.

Increasing Safety

A very serious impediment to growth is crime, especially violent crime. Not only does it deter investment and cost jobs, but it violates peoples' right to live without fear. We have to do what we can, within our limited resources and constitutional mandate, to increase the safety of the citizens of this province.

Under the leadership of Minister Albert Fritz, we will continue to exercise oversight over the South African Police Force as we are mandated to do. And we will do it constructively, with the intention of improving the work of the police and increase the safety of our citizens. This year we hope to finalise provincial draft legislation that will formalise roles and responsibilities when it comes to oversight of the police. We are finalising the necessary amendments to the Provincial Traffic Act to provide for regulations to restrict the use of blue lights on our roads to on-duty police vehicles, operating in an emergency.

But, if we are to increase safety in the Western Cape, we have to go beyond oversight. To paraphrase a former British Prime Minister, it is not enough to be tough on crime. We have got to be tough on the *causes* of crime. In the coming years, using a 'whole-of-society' approach, we aim to remove opportunities for people to commit crime, create disincentives for criminals to re-offend and remove the longer-term drivers of crime. Our Department of Community Safety, in partnership with some of the province's top crime experts, is in the process of compiling a detailed plan to achieve these goals.

Speaker, today I have made the case for a jobs and growth agenda. It involves creating opportunities for all, and using those opportunities, to overcome the legacy of our past. This is a redress strategy that works. It is the opposite of manipulating outcomes to benefit your political cronies.

Building an opportunity society involves everyone. It takes time to establish this culture and for its various components to begin working in harmony with one another. But when this happens, we will reach a tipping point – the point at which there is sufficient momentum for significant and sustained social change. Our goal is to reach that point within a generation.

Caring for the poor

As we approach this goal, we must continue to cushion the effects of extreme poverty. That is why we are redoubling our efforts to increase access to housing and basic services. It is why we support social grants to alleviate poverty. And it is why we are working on a plan to develop socially cohesive communities.

Social cohesion is measured by the extent to which people live together harmoniously, feel a sense of belonging, and participate in the civic and social life of their communities. It is an integral component of the opportunity society we are building. When individuals feel empowered, families are functional and communities are connected, there is less crime, substance abuse, child abuse, unemployment and, ultimately, less poverty.

How do we begin repairing our threadbare social fabric?

This is a question we began grappling with as part of our policy-making process. We don't have all the answers yet. And if we get all the other aspects of our plan right, they will serve as a catalyst for cohesion.

In the meantime, we have started a number of initiatives to address social dysfunction.

For example, Minister Ivan Meyer is harnessing the power of sport to get kids off the streets and out of the clutches of the drug dealers. Last year, we established 98 Mass Participation and Opportunity Development Centres or MOD centres, where young people have access to sporting facilities and skills development programmes under the guidance of qualified coaches. Fifty more are due for completion this year.

Children who demonstrate exceptional talent at the MOD centres will be given the opportunity to attend our SHARP centres where they will receive advanced training in their sporting code. They will become the role models that others aspire to be.

A good role model, particularly a functional father figure, is often the difference between success and failure in a child's life. Fathers who do not take responsibility for their children perpetuate dysfunctional families. We must break this cycle. Making a baby requires a man to take the responsibilities of fatherhood. Last year, we started a campaign to raise awareness around maintenance defaulters and to track down men who refused to pay what they owe for their children. In a two week period, we found 71 defaulters resulting in 59 arrests. We traced 210 women who had not collected maintenance money that was owed to them, but incredibly, less than a third of them actually went to the Department of Justice to collect their money. It shows that the state can only do so much. At some point personal responsibility has to kick in.

That is also the purpose of a social grant. It should not entrench and perpetuate dependency. It should offer a stepping stone out of extreme poverty. This is what President Zuma meant when he said grants are not intended to turn South Africa into a welfare state. We agree.

That is why, under Minister Patricia de Lille, we have started a programme to link people on the social grants register with suitable employment opportunities. The Expanded Public Works Programme will also play its part to provide people with a temporary income and work experience.

Another crucial component of our poverty alleviation programme is the school nutrition scheme which was last year expanded to include an additional 14,000 learners. Altogether 350,000 learners receive food each day at 998 schools across the province.

Speaker, expanding access to well-located housing is crucial if people are to seize opportunities and not get left behind. It is one of the great challenges we face in this province.

The more our economy grows, and the more people get jobs, the more they can afford to pay something for their accommodation. This will make it feasible to offer a variety of housing options, and move away from the conventional model of an RDP house on a single plot which drives urban sprawl and entrenches apartheid's legacy.

Minister Bonginkosi Madikizela is driving a variety of interventions, from formalising backyard shacks, to upgrading existing informal settlements, to providing affordable housing through market mechanisms and densifying existing suburbs. We need much more land for this purpose. The bulk infrastructure alone will cost billions. And we have to move away from the model which assumes, from generation to generation, that everyone is owed a house by the state.

Upgrading informal settlements must be a partnership. And, as we have learnt, it usually generates conflict around a myriad issues, between various community factions. This is rich terrain for opportunists of various kinds to promote their own interests and agendas. It usually results in long delivery delays. We must understand that development includes conflict and proceed nonetheless.

That is why it is good to be able to announce that we will be turning the first sod for the upgrading of the Joe Slovo informal settlement in Langa later this month. It will enable us to partner that community in an incremental upgrade on their current well-located land. New greenfields projects, such as Pelican Park, are making good progress for people who have waited decades on the housing database.

But accommodating people is not possible without access to basic services. This is the job of local government. Our role, under Minister Anton Bredell, is to provide oversight and support to municipalities. I would like to congratulate the local authorities across the Western Cape which was last year ranked number one out of all nine provinces for service delivery in the Universal Household Access to Basic Services or UHABS Index. And particularly for providing, according to an independent survey of the South African Institute of Race Relations, greater access for the poor to free basic services like water, sanitation and waste removal than

anywhere else. We must build on these achievements and increase the provision of services still further.

We are expanding the reach of Thusong Centres to give the poor a one-stop shop for government services. In one centre people can pay their municipal accounts, or apply for an ID or social grant, or be trained in starting their own business. Two more Thusong Centres were opened last year in Hawston and Oudtshoorn. Three more will soon be launched in Ceres, Murraysburg and Bitterfontein. Next year two more will be built in Prince Albert and Robertson, and another is in the pipeline for Mossel Bay. We have also introduced a mobile Thusong service to reach more remote rural areas of our province, and will double this service next year.

Speaker we have come a fair way but there is a long distance still to travel and enormous obstacles ahead. As former President Mandela famously said: whenever you cross one hill, there is another mountain to climb.

It is a big step forward that all spheres of government, and all parties, agree that job creating economic growth must be our top priority. At the recent Cabinet Lekgotla I read the framework of the national plan that will be finalised towards the end of this year. I am pleased to say that there is alignment between the emerging national framework and the plan we table here today.

At the Lekgotla, I had the occasion to talk to President Zuma about the future. I asked him to see the Western Cape as an opportunity for South Africa's democracy, not as a threat. The architects of our Constitution, in their wisdom, enabled us to disperse power between different parties across provinces if that is the choice of the voters. This gives us a wonderful opportunity to test alternative policy options and measure their outcomes towards our shared goals of growing opportunity and prosperity for all. I said that we would use the full extent of our constitutional powers in the Western Cape to implement our mandate in the interests of our country as a whole.

With his inimitable charm, he agreed. We intend to take him at his word.

By “we”, I refer to the exceptional team that has forged a strong bond during our first 18 months in government. It is impossible to name them all. I cannot do justice to the debt of gratitude I owe the Director General, Brent Gerber and Ryan Coetzee, my special adviser, for leading the policy development process in this province. They, all the Heads of Department, and their staff, have given our vision form and content, provided the road-map, systems and structures to translate good ideas into real results. My office, so ably led by Lorika Elliot, and my private secretary Donnae Strydom who is faithfully at her desk at 05h30 am each morning to manage my life, often well into the night. You, and the rest of the team, have become so much more than colleagues.

And finally, my husband, Johann, Words cannot do justice to him, nor do I need to wear my heart on my sleeve. He knows what he means to me.

Everything we do in the years ahead will extend opportunities for our poorest citizens to escape the poverty vortex. We have the mandate, we have the people and we have a plan.

We can make real the South African dream.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. God seen Afrika. God bless you all.

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