

**Address by the Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, at the Policy Debate
Vote 14, National Council of Provinces, Parliament of South Africa, Cape Town**

24 Jul 2014

Honourable Chairperson,
Chairperson of the Select Committee on Sports, Arts and Culture,
Honourable Members,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is my distinct honour to address this house, on the policy debate on the budget of the Department of Arts and Culture. As we commemorate 20 years of our freedom and democracy, let us recall that it was 47 years ago this week on the 21 July 1967 that Chief Albert Luthuli, Africa's first Nobel Peace Laureate and President of the ANC, died under mysterious circumstances, while walking a route he took every day. Apartheid authorities claimed he had stepped on to the railway track and had been hit by an oncoming train.

But his legacy still lives on and his contribution to our struggle changed the way the world viewed our country and our people and paved the way for our freedom. We are pleased to announce that together with Script 2 Screen, a production house, a documentary is being made on Chief Albert Luthuli, President of the ANC and Africa's first Nobel Laureate that will tell the story of this great South African and his legacy.

His words still resonate through the annals of history. In 1958 he posed the following question (and I quote): "One might ask, "Is this vision of a democratic society in South Africa a realizable vision? Or is it merely a mirage?" I say, it is a realizable vision... But I personally believe that here in South Africa, with all our diversities of colour and race, we will show the world a new pattern for democracy." (end quote)

Today we can say that indeed we have not side-stepped this task. Singenza lukhulu ukuqinisekisa ukuthi abantu bakithi inkululeko yabo bayijabulela ngendlela ehloniphekile futhi enesizotha.

Kungumsebenzi wethu ukuthi sigqugquzelele umoya wobunye nokuzwana isisekelo sakho kube kungumlando wethu onothile, ukubekezelelana, ukwethembana, ukwazisana kanye nokuxoxisana uma kufanele sixazulule izinkinga futhi sandise isiko lokubambisana nokuxhumana singabantu sonke.

Esikhathini esiningi esedlule ingcindezelo nobandlululo zibe nomthelela omkhulu ekwakheni izimpilo zethu, izindlela esiphila ngazo, amathuba umuntu okufanele awathole empilweni, ikakhulukazi ezintweni ezifana nemindeni, ukubuswa nokuphathwa kwezwe, amasiko, isimo somnotho, imiphakathi esiphila kuyo, izinto ezingamagugu ezwe kanye nendlela nje yokuphilisana singabantu ezweni.

The National Development Plan

The challenge we face as a society is the process of building our nation out of a vast cultural and economic legacy of difference and inequality.

The NDP (National Development Plan) responds to five key priorities, namely (1) Inclusive social and economic development; (2) sustainable investment and growth; (3) Decent jobs and sustainable livelihoods (4) A capable developmental state, and (5) Expanding opportunities.

Designed as a set of broad programmatic interventions, the plan proposes a roadmap of radical engagements with all sectors of society during second phase of our transition to 2030.

The NDP states, “Arts and culture opens powerful spaces for engagement about where a society finds itself and where it is going. Promoted effectively, the creative and cultural industries can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, urban development and renewal.”

Building on the foundations for radical economic transformation. As we enter the second phase of our transition to transform our society, a brand new era is upon us. We shall turn our goals into practical and programmatic interventions that together constitute radical economic transformation.

Our plan for the next five years responds to the unfinished business of economic transformation as a framework for the economic vitality of our social and cultural fabric. It restores social transformation as a pillar for nation building and unity.

In order to build on our collective identity and national pride as South Africans, government has elevated nation building and social cohesion to a stand-alone outcome 14. This identifies building a common national identity and creating a cohesive society among our top priorities towards the realisation of Vision 2030.

Mzansi Golden Economy

We have begun a process of transforming the Arts sector to encourage and support pro-poor innovations necessary to equip citizens, especially youth, with theoretical and experiential knowledge.

Over the next five years, we shall be initiating several creative arts incubators across the country. These will be the hotbeds for cultural entrepreneurship and democratise and promote access to tools of production. These will be the sites that we encourage as government for the creation of local content.

These creative arts incubators will be located in community arts centres, in cultural precincts and villages. The pilot project has commenced with the establishment of precincts. Cultural precincts and cultural villages commencing construction in 2014 include the Nwamitwa Cultural Village in northern Limpopo and the Enyokeni Cultural Precinct in KwaZulu-Natal.

Through constructing and upgrading spaces, these facilities will bring people together for social dialogue and cohesion. Together with the eThekweni Metro we are piloting a Fashion Hub in the city.

The National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) will begin the rollout of pilot film hubs to grow township and rural audiences and provide infrastructure for emerging filmmakers to tell the South African story through film. We shall establish a Film Fund that will support the growth of the local film industry.

This will also lay the platform for the department to create a specific venture capital fund that will finance the cultural entrepreneurs. This is in line with the goals set out in the NDP. The Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE) Venture Capital Fund will be established over the next 3 years. Through this fund we will invest in the early stages of artist development through taking their products to the markets. This will close a big gap that is currently faced by artists who end up living from hand to mouth and dying as paupers.

We will launch the Mzansi Golden Market (Sourcing Enterprise e-platform). This e-platform will showcase the works of artists and enable the buying of a range of arts services directly from the artists, thus ensuring that the artists enjoy the full benefit of their products. It also acknowledges that government is the biggest buyer of goods and services and will use this platform as their first choice. This means

unlocking opportunities within government and the private sector for the buying of goods and services in the arts and culture sector.

We are supporting the Interim Committee of the Creative Industries Federation appointed in March 2014 to lay the ground work for an organising body that will foster unity and advocate for the interests of all arts, culture and related disciplines. This Committee will shortly commence with nationwide sectoral engagements.

We have embarked upon a national mapping study to quantify the economic impact of our cultural industries. Studies on the cultural economies of Limpopo and Mpumalanga have been completed and these indicate that the Arts and Culture sector is already making a significant contribution to the economies of these provinces. Studies on the remaining provinces have begun and will be completed by the end of the financial year.

We will work closely with the Department of Small Business Development to ensure that cultural entrepreneurs can start their creative enterprises with no red tape and ensure that artists are the beneficiaries of incentives earmarked for small businesses.

In order to build the creative economy country-wide and foster social cohesion, the Department of Arts and Culture supports 22 national and regional festivals in all Provinces, including the Diamonds and Dorings Festival in Kimberley, the MACUFE Festival in Bloemfontein, the Calabash Festival in Mahikeng, and the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, the Sixties Festival in Mpumalanga, that create significant platforms to promote local talent.

Through Public Arts initiatives such as the "Infecting the City" festivals in Mpumalanga and the Western Cape, we are empowering our youth to explore the creative capacities, and see art as creating meaning within their communities.

In honour of the founding of the Organisation of African Unity we shall host a month-long Africa festival in May 2015. This will showcase African fashion, fine arts, crafts, dance, literature, music, theatre, film and food culture. This will include a series of dialogues and seminars in a festival of ideas to forge African unity, to develop cross-border culture and exchange through the arts.

Conscious of the role played by neighbouring countries in our liberation, the Matola Raid Memorial and interpretive centre in Mozambique, is complete. A special event to launch this centre will be held later this year.

We shall also seek to impart to our people a sense of local cultural identity that contributes to national consciousness. The Liberation Heritage Route traces the story of our struggle throughout the country and continent. In partnership with the National Heritage Council, we shall commence the national roll-out and implementation of the project in all provinces. We shall not leave any community without fully recognising the roles of their heroes in our struggle.

The development of heritage infrastructure contributes to stimulating economic vitality and turns every part of our land into creative sites for the learning of history, for fostering community pride and confidence and expanding opportunities for local and international tourism.

Work is also underway at tracing the heritage sites associated with Khoi and San communities as well as publicising their contribution to resisting colonial oppression. We will be establishing a Heroes Acre in order to locate the heroic deeds of our people in fighting for a non-racial and non-sexist democratic South Africa. This will stand as a monument where the public can pay homage to those who fought for

freedom.

Before the end of 2014, we shall unveil the statue of Inkosi Bhambatha kaMancinza Zondi, who is popularly known for fighting against the imposition of the Poll Tax, in KwaZulu Natal.

In transforming our heritage landscape, we can report that work on the Ngquza Hill Museum in the Eastern Cape has started. This pays homage to rural struggles that were aimed at protecting indigenous communities.

Construction will shortly begin of the Sarah Bartmann Centre of Remembrance. The contractor is now on site to start building the long awaited Sarah Baartman Centre of Remembrance in Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape. This site holds great significance for Khoi and San communities and the community of Hankey and is part of our South African story.

President Jacob Zuma unveiled a bust of Tata Mandela in Mvezo, on Mandela Day as well as a renovated Nelson Mandela Museum in Mthatha. Work on the Winnie Mandela Museum in Brandfort is advancing, with the contractor on site and construction to be completed before the end of this financial year.

We are working hard to ensure that the remains of our renowned journalist who called himself "A Native of Nowhere", the iconic Nat Nakasa, will be repatriated from New York to South Africa where he will be re-buried as a citizen of a free South Africa.

Talks are also underway to exhume and repatriate the remains of Moses Kotane, the great struggle icon, and Secretary-General of the South African Communist Party, nearly 40 years after his death, from Russia to a final resting place in South Africa. In this way we shall honour the request that has come from his widow, Mama Rebecca Kotane, who turned 102 in February this year.

The National Library of South Africa will continue to identify and reprint books regarded as literary classics in South African languages and publish 18 classics in this financial year.

Research indicates that public libraries contribute to the quality of social relations in local communities. As part of our community library programme, the department is providing more than R3 billion in the 2014 to 2017 MTEF period towards opening the doors of learning, reading and writing.

We shall deliver 54 new libraries and upgrade 150 existing libraries during the 2014-2017 MTEF period. These funds will help to build new libraries, upgrade existing facilities, stock the shelves with new books, connect to computer technology and access the internet.

The new libraries will be built in, among other places, Tsolo in the Eastern Cape, in Wepener in the Free State, in Wadela township, near Carletonville, Merafong, Gauteng, in Vulamehlo in KwaZulu-Natal, in Phokwane, near Marble Hall, Limpopo, in Emjindini 43, Mpumalanga, in Tlokwen township close to Rustenburg, North West and in PA Hamlet in the Witzenberg Municipality, Western Cape.

We will implement a pilot project with the South African Library for the Blind to employ speech technology to make written documents accessible in four languages to people who are blind.

Working towards social transformation

The challenge we face as a society today is to build cohesion. The department will intensify its work to encourage active citizenry towards an inclusive society following the 2012 National Social Cohesion

Summit held in Kliptown. This culminated in the adoption of 12 resolutions that amongst others included promoting community dialogues and holding a Report Back Summit.

Sizimisele futhi siyazibophezela singumnyango wezobuciko namasiko ukuthi bonke abantu bakithi babe yingxenye yokugqugquzelela ukugujwa kwamasiko nemicimbi ebalulekile yesizwe. Umnyango wethu uzosebenza ngokuphindiwe ukweseka imigubho ephathelene nezinhlelo eziqondene nabantu besifazane ikakhulukazi ukweseka lomkhankaso ogqugquzelela ukulwisana nodlame kubantu besifazane owaziwa phecelezi ngokuthi i “Unite to end violence against women” lapho khona abantu abasebasha benza khona imibukiso elandisa ngokuhlukumezwa nodlame kubantu besifazane.

Umnyango wethu futhi uzokweseka zonke izinhlelo zezigcawu lapho abantu besifazane bengakwazi ukuhlala baxoxisane, babhale futhi benze imibukiso exoxa ngezinto ezithinta izimpilo zabo njengabantu besifazane futhi bakwazi nokunika umlando ngeqhaza elabanjwa ngabantu besifazane ekulweni nobandlululo nokutholaka kwenkululeko yalelizwe.

To bolster the National Youth Service Programme, we have partnered with the Field Band Foundation to host Regional and National Championship. This project supports the development of a variety of brass bands in all provinces. The arts access programme seeks to promote arts, culture and heritage participation in Correctional Facilities to restore dignity, self-respect and purpose of offenders, especially youth, women, and people with disabilities.

Languages

The Use of Official Languages Act requires that all government departments and public entities create language units and develop language policies by November 2014. This will allow communities to access government services in the language of their choice. To promote multilingualism, the department will offer more than 280 bursaries to people who desire to be language professionals. Also, Sign Language study will be included to bolster education and training efforts in this area.

The National Archives will host the annual Oral History conference with academics, writers and other community stakeholders to create history out of the memory banks of our people.

20 years of Freedom

We continue to observe the commemoration of 20 years of freedom through telling the South African story and fostering constitutional values through distributing the Preamble of the Constitution to schools and on all national days. To popularise national symbols, we will install flags in 22193 schools and deliver a National Anthem Tool kit to popularize the Anthem in all provinces.

All national days are happening under the main theme of celebrating 20 years of freedom and democracy in the country, focusing on educational programmes, public dialogues and community engagements. Going forward, we have embarked upon processes to change the way we commemorate national days.

We shall also take this opportunity through the 20 years of freedom programme to acknowledge the role of the media in the struggle and recognise the role of committed African journalists who used their pens to call for the right of media freedom and artistic expression in the country.

As 20 years have passed since the advent of democracy, government records of 1994 will have to be transferred to the National Archives; and these include provincial governmental records.

In this historic year, we continue to promote South African arts and culture to the world through engaging artists from all over the country. As we speak, we are at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014 as part of our cultural relations with the United Kingdom. Yesterday, together with Sports and Recreation South Africa, we opened the Ekhaya Village in Glasgow as the hub of South African culture during the Commonwealth Games.

In celebration of our strong ties with India and our 20 Years of freedom and diplomatic relations, we will commence with cultural festival with India tomorrow, 25 July 2014 in Johannesburg with Indian artists showcasing their talents in South Africa.

In this week we are also hosting the first Argentine Cultural Week in South Africa where South Africans can experience the rich variety of Argentinian creative arts to coincide with the restoration of 30 years of democracy in Argentina and 20 years of democracy in South Africa.

Guided by the National Development Plan and the strategic approach of outcome 14 in transforming society and uniting the country, together with all our programmes and interventions, we are working towards building a creative eco-system and an enabling environment within which all our citizens can flourish and which will enable people to work together to achieve common goals.

In this way, we shall continue to build on this freedom and indeed, in the words of Chief Luthuli, “show the world a new pattern for democracy” and strive to reach the apex of human achievement. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Minister, Honourable Joyce Mabudafhasi for her unwavering support as we drive this agenda. She, sadly is unable to be with us today due to a family bereavement - we express our heartfelt to her and her family.

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