
THURSDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2020

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

The sign † indicates the original language and [] directly thereafter indicates a translation.

[Hybrid sitting held with some members present in the House and some in virtual attendance through Microsoft Teams]

The House met at 14:15.

The Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: You may all be seated. Order! Hon Premier, hon members, welcome! I would like to also welcome the guests in the gallery. You are the first guests that we welcome here since the beginning of lockdown, so you are welcome, and to also appreciate the presence of the media in our gallery. As you all know, the rules of engagement in terms of the virtual sittings are that, if you are not speaking, please mute your microphone; and for the media, please mute your microphone and your camera, so that you do

not cause a disruption in the sitting itself. You know that you are an important partner and we appreciate your presence as members of the Fourth Estate.

Now for the session to take place orderly I would like to draw the attention of the hon members to the process of raising points of order. You follow the same procedure that we have been following since we have started off. You will indicate by raising your hand and then the Presiding Officer will acknowledge you; and if you are not recognised, you do not speak until such time that you are recognised and, unless otherwise, where you do not have a device that has these features, you can also indicate in the chat room, which we would be able to recognise you.

At this point I recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I give notice that I shall move:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 18, I move that the next sitting of this House scheduled for Friday 23 October 2020, commence at 09:00.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any

objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objections?
Motion agreed to. I recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I give notice that I shall
move:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 20(1), precedence be
given to the two Orders of the Day, on Friday, 23 October 2020. Thank
you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any
objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objections?
Motion agreed to.

At this point, hon members, I would like to draw your attention to the
agreement which was reached in the Programming Authority at the meeting
where the sitting was approved unanimously that this session will specifically
be for the purposes of affording the Premier an opportunity to address this
House. On this occasion no further business other than the address by the
Premier will be entertained.

I also wish to remind the hon members that the debate on the address by the
Premier will take place tomorrow, 23 October 2020, where the hon members

will have the opportunity to fully engage and debate the Premier's address.

I also want to take this opportunity to further recognise the guests that are there and I know there was a special request by the Premier and we have granted that request, hon Premier.

I would like to say to the hon members, we have got hon members as you know that are in the Chamber here, but also the hon members that are on the virtual platform, so we do have a hybrid session which fully quorate for the purposes of this meeting.

I now recognise the hon, the Premier.

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

“The courage needed to get the job done.”

The PREMIER: Mr Speaker, and from what you have just said to the members of the Programming Authority, the hon members of this House and those online; the people of the Western Cape, thank you very much for agreeing to my request to address you here today.

It has been eight months since I set out this Government's priorities at our historic State of the Province Address in Mitchell's Plain. Little did we know that just one month later, President Cyril Ramaphosa would declare a

National State of Disaster that would fundamentally change the trajectory of this country and the demands on our Government.

We find ourselves now in a very different world than we once did then. The reality is that South Africa is now at a fork in the road and the decisions made in this moment will impact each and every one of us in the Western Cape.

As we heard on Tuesday, during Minister David Maynier's address, we have serious headwinds facing us. Speaker, our country's economy is shrinking. Unemployment is growing and South Africa is facing the prospect of a debt crisis. We are now staring into the hippopotamus's mouth. The National Government will look to fund its growing gap by drastically cutting provincial budgets.

At the same time, the catastrophic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and our country's lockdown restrictions are gaining momentum, with poverty, hunger and inequality increasing in the Western Cape and in South Africa. It is this confluence of factors that has brought us to our own fork in the road, and why I address you all here today. The demands on this Government have never been greater, and there will be significantly less money to do the job. This moment that now presents itself therefore requires brave decisions; difficult decisions. It requires us to prioritise, to make a tough call on what we will continue to do and what we can no longer do. This is not an easy process because we run many valuable projects and programmes across this

province. It is time for brave decisions.

Speaker, while we cannot control what is decided at other levels of government, we can be brave here, for this moment requires courage – the courage needed to get the job done and to keep us moving forward; courage not just of this administration, but of everyone in this Parliament. It requires courage from our officials, DG. It requires courage from our businesses and from our trade unions. It requires courage from every single one of us.

I am here today to share with you and the people of our province how we will make the best possible choices in the most difficult of circumstances as we look to recover and move forward, and how we will do this in line with one unwavering guiding principle in mind – that our mission is to create an environment where every single person, no matter the circumstances of their birth, can live a life of true value when they live in our province, because the life of every person matters to us. I am also here today to ask for your support, regardless of political affiliation, as we navigate the road ahead. While there will always be points of disagreement, I know that all we want is what is best for the people of this province. Let us show them that we have the courage to get the job done. Speaker, during a difficult moment such as this, we need not look further than the people of our province for inspiration. They are the epitome of bravery. They stand up to the most trying of challenges each and every day and overcome them. We have all witnessed this remarkable display of determination over the last eight months as we fought together to flatten the curve and save lives.

I want to use this opportunity to thank you - each and every person in our province - for the role that you have played, and will continue to play, in our battle against COVID-19. I especially want to extend our deepest gratitude on behalf of every person in the Western Cape to our frontline workers, be they healthcare workers, admin clerks, police officers, Government officials or teachers. You are all our heroes and we thank you.

Speaker, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the great pain that many of our residents are feeling right now. I want to send my and our deepest condolences to everyone who has lost a loved one during this pandemic. It has been really a tough time for so many in our province. But I also want to recognise the pain that so many people in our province are feeling because they have lost their job, because their business has had to close down. We feel their pain. We understand it and we will do everything we can to change this, to fix this and to move forward.

As we will set out today, we are taking this very seriously and we will do everything we can to get our economy growing so that we can again access jobs and re-open a business in the Western Cape.

While this has been a time of great sadness for many, there have been many, many stories of hope which we can draw inspiration on. One such story, Speaker, is Zuliswa Maqana, and that story of Zuliswa from Samora Machel here in Cape Town is one of a COVID-19 survivor.

On 20 July 2020 Zuliswa was discharged from Groote Schuur Hospital. She was discharged after 77 days in hospital. She spent 54 days in ICU and 51 of those days on a ventilator. Zuliswa did not walk out of the hospital; she danced out of hospital! Yes, you can... [Applause.]

She did not walk out of hospital; she danced out of hospital, but more than that, Speaker, when she walked out of that hospital and danced out of that hospital the doctors and the nurses lined the corridors of that hospital as she, with her recovery, could go home. They also cheered and danced as Zuliswa recovered from COVID-19. Speaker, Zuliswa's life mattered to us, and this is a story of the Western Cape's COVID-19 response, and it was no exception. Across the province our dedicated officials worked tirelessly with professionalism, compassion and sheer grit. From our Hospital of Hope here in Cape Town all the way to George, every person – no matter where they lived – received the best possible care, because every life matters to us.

Speaker, hon members, as we approach our fork in the road and make the tough decisions required of us, we should draw from what is best in our province – the hard but inspiring lessons of the past year, and remember that we are capable of moving mountains when we have the courage to do so, and mountains we did move!

When President Ramaphosa announced that South Africa was to go into Hard Lockdown, our Government did not waste a moment of time in ensuring that

we were prepared for our peak of infection that was still to come. Speaker, our objective was simple; I remember even before that announcement was made, we had already put our disaster team together. We had already assembled the Cabinet and the top officials of this Government and we were already meeting, because we could see what was coming and the one thing that I did not want to do was run out of beds. I did not want us to be in a position that we saw in so many other countries around the world where people were lining up in corridors of hospitals and in parking lots, waiting for healthcare. We also saw coffins lining up in countries around the world. We did not want our citizens to be waiting for beds and we definitely did not want our citizens dying and ending up in coffins piling up in churches not being able to be buried, and everything in between, and so that is what we set about doing in this province.

I remember when the President phoned we were actually at the Tygerberg Disaster Centre when we got that call, and he was phoning all the Premiers, to say, “tonight we are going to announce that we are going to put the country into a disaster declaration”, and Speaker, we used the following declaration which was a lockdown, a Hard Lockdown in this country and in this province we used that lockdown. We required courage to get the job done and we used the lockdown to prepare ourselves so that we could offer quality healthcare to every citizen in this province, so that we could manage this disaster as a province and everything that came at us, and Speaker, the courage that we had we managed to build world-class state-of-the-art field hospitals. We built the CTICC Field Hospital, planned for 800 beds, ended

up 862 beds in six weeks. But not only that hospital; we built three more field hospitals. We built the Médecins Sans Frontières Partnership Hospital in Khayelitsha. We built the R300 Hospital of Hope now on the R300 and we converted the field hospital out in the Winelands.

Speaker, we put 41 quarantine and isolation facilities together in this province so that people who tested positive could make sure that they could isolate themselves and protect themselves from spreading this virus to their loved ones, to their family and their communities. We built testing and triage centres outside of our hospitals across this province so that you could be tested and triaged without going in and affecting people that were already in the hospital system. We delivered medicines, Speaker. We delivered medicines to the doors of our citizens. 800 000 medicine packages have been delivered to the most vulnerable citizens in our province, elderly and people with comorbidities.

Speaker, we put a partnership together. We put a partnership together with the Taxi Industry called the Red Dot Transport System, because during lockdown and curfew we needed to make sure that our nurses could get to work and home again safely themselves, without being infected, but also that they are not infecting other citizens. This partnership has already delivered more than 110 000 trips to get healthcare workers to and from work. The same Red Dot System also took patients to our Q and I facilities; 11 400 trips to and from our Q and I facilities.

Speaker, we put together the biggest communication system and biggest communication campaign that we have ever done as a government, to make sure that we were working with our citizens to get behavioural change right so that we could actually fight and flatten this curve, fight this virus and flatten this curve, and if you look at the data that came back at the end of the day from the big data companies like Google and Apple and they looked at cell phone movement across South Africa the citizens helped us flatten this curve. In this province the citizens stayed at home and made sure they were playing their part so we could get through pandemic. Speaker, we also had the courage to try new methodologies by launching our own Evidence-Based Hotspot Strategy. That strategy is still operating today, and that hotspot strategy taken to National Government which was implemented across South Africa.

Speaker, we had the courage to deploy our Neighbourhood Watches and the Project Chrysalis students to help us in those hotspots to make sure that we flattened the curve. We had the courage to trust science and medical advice and we put together a Diabetic Action Plan to reduce the risk of diabetics who ended up catching this virus and ended up in our hospitals and our high-care systems.

In the beginning, when we first started dealing with the virus, a diabetic ending up in an ICU system in our hospital system had a 28% chance of not coming out again. The interventions by this Health Department reduced that 28% down to 4.5% – world class! [Applause.]

Speaker, we also had the courage to be absolutely honest and open and transparent with the citizens of this province. We put together a Dashboard and Data System and we made that available to the citizens of the province. I know businesses made use of that dashboard system. Every day citizens would wait for the dashboard to be updated so that they could understand what was happening in the community or the town or the district where they lived, and I was really, really encouraged when I saw that our team in the Department of Health who put this dashboard together actually won the silver medal in competition with private sector companies when they were measured on data efficiencies and data projects that came about during COVID-19, absolutely amazing that we could compete in that space and I really thank those officials who played a part in making sure that I could talk about these things today and so many more.

Speaker, we had the courage to get the job done and importantly, we also had the courage to make tough choices; to listen to our experts who told us that high-flow nasal oxygen was working better, when some were demanding that we find and fund expensive ventilators; the courage, Speaker, to only promise and plan facilities that we knew we had the numbers to staff adequately and professionally. And of course, to trust our citizens who told us they could self-isolate safely when others demanded that we build huge isolation facilities. I am so proud of the hard work of every person in this Government in ensuring that no one in the Western Cape had to suffer the indignity of not having properly equipped hospital beds available for them.

Beryl Williams from Lotus River, who is here today, was a patient admitted to our Brackengate Hospital. She too, colleagues, she too danced out of that hospital! [Applause.] When we asked her what was her experience like, the first word that came out of her mouth was “wow!”, and this again shows you that it was the dedication and the commitment of our healthcare workers on the frontline that helped make her journey matter.

Speaker, we however soon realised that we are not just confronting a public health emergency. The Hard Lockdown and subsequent restrictions, which at times lacked common sense, have created a second, equally dangerous pandemic that will arguably bear the greatest loss of life over time; a pandemic of growing unemployment, poverty, hunger and inequality. Facing this reality, we knew that even more was required of us and our teams, and that in this province the second pandemic would and will continue to be addressed with equal determination and bravery.

Right away, we launched a major humanitarian response, partnering with civil society and NGOs in the delivery of food parcels and other support. NGOS, community leaders, faith-based organisations and ordinary residents together helped deliver more than 15 million meals across this province. We persisted, even when some tried to stop us feeding our vulnerable young children at school. We delivered over eight million meals to the children at our schools in this province. [Applause.]

Speaker, there were many, many amazing stories of teachers and school staff and volunteers that came together to ensure that our children were fed, and I would like to tell you about one such story in George. A special-needs school in George, called Carpe Diem, and the principal, Elzeth Grobler, she decided during lockdown that her special-needs students still needed that meal that they gave them every day and so what she did was she made sure that that meal was dropped off at the homes of those young people. [Applause.]

But Speaker, it actually went further than that, because when she got to those homes she found that that meal for that young learner who was in her school actually was a meal that was going to feed the whole family because they did not have food on the table, and that very school then expanded what they do, went about finding other volunteers and made sure that they did not just deliver a meal as they had in their budgets, they made sure that they delivered enough food for each of those 200 families for the duration of that lockdown.

Speaker, this illustrates the real impact of our decision to continue feeding children and the real impact of Government and citizens tackling shared challenges hand in hand.

Speaker, we also launched over 2000 food gardens across the province, so that household by household, communities could become more food secure, but this would not be enough, nor would it be sustainable as long as the

economy continued to be restricted and jobs lost, and so we did not stop there. We stood up for small businesses and lobbied for key job-creating sectors of our economy to open safely. Then, when some wanted us to go back to Level 5, we backed the people of the Western Cape and fought for jobs too. We developed detailed health-and-safety guidelines for businesses so that they could open safely and created a hotline for employees to report businesses which did not, and because we know that the education of our children is essential and if we are to fight poverty and inequality, we backed our schools to open safely too, providing 2.4 million masks and nearly a million litres of sanitiser to schools across the province. We stood up for you and spoke truth to power. This was in the President's Coordinating Council and in meetings with Ministers, in direct engagements across our province. We backed the people of the Western Cape because every life matters to us.

I share this experience of the last eight months with you, because it showed us that what is possible when we work with the courage that will be required of all in the months ahead. We cannot go back to the status quo, where projects take many years to get off the ground, when we are facing a crisis and there is simply no time.

We have proven that we can govern with agility, innovation and efficiency and we can do it cleanly, with an excellent governance record. We do not steal the people's money in this province, Speaker. The bottom line is that we must not slip back to the old ways of doing things. We need action and the courage to get the job done so that we can keep on moving forward.

Speaker, before I turn to the tough decisions that need to be made in the months ahead, I want to reflect briefly on the National Government's budget priorities. I am deeply concerned that provincial budgets will be significantly cut, despite public promises; some made, Speaker, to me personally. Some of you will remember a meeting at the CTICC, socially distanced, official opening of this amazing Hospital of Hope that we built in just six short weeks, and in that meeting – I still remember the President looking me in the face and saying: “Do not worry, Premier, you do what you need to do, we will cover you with the funds”, and unfortunately today we still have not seen those funds. But Speaker, what we do do in our country is we continue to pump money into failing State-owned Enterprises like South African Airways. The Western Cape Government budgets over the medium term are likely to be cut by the same amount or more that is now going to be funnelled into the black hole, which is SAA. [Interjection.]

†Die MINISTER VAN GEMEENSKAPSVEILIGHEID: Skande!

[The MINISTER OF COMMUNITY SAFETY: Disgrace!]

†n AGBARE LID: Ja!

[An HON MEMBER: Yes!]

The PREMIER: Let me be crystal clear – over R10 billion is going to be taken out of the mouths of the poor to pay for our failed state airline. Speaker, we do not need SAA, when there are so many airlines that can fly

cheaper and better, but we do need life-changing and life-saving services like education and healthcare and these services are provided by provinces.

We do not need chicken or beef being delivered in the skies to those who already have an income, but what we do need is good nutritious food delivered to our children so that we can eradicate extreme hunger.

[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The PREMIER: These warped priorities should leave every person in this Chamber, and indeed our province, angry; every parent, every student, and every person who got healthcare in the last eight months from our province and that saved lives – they should all be angry. This is part of a worrying pattern, Speaker, which needs to be addressed urgently. Provinces are not nice-to-haves that can be done away with when times are tough. They are the frontline, and we know better than ever before that you do not cut your frontline.

So, Mr President and Minister Mboweni, we need you to reconsider this course of action very, very carefully. We know that we must all tighten our belts and do things differently during this difficult time, but please, cut the fat first before you cut from where it matters to our residents, and reward those provinces that have a track record of delivery and who have shown that they have the courage to get the job done, without stealing the people's

money.

Speaker, hon members, we are confronted with the reality that we have significantly less money to deliver on our mandate and to assist our province's recovery. We need to make hard choices now, and the reason they are so hard is because they require trade-offs. They are, in effect, forks in the road, and every path that we pick will have consequences for how we govern for the future. Our residents therefore deserve to know what these are.

We have identified four major choices that we must make if we are to move forward. The first relates to prioritisation; the second to efficiency; the third to spending and the fourth to the delivery model that we will use.

On prioritisation, our Government considered whether we must try to do more with less, with the potential of not doing any of it well enough, or whether we should be brave – let us do less, but do it effectively, achieving real outcomes that will change our people's lives for the better. Speaker, our decision is that it is better to focus our efforts on fewer key priorities that will make the biggest impact on the lives of our people, and to do it well.

On efficiency, our Government considered whether we must stick with the current mechanisms that we have used to date, drafting annual plans which we religiously stick to, whether they are delivering maximum benefit or not, or whether we should be brave, take the risk and allow our staff to innovate and make changes along the way so that we can deliver a better, smarter

government.

Speaker, our decision is that innovation is the only way to make a difference in this resource-constrained environment, and that we must find new ways of delivering more efficient, cost-effective services. Speaker, we already have an example of this innovation in practice. As I mentioned in my SOPA, we have established a War Room which brings together the Province and Local Government in a collaborative space that takes problems and looks at how we solve those problems, not only just in government, but we do it alongside citizens and businesses, those that are involved or suffer the consequence of that conundrum, that difficulty, and together we found innovative clever ways on dealing with the problem. We need to continue with that kind of innovation and enable that kind of innovation.

Speaker, our third choice is on spending and whether we allow our administration to become bloated by our own wage bill, like so many other administrations across the country, or whether we should be brave and fight against this, because we believe that only a major investment in infrastructure and excellent service delivery will spark the economy and create jobs to the degree that we need to properly recover from this crisis. Our decision is to make as much money available for this as possible, and Speaker, that is why we have put a freeze on filling of non-critical posts in our Government. That is why we have also already written to the President and the Minister of Public Service and Administration – and saying that we want a seat at the Bargaining Council, because what happens is decisions are

made about our province without us. Decisions are made that have huge implications for the service delivery and huge implications for the people of this province without us, and so we are asking that we need a seat where those discussions take place because they have a direct impact on this province. And Speaker, lastly, on the delivery model, our Government must decide on whether we tackle these challenges through using our own Government services or whether we should be brave and make the bold decision to partner with others when they can do it better. We learnt that during COVID-19.

Speaker, our decision is to join hands with civil society and the private sector, and by empowering them in this way we will also grow our economy, boost employment and roll back poverty. In summary, the Western Cape Government has chosen to be brave.

We choose to have the courage to get the job done; no matter how difficult it may be. Speaker, our Government has also through these deliberations identified three North Stars, which guide all our work as we seek to improve the lives of our people.

Firstly, that our job is to create an enabling environment for the economy and grow and create employment, because without a job there can be no dignity and wellbeing in our communities. A job is a golden ticket out of the cycle of poverty and inequality in South Africa, and it is the foundation for any recovery. That is why creating jobs remains our number one priority.

Secondly, that no person can live a life of true value and have real dignity if they live in fear of violence and crime.

The reality is that in the Western Cape it is not safe in places for many of our people, and this needs to change, and so our second priority remains to build a safer, more compassionate province.

Speaker, thirdly and fundamentally, that every person has the inalienable human right to dignity and wellbeing. From the moment we are born to the moment we die, and every moment in between, every life must matter, and we must make it so. When you have a job, when you feel safe, and when you are treated with dignity, you create wellbeing and hope. [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

The PREMIER: They are all interlinked. Without one you cannot achieve the other. Together, they are the recipe for real change. These are our ingredients for hope, and this is what we must now pursue single-mindedly and courageously. Speaker, I have set out in some detail our COVID-19 response to the pandemic, because fundamentally that changed the way that this Government worked. As we approach these three key priorities for real change and hope, we need to always remember what we are capable of when we work with determination.

Last month, Speaker, I joined a panel discussion with the brilliant Professor

Salim Abdool Karim, the Chair of the National Ministerial Advisory Committee, and it was interesting that during this discussion and this panel the professor reminded me of the unbelievable CTICC conversion in a few weeks. He actually started off by saying that if anybody had said to him in six weeks' time there will be a fully-fledged hospital of 862 beds with piped oxygen, WiFi, nurses, special waste-disposal systems, he would have said it would simply be impossible. He actually likened it to the building and the complexity of an airport and actually even more so, and he then said and commended this province on what we managed to achieve. And Speaker, we got the impossible done, and this, hon members, is what is referred to as a moonshot. We had a moonshot, something that was beyond reach and we decided on it and we committed to it and we delivered on it.

This, as I have said, hon members, is what is referred to as a moonshot, where you make an ambitious, brave decision and you work tirelessly towards achieving it until it happens – like sending the first man to the moon, when you invest and focus on a common goal anything is possible! We need many more moonshots in the Western Cape, in each of these priority areas, if we are able to create jobs, build safer communities, and ensure the dignity and wellbeing of each and every person that lives here.

Speaker and hon members, this moonshot-thinking is what our Government intends to embrace in the months and years ahead. We intend to demonstrate the courage needed to get the job done, and so, under our priority of creating jobs, we will be bolder than we have ever been before. We have launched an

Emergency Economic Relief and Recovery Programme. This will address the major blow wielded by COVID-19 on our economy, which will result in over 150 000 job losses in the Western Cape this year alone. Speaker, this plan under the guidance of our Economics Cluster aims to create nearly 20 000 new jobs through rapid interventions. I want to again make it clear that in the Western Cape we believe that it is the private sector and not the State that drives economic growth and job creation.

In order to allow for this private sector led growth, we need to continue our war on red tape in this province, by proposing new legislative and regulatory amendments – especially to the Heritage legal framework – so that we can stop being a barrier to growth. I have now instructed every single department and team to look carefully at everything they do and ask whether they have systems or rules that can be changed to make it easier to do business or to allow businesses to establish and grow.

I have also asked them to go back to the past complaints that they have received from businesses and to think carefully whether we can make changes that will help entrepreneurs, and Speaker, this has to happen across every department in our Government. This is not just one department's job. It is the whole Government's job.

Speaker, I am also today calling on any business, any business or person who wants to start one, to let us know if there is anything in the Western Cape Government that we should be doing differently in order to help them or their

business grow.

This focus on private sector led growth and job creation is also why we will do everything we can, together with our entities, to finalise the more than 26 private sector investments still in the pipeline, which will create over 3000 jobs and pump more than R30 billion into our economy. This includes investment in the property and construction sectors, in logistics, health tech and investments at the Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone and in Atlantis at our Special Economic Zone for Green Technology. It is also why we will work to grow exports by 5% through export development programmes which will support market access research, certification needs and provide export training in priority commodity areas.

Wesgro will promote exports through its export and trade promotion programmes, and we will also work closely with the National Government to ensure that issues at the Cape Town Port are addressed urgently. We will scale up existing public sector programmes that will provide work opportunities to unemployed people and we will ensure new skills are developed in this increasingly digital world, and we will fast-track existing infrastructure builds which are already at implementation stage.

We will need the National Government to back us by doing the same too, as funding partnerships will be essential. But Speaker, this will not be enough if the private sector does not have the confidence or resources to invest too.

We will therefore also boost economic and consumer confidence by

promoting our province both domestically and internationally as an attractive place to do business, but also to visit. It will be the best place to be this summer, Speaker. We will continue to lobby the National Government to allow all international visitors with a negative PCR COVID-19 test to visit our province, so that tourism can safely boom once again.

We have also supported our small businesses and informal sector, who have been hit the hardest, by launching an initial R27 million Relief Fund and we will continue with small business support programmes over the medium term too.

A foundation needed for any economy to thrive is a consistent energy supply, Speaker. If we are to achieve our ambitious moonshots, load-shedding needs to become a thing of the past in our province. To work towards this objective, we will support municipalities in leveraging the recent directives from the National Minister of Mineral Resources that they can now develop their own power generation projects and can also secure power from independent power producers. This is an exciting development for our province, and we are well poised to gain from it because of the ongoing focus of this Government on the new, green economy over the last term. Hon members, it is my promise to you that we will be the first province in South Africa to beat load-shedding.

Speaker, as I have explained earlier, we have made the bold decision to invest heavily in infrastructure in the Western Cape in order to achieve our

job priorities. To do so, however, we need the right vehicles to deliver these projects.

That is why we will launch the technical process to form a dedicated infrastructure agency that can transact, borrow and hold assets as a 3D-entity under the PFMA. We hope to conclude this process within the next year. This will allow our Government to better partner with the private sector in such initiatives in line with these new priorities, Speaker, and so we have therefore also taken a decision to explore, for the first time in history of this province, the possibility of borrowing money from financial institutions to specifically invest in infrastructure that will enhance economic growth and job creation.

This decision will not be taken lightly, and all due diligence will be followed. However, given our excellent track record in Government, and the consistent clean audit results, that we have demonstrated, I am pretty certain that we will be able to do this successfully. Speaker, none of these moonshots will bear fruit while our economy continues to be dragged down by our failing transport system and poor mobility. I will repeat again that it is outrageous that while our train system is in disarray and in need of major overhaul, billions will be pumped into failing entities like SAA.

Mr President, we do not need state-funded planes, but we do need working trains in the Western Cape, and ones that arrive safely and on time. I am personally very pleased to hear of the President's commitment to getting the

Central Line working again – which is essential to all our priorities: jobs, dignity and the safety of our residents who live on the Cape Flats.

I also want to thank him for proposing the privatisation of our rail service on certain routes. We now need to play our part and assist the repair of our public transport system by establishing a single transport authority for the greater Cape Town region in the Western Cape.

We will therefore proceed with the engagements with our partners in the other spheres of government to get this done. This is international best practice, seen in every major city in the world. We should expect the same here too.

Lastly, Speaker, as I have set out earlier, our Red Dot Transport Service was an important innovation and showed what is possible when we work efficiently with the taxi industry. Who would have thought before COVID-19 that the Government and the taxi unions would be working together to make sure that our nurses got to work and home safely again, and this is where I am really pleased to welcome Nazeem Abdurahman – thank you very much – the Chairperson of SANTACO, because it is the partnership I am talking about, absolutely! [Applause.]

For me it was quite amazing to see this partnership and the effectiveness of this partnership and what our Department and we have done is to say let us look at how this partnership can grow, and so, the Red Dot System of getting

nurses and COVID-19 patients to and from our healthcare facilities, our quarantine and isolation facilities, is now going to become a project called the Blue Dot Transport System. We will be rolling this out in phases. This will be a five-star recognition system, where incentives will be put in place for the taxi industry when our citizens can be moved safely, efficiently and cost effectively in this province and this partnership is something that I really, really look forward to. I think that what we learnt during COVID-19 was just amazing. The partnership was amazing. We saw what we could do if we put our minds to it, and we saw that partnering actually gave results in the best interest of our citizens, and I really am looking forward to what is going to come out of the next stage of where we and SANTACO partner up and the launch in this partnership to be able to work with the first 1000 operators on priority routes in this first phase, and Minister Madikizela will be making announcements on this further as we pull this partnership together. But this again shows you that where we work together, where we are able to innovate and enable the innovation that we can actually take giant leaps forward in creating a better environment for our citizens.

Speaker, hon members, I have spent some time on our job's plan because of the very serious challenges facing South Africa's economy, but, as our communities know too well, a job, while important, is not enough because you cannot feel you matter when you live in fear of violent crime. I want to pause for a moment to use this opportunity to acknowledge the many lives lost to violent crime in this province, and to reflect on the pain that their families and loved ones will surely feel forever more. I also want to

recognise the brave efforts of so many law enforcement officials in this province.

There are simply not enough police resources for the Western Cape, and while I know General Matakata is addressing this, we must realise how difficult it makes the work of these officials. I salute you for what you continue to do for us.

Hon members, there is a war raging in our communities, especially against our women and children, and it is a war that we must win if we are to build a better future for our people. This will require both urgent interventions immediately and a medium term response.

Over the medium term we must have the courage to continue with our Government's first successful moonshot, the Western Cape Safety Plan, despite our financial pressures, and they are huge as I have said already. There simply is too much at stake. I can therefore confirm that even though we face budget cuts, we will not roll back on our boots-on-the-ground commitment. [Applause.]

The 500 LEAP officers already launched will continue to be deployed to hotspot crime areas based on evidence and data, and we will stick with our plans to deploy an additional 500 officers thereafter. I will never forget, Minister Fritz, the day standing there when those 500 officers marched into the Athlone Stadium, but more so than that, Minister Fritz, when you said to

us in Cabinet the other day that after the deployment of 100 of the LEAP officers along with the South African Police Services, in partnership with the community in Hanover Park, for that week not one shot had rung out in that community. We just go back two weeks before and every single day people were losing their lives and bullets were flying all over the place. That shows you the commitment of this project and the difference that it can make.

We will also not walk back on our commitment that we will halve the provincial murder rate in the Western Cape in a decade. We must have the courage to get the job done on safety. Evidence-based data-led intervention is one key component of our Safety Plan. The other equally important pillar is violence prevention in our communities. Violence prevention requires being there for our residents from the moment they are born, through their lives, so that they can always have dignity and so that they always treat others with care and compassion. To this we need to foster nurturing relationships between children and caregivers and to ensure education and life skills.

We need to reduce access to weapons, create safe spaces through urban design and empower women specifically, and socially and economically. We need to change dangerous social and cultural norms and provide effective victim support services that no one has the indignity of a second-hand victimisation. We need to confront the fact that the Western Cape has a deadly relationship with alcohol that must be addressed urgently. We learnt in lockdown when alcohol was reduced or banned it had a direct correlation to crime, and while we know that we cannot just ban alcohol, it plays a role

in our economy and creates jobs, but we also know that it has a deadly component to it, and we have to address that, and so I know that we have already started with our legislative changes. We need to be clear and this is really close to my heart, that when we come to these legislative changes it has to come to this very House, that we need speed and efficiency in getting this legislation changed. We want us to look seriously at pricing and the costs of alcohol, specifically the price points of this cheap alcohol that causes so much trouble in our communities. We need to look at how we change that because we know that that pricing will reduce consumption.

We need to look at hours of trade. We need to look at hours of trade as a tool or a mechanism to slow down, close down or reduce the amount of alcohol flowing in communities where these dangers and the damage is being done. We also need to look at the other side of the equation. I truly believe that in this legislation we need to make sure that we build incentives into the legislation so if you are a responsible trader, if you run a responsible business, there must be incentives in your ease of getting your licence. There must be incentives to say that you have shown through a track record of good behaviour that perhaps we can actually only allow you to renew a licence every second year instead of every year. We need to look at various options and mechanisms that will actually both restrict and manage but also incentivise that we bring about behavioural change with regard to liquor in our province. It is very, very important.

We must have the courage to get the job done on alcohol, and lastly, as part

of our medium-term response, Speaker, I can reveal today that we will recruit an additional 1000 young people to be deployed as safety ambassadors in public spaces. [Applause.]

Speaker, this will also help create opportunities for our youth in our most vulnerable communities, and our safety cluster has also devised a number of additional interventions to make an immediate impact on our communities. We will train and place 120 peace officers at six vulnerable municipalities across the province. We have established a rural safety desk in our Government to address the growing concerns of our rural communities and I can say that that recruitment process is just about finalised, and we will upscale our Gender Based Violence Services, through six new shelters, and start work, or we have already started work, on a dedicated GBV strategy for the Western Cape. We have the funding and the service providers ready to go just as soon as the Minister of Public Works, Minister Patricia de Lille, signs the MOU for these properties. Speaker, it is also why we are strengthening our after-hours response team by advertising 30 additional GBV social worker posts. This will ensure that we have the right support available to GBV victims late at night and on the weekends, when help is needed most. This is about understanding what happens on the ground and being bold and able to make decisions that will make a difference to people in this province.

Speaker, having a job and feeling safe helps realise the dignity and wellbeing that every person in this province is entitled to, but together they are not enough. We must acknowledge that dignity and well-being have to be

consistently realised throughout someone's life.

From the moment we are born, to the moment we die, every life matters. Dignity is about a solid foundation in our early years. It means that you have a healthy pregnancy with the right psychosocial support. It means that you have a safe childbirth, with good health services for you and your child. It means that your baby has the opportunity to develop and grow in the early years. It means that dignity is about supporting children. It is about school-readiness and early-childhood development. It is about having the education services to enable our children to achieve in school, and it is about being a thriving adolescent with guidance and hope for the future.

Finally, dignity needs to be protected throughout your life. It is about opportunities for work and the income needed to live. It is about respect when you are old and cared for when you are sick. It is about living a fulfilling life where you feel like you matter.

Speaker, due to the unprecedented consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the humanitarian disaster which ensued, many people in South Africa are now in jeopardy of not having access to these critical services needed throughout their life. Our people have been hungry. Our children have had their schooling interrupted. Our older residents at old age facilities have been at greater risk of severe infection and death. Parents have had nowhere to send their young children when they returned to work. Sick residents have been too scared to access key services at our health facilities because of

COVID-19, and the rate of life-saving immunisations and TB-testing has dropped. That is why from the beginning our Government realised that we had a responsibility to do whatever we can to protect these key services, and why we are working resolutely to ensure that they recover. We need the courage to get this job done, because it will save lives and futures too.

This is why our Department of Education has, in the most challenging environment, provided resources, orientation and support to public schools across the province so that our children can return safely to class and pursue their dreams. We are determined to make sure that every child in this province, no matter where they live, has the access to the quality education that they need to succeed, and it is for this reason that we will continue to protect our key education services, even in the tight fiscal environment.

As more and more people move to our province in search of opportunities, however, we will need to find new innovative ways to deliver education so that the quality is not jeopardised by our declining budgets. Fortunately, the Western Cape Education Department are already leaders in education innovation, with the 13 collaboration schools providing a new model that can make a big difference in a financially or fiscally constrained environment.

A collaboration school is an institutional mechanism that partners poor-performing schools and schools serving marginalised communities with a non-profit school operating partner, committed to improving the quality of teaching and learning at that school.

In these schools, we see that the quality of education has improved. Parents are more involved and invested in the quality of education being provided, and in some instances we have seen extended school days so that more quality learning can be provided, and one such school, which I have mentioned before, but I need to mention it again, and that is the partnership that was built around the Miracle School or Jakes Gerwel Technical School in Bonnievale. We have spoken about it in this House before, where community, businesses, the Education Department, charities and funders all get together in the one common interest – to make sure that we provide an excellence in education and here, where there is a 60/40 partnership between the Government and the private sector, where donors raised money to give diesel for the earthmoving equipment; to funding the fridges and the stoves in the facility; to community members clearing the land so that their children would have an opportunity at this school. And this school, if anybody has not visited it, they need to, because it will be the inspiration that you need to see what needs to follow, and all I really want to see - and I know that these are in the planning - are more Jakes Gerwel Schools all across this province, and Speaker, I am pleased to note that Jakes Gerwel was one of five Western Cape schools to be selected to participate in the prestigious World Education Week. As we move forward, we need more schools like Jakes Gerwel Technical in the Western Cape and this is a programme our Government is committed to expanding.

Speaker, we also need to ensure that our children do not drop out of school, especially in their final year. This is a real risk due to the school closures,

and the tough economic environment that many families find themselves in. To achieve this objective, we have also launched the #CommitToFinish Campaign that encourages our Grade 12 learners to finish their final year and provides them with access to the resources they need. I want to say to our Matric learners right now, please do whatever you can to finish this year. I know it has been very difficult, but I promise you that this decision will change your life and that of everyone around you and you will thank yourself when you are much older.

Speaker, hon members, this critical support was not just confined to our public schools alone, because we know that ECDs are essential for realising the dignity of every person during their life, and of women in particular, our Department of Social Development also provided the resources and protocols needed for ECDs in this sector to open safely as soon as it was permitted by the National Government.

Even with this initial support, however, too many ECDs remain closed. This deprives the child of a safe space to develop, and in turn, many women are forgoing opportunities for income to look after their children. So far 2616 ECDS have reopened, 1423 are ready to reopen and of these 1255 need more help to become COVID-19 compliant so that they can open safely. We will therefore be increasing our assistance by providing more PPE and hygiene materials to those that still need it. We need to ensure that as many ECDs can reopen safely as soon as possible.

Speaker, we have also worked with old age homes, homeless shelters and other homes and facilities to ensure that they had the right equipment, resources and protocols in place, so that people were kept safe during the pandemic. A key priority for us moving forward is to also now ensure that our residents can access comprehensive health services at all our facilities. Even more importantly, we need to ensure that residents immunise their children, and get help if they feel sick with other diseases.

Our community healthcare workers, who have shown unrivalled bravery during this pandemic, are now also helping with access to non-COVID-19 services, testing for other diseases such as TB and ensuring that our children get immunised. Speaker, in June, I had the opportunity of actually walking the streets with the volunteers and the NGOs that were working in getting medicines delivered to the homes of those with comorbidities or elderly, and never again in this province do people need to queue up at four o'clock in the morning for those medicines. They will be delivered to their homes, and I really thank those workers and those people involved in this programme from the bottom of my heart for this heroic effort.

Hon members, the challenges we confront in realising this priority are immense. The effects of our painful history of racial segregation and exclusion are still witnessed across our province in every community and in every region. That is why, like with safety and jobs, we need moonshots for dignity too. We need to be bold, to be brave and do things differently.

That is why I am announcing today that Early Childhood Development is now in the eyes of the Western Cape Government a critical service that we must find ways to deliver again as soon as possible. [Applause.]

Speaker, my vision is that every child will have access to Early Childhood Development, if needed, and every mother must have the opportunity to go to work in the knowledge that her child is safe, no matter her income.

Achieving new ambitious goals for this sector will require developing new public-private partnerships that will enable the sector to thrive and for more of our residents to make use of them. We will therefore be convening a special consultative forum with key stakeholders who are already doing such amazing work in this space, to plot a common way forward in achieving this objective. We need together to set bold, ambitious targets that will push us forward, making the biggest possible difference in the lives of our people, and I look forward to engaging with the sector on the new ideas for making this happen.

I must say, however, that I am very concerned that the National Government is currently more worried about which department is responsible for ECD, rather than increasing access to and quality in these centres. We will keep our eyes firmly on what matters most – the best outcome for our youngest residents. This, together with our Department of Health's First 1000 Days Project, which provides key services to both mothers and babies, we can put our youngest people on a safe road to a successful, more prosperous life.

Speaker, because we believe that no-one can have dignity if they are hungry, a large part of our focus on dignity and wellbeing is working to eradicate extreme hunger. The Departments of Social Development and Education, municipalities, NGOs, faith-based organisations will all work closely together to continue to deliver food where it is most needed.

To assist in undoing the painful spatial legacy of the past, Speaker... have I missed a page? I apologise, Speaker.

The Department of Social Development will be allocating additional funding to food relief by community kitchens, while the Department of Economic Development and Tourism has developed a voucher system that the community kitchens can purchase what they need from local businesses and spaza shops. We will also develop a comprehensive surveillance system, including a stunting baseline survey that will assist us with the evidence we need to intervene with nutrition programmes in the future, and we will continue with our Food-Gardening Programme, by launching thousands more gardens in communities across the Western Cape.

Because shelter is also a part of dignity, we will scale-up shelter space and related services for the homeless in areas where it is needed most, and we will focus on the reintegration of homeless adults, so that they can have access to the families and support systems that they need to have in order for them to have dignity.

Speaker, inclusionary housing has been a guiding principle for this Government as evidenced by the developments of the Conradie Better Living Site and the Artscape Precinct Project. We will be taking this commitment to inclusionary housing even further by finalising and approving our inclusionary housing policy by the end of the financial year that will guide all municipalities across the province.

This policy will incentivise mixed use, affordable development close to areas of economic opportunity to assist in unlocking the painful spatial legacy of the past, and we will identify, through a review of Government property, new, well-located pockets of land across our province, as we did with the Somerset Precinct, where affordable housing can be delivered as soon as the illegal occupiers vacate the premises.

Speaker, our COVID-19 health response has shown us what is possible when we work with determination to fight disease. While we will not take our foot off the pedal in our COVID-19 health response, we will also need to turn our full attention to the tuberculosis epidemic in our province. TB kills more people in South Africa than COVID-19 has, and it also requires a courageous moonshot in this province.

We are – with the lessons from the past year – therefore implementing a 90-90-90 strategy for TB. We want to find 90% of all TB cases and place these residents on appropriate treatment. We want to find at least 90% of the TB cases living with HIV, and we want to successfully treat at least 90% of

all those diagnosed with Drug Sensitive TB. Like with COVID-19, we will use new technology and methodologies to do so. We will make sure that we deliver medication to people where they live. We will increase our screening and testing in communities, and we will employ new technology to ensure easy self-screening is possible. We will use new data management systems to properly track our performance, and we will adopt hotspot-focused, behavioural-change led approaches to prevent the spread of TB amongst those at risk.

Hon members, I also intend to use the Provincial Council on AIDS, which I chair, to champion the battle against TB, and I will support the Barcelona Declaration's intention of working towards the establishment of a new global parliamentary caucus to present a more effective, urgent response to the TB epidemic. I believe this is also a cause for this Legislature to champion too, and I look forward to engaging you on this priority.

Speaker, hon members, the three priorities that make up the North Stars of this Government; together they are the ingredients for real change, and they are our reason for hope and if we pursue them courageously and single-mindedly, they will set us on a course that will slow down unemployment, poverty, hunger and inequality in this province. This must motivate us all - each and every one of us in this Chamber today - to have the courage to get this job done. I do, however, need to be as direct and honest with you as I can. These priorities will require trade-offs.

It will mean that some programmes and projects - that also did make a difference - will not be continued. This will be trying for all of us. Strong leadership will therefore be needed as we now move forward.

To our members of the Opposition, I look forward to the debate tomorrow and hearing your suggestions. This Government is pursuing brave, new ideas and a different way of working in order to make a big impact in a very difficult environment. This will not be easy and it is a possibility that not all these plans will land. Being courageous does not mean that mistakes are never made; rather, being courageous for me is the ability to learn from experience, and to try and try again, and to make that positive difference. It is the commitment I make to our residents every single morning of my life. I promise to be the first to tell you when something does not work. We must not be afraid to fail. We must learn, stand up and move forward again.

I also want to urge you to continue to hold me and my Cabinet to account and to ask the tough questions. We must be kept on our toes so that we always do the very best for the people of this province.

So, what are the next steps in landing these priorities in our Government? We have just completed the first Provincial Government Medium Term Expenditure Committee engagements, with the critical discussions with all 13 departments and the nine public entities which share our funding.

Our Provincial Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities, David

Maynier, will next month table the Western Cape's Medium Term Budget Policy Statement in this Parliament, which will include adjustments to the budget, especially in light of the necessary COVID-19 expenditure expenses that we have incurred, and the project cuts we are expecting to see.

The State of the Province Address that I will deliver to you and the people next year, and the Main Budget which follows soon thereafter, will then be a key opportunity to lift the sails and to move our Government in this new, brave direction.

Speaker, I have already changed the reporting structure of the Extended Cabinet to include these new priorities, so I can make sure that we land them in our Government. This Extended Cabinet also links up to all district municipalities and the City of Cape Town and will ensure we work together in getting this important job done.

We now eagerly await the Minister of Finance Tito Mboweni's delayed MTBPS, which was meant to take place yesterday. This will provide us with much-needed clarity on just how severe the expected budget cuts are going to be. Speaker, over the last eight months, I have had the great honour to meet so many heroes across our province, from healthcare workers to community activists operating soup kitchens in our hotspots; from teachers who care so dearly for the future of our children, to small business owners who have gone the extra mile to open safely for us.

I have also had the privilege to work with some outstanding individuals in this Government who have made me proud to be a South African. I remain in awe of the sheer determination I have witnessed by our Government officials, as they navigated these difficult past months. There are so many people worth mentioning, but I do wish to extend a special word of gratitude to our Head of Health, Dr Keith Cloete [Applause.] Dr Keith Cloete took over the reigns of the Health Department in the midst of this pandemic, and under the leadership of Minister Nomafrench Mbombo he helped deliver a world-class health response that we can all be proud of. Thank you very much, Dr Cloete. [Interjection.]

HON MEMBERS: Hear-hear!

The PREMIER: Speaker, we are also heartbroken that we have lost so many of our own employees during this pandemic, many of whom were frontline workers fighting for all of us. To their families, loved ones and colleagues, we send our deepest condolences. Their example will motivate and inspire us to do whatever we can to build a better future for all our people.

Speaker, I now want to end by speaking directly to the people of the Western Cape. The best way to honour all those who have done so much for us during this time is to keep fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. We all need to be leaders now, because you, wherever you live in this province, are the most important warrior to fight this pandemic, and as I have set out in my weekly COVID-19 public briefings, we are starting to see bushfires again emerge

across our province; clusters of spread of this virus. These bushfires flare up when people do not follow the important golden rules. Speaker, we are fighting these bushfires using our data, our contact-tracing and screening teams, and by employing all of the lessons we have learnt this year. We also still have the Brackengate Hospital of Hope and the Sonstraal Hospital of Hope, at the ready, should we need them, but we cannot fight COVID-19 alone. We need your help to keep us moving forward. Your behaviour – by mask-wearing, keeping distances and avoiding poorly ventilated, crowded spaces and regularly cleaning your hands – will help us all keep safe and moving forward.

Let us show the world what we are capable of, right here in the southernmost tip of Africa. Let us keep showing that our response is world-class. For our part, you have my word today – before all of your elected representatives – that we will keep on fighting for you; that we will do whatever we can to save lives, each and every day, because every life matters to us, and that we will work tirelessly, as we have done throughout this pandemic, to now deliver on these priorities of real change and hope that I have set out before you today. As we now face our fork in the road, let us not be afraid of the hard choices that we need to make. Let us do it for our communities, for our children, for our future. Let us have the courage to get the job done.

I thank you. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon Premier. Hon members, the

session tomorrow will begin at 09:00, not 14:00. Now this is the end of the sitting and that concludes the business of the day. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 15:45.