

**Budget Vote address by the Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women, Ms
Susan Shabangu, MP, to the National Assembly, Cape Town**

16 Jul 2014

“Celebrating 60th Anniversary of the Women’s Charter and 20 Years of Freedom: Moving Women’s Agenda Forward!”

Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today I stand before you to present Budget Vote 08 as Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women. We are tabling this budget during the transitional period between the fourth and fifth ANC-led administrations.

Let me take this opportunity to pay my respect to the family of one of the illustrious daughters of our soil, the deputy president of the ANCWL Ms Nosipho Ntwanambi, who passed away on Tuesday, July 08. She was a stalwart dedicated to the empowerment and emancipation of women. Hers was a life lived in sacrifice and she has left us with a rich legacy to follow. We will pick up the baton and continue where she has left off. May her soul rest in peace!

Chairperson, on July 03 President Jacob Zuma signed a Proclamation establishing the Department of Women, located in the Presidency, reaffirming the country’s commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action. This is a positive step in enhancing the department’s role to lead, coordinate and oversee the transformation agenda on women’s socio-economic empowerment, rights and equality through mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation.

We are currently engaged in a reconfiguration process to transfer the functions and responsibilities related to programmes for the rights of people with disabilities and children’s rights to the Department of Social Development as pronounced by the President on May 25.

A joint task team has been established to expedite the transition, guided by the Presidency and the DPSA.

At the Departmental level this has necessitated a strategic re-alignment and restructuring exercise. We are reviewing all our programmes, taking stock of the human capital and financial needs, to move the women’s agenda forward.

In addition we will be reviewing the status, role, location and sustainability of the National Council Against Gender-Based Violence so as to strengthen efforts towards the elimination of GBV in our society.

As such, by the end of this month we will be undertaking our first departmental strategic planning session as the Department of Women in the Presidency to develop a five year strategic plan 2015 – 2020.

Chairperson, we are not departing from an unknown plane, there has been work done before us. Ours is to build forward, mindful of the foundation already laid. Let me therefore take this opportunity to reflect on some of the commitments that were made in the previous budget vote speech by my predecessor Minister Lulu Xingwana.

The Department committed to advocate that more land be allocated to women by the Department of

Rural Development and Land Reform. We thus welcome the re-opening of the land claims process and we will be monitoring how women benefit from it.

We also welcome the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's Final Policy Proposals on "Strengthening the Relative Rights of People Working the Land". The Department of Women will submit inputs that will ensure that women working on farms, those that reside in farms and women married to farmworkers benefit from the process.

We had committed to finalizing the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (WEGE Bill).

The bill was tagged as Section 76 and went through the National Assembly processes and was approved and referred for concurrence to the NCOP. Further amendments were made by the NCOP, however, due to the rise of parliament for end of the fourth administration, it lapsed. We therefore intend to further consult and review this Bill.

We intend to through communication ensure that the review process is an inclusive one and takes into consideration the multiplicity of views.

We had also committed to submit reports on the rights of children to the AU and the UN.

Cabinet approved the following reports for depositing;

- The Combined Fourth Report on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

2014 will see the popularization of the National Plan of Action for Children as well as the domestication of international and regional conventions.

The National Disability Rights Policy, which strives to address poverty and inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities in a systematic process that places the responsibility for removing access and participation barriers on duty-bearers, will be finalised this financial year.

The Department of Social Development will as part of their mandate, take over the responsibilities and functions pertaining to the rights of children and persons with disabilities.

We have also signed and ratified international and regional instruments such as CEDAW, the MDGs, Beijing Platform for Action, the AU Protocol and the SADC Gender Protocol.

The department has undertaken reporting on the progress made in the country on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW.

The Beijing plus 20 report will focus on the country's progress to date on the implementation of the critical areas that includes access to education in technical fields, access to health services, participation in peace keeping missions, increased level of participation in political spheres and increased appointment and participation of women in the judiciary. Most of these achievements have been made possible by the consistent political will and progressive legislative reform for the rights and empowerment of women, the advancement of the girl child and gender equality.

The CEDAW report will assess the extent to which South Africa has successfully implemented the range of provisions of the Convention including progress on the adoption of legislative enactments regarding the criminalisation of certain sexual offences, equality and children as well as government policies, programmes and plans of action to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination against women.

The report will also indicate progress made on the multi-sectoral inter-ministerial action plan to combat violence against women and the adoption of comprehensive measures to better address such violence. In addition, the report will reflect on measures to address violence such as the prevention of violence campaign and public awareness of the fact that all forms of violence against women are in violation of women's rights.

The Country represented by the former Minister of Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities in March participated in a successful 58th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. We reached agreed conclusions that are holistic and transformatory that include the stand alone goal on gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender in all other future goals in the post 2015 Development Agenda.

We therefore have a clear mandate from the women of Africa and the women of the World in terms of the report to the Heads of States when they meet in September to deliberate on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

We will also report that through the GRB framework the country will ensure the necessary budgetary allocations for the implementation of projects and programmes, including socioeconomic empowerment and overall gender mainstreaming.

Chairperson, this Budget Vote seeks to consolidate the gains made in the previous term of office while also setting a firm foundation for the future with regards to women's empowerment and gender equality.

The overall budget for this financial year is one hundred and ninety eight million three hundred thousand (R198.3m) which includes the Sixty three million (R63m) allocated for the Commission for Gender Equality.

This budget, though, continues to pose limitations in fulfilling the mandate of this department. The reorganization will therefore create an opportunity for adequate resourcing.

While we acknowledge with great pride the strides made in the past 20 years towards women empowerment and gender equality, we have to contend with the unsettling reality of high unemployment, poverty and inequality that women still experience.

The removal of the persisting barriers to the advancement of women, many of which are systemic, structural inequalities that are patriarchal in nature remains a critical condition to achieving women empowerment and gender equality. It is therefore imperative, as President Jacob Zuma outlined in his June 17 SONA that "as we enter the second phase of our transition from apartheid to a national democratic society, we embark on radical socio-economic transformation to push back the triple challenges [of unemployment, inequality and poverty]".

Therefore, the aim of the Department of Women is to lead, coordinate and oversee the transformation agenda on women's socio-economic empowerment, rights and equality through mainstreaming, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation. In the next five years, the priority of the Ministry in The Presidency

responsible for Women will be to ensure that women's socio-economic empowerment and women's rights are mainstreamed across all sectors of society through:

- monitoring the extent to which social and economic circumstances of women are significantly improved.
- promoting, advocating for and monitoring women's empowerment and gender equality.
- promoting the understanding of differential circumstances of women and men in society and the impact of seemingly neutral decisions, plans, laws, policies and practices on either gender through capacity building on gender mainstreaming and responsive gender budgeting.
- facilitate and monitoring capacity building and skills development for women to participate meaningfully in all areas of the economy and the workplace
- standardising and regularising of accountability with regard to the implementation of gender mainstreaming by both public and private sectors.

The mainstreaming will be anchored on the following pillars:

1. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department of Women will play an oversight role by introducing monitoring and evaluation tools to keep not only the government but the private sector accountable when it comes to the mainstreaming of gender. The Department will work closely with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to align our monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure harmonization of our systems.

2. Research Agenda

We will pursue a strong research agenda to allow us to look at gaps which resulted in women not benefiting as anticipated. The research findings will allow the department to make the necessary interventions.

3. Gender Responsive Budgeting

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is one of the enabling tools to the mainstreaming of gender. A radical change is needed to ensure that all parties in the public and private sectors including NGOs implement GRB in all their planning, programmes, budgeting and expenditure processes.

Chairperson, lest we forget, this year marks the 60th anniversary of the 1954 Women's Charter, which preceded the Freedom Charter of 1955, a clear indication that women were in their own rights pioneers in the struggle for liberation. The 1954 Women's Charter, together with the Freedom Charter of 1955 influenced and anchored the fundamentals of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. It further informed the development of and influenced the 1994 Women's Charter for Effective Equality.

The Women's Charter called for the enfranchisement of men and women of all races (the right to vote and be elected to all state bodies), the right to full opportunities for employment with equal pay and possibilities of promotion in all spheres of work (equal pay for equal work), equal rights in relation to property, land rights, marriage and children; and the removal of all laws and customs that denied women such equality among others.

For the first time both black men and women voted in the historic general elections of 27 April 1994. All

racess voted as equals before the law. The dreams of women like Charlotte Manny Maxeke were realised. They must have ululated in their graves as one of the aims of the Women's Charter of 1954 was realised.

This path was carved over a hundred years ago by the endless sacrifices and courageous struggles displayed by heroic stalwarts who are an embodiment of 102 years of a relentless forward march for total emancipation from all forms of discrimination. Unarmed and defenseless, they challenged the might and brutality of successive oppressive regimes in order to ensure that future generations live in a South Africa that truly belongs to all, both black and white.

Once more in 2013 we commemorated the centenary of the 1913 Women's March led by Charlotte Manny Maxeke against the introduction of pass laws and the infamous 1913 Native Land Act.

We also have to bear in mind that whilst celebrating 60 years of the Women's Charter, in 2016 we will further celebrate 60 Years of the 1956 Women's March to the Union Building under the heroic leadership of Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Sophie De Bruyn, Rahima Moosa, and many others.

It is, therefore, against this backdrop that we will be celebrating the 2014 Women's Month under the theme: "CELEBRATING THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMEN'S CHARTER AND 20 YEARS OF FREEDOM: MOVING WOMEN'S AGENDA FORWARD!" We will therefore elaborate on the programme for the National Women's Month on the 31st of July when we brief the nation of the plans for this year.

Chairperson, other significant milestones we need to build on as we together move South African women forward include:

- Key legislative framework such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998, Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair
- Discrimination Act of 2000, Broad Based Black Economic
- Empowerment Act of 2004, the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, of 1998, Customary Inheritance Laws, Credit Laws, among others have been enacted since the dawn of democracy and that has contributed to an enabling environment for women empowerment and the achievement of gender equality.

The Post-1994 visible representation of women as public representatives both in the country and at international level that has risen significantly. For example, currently there is a 41% representation of women in the National Assembly, 43% of Cabinet Ministers and 46% of women deputy minister.

Women now have increased access to participate in sectors that were previously male dominated sectors such as the judiciary, defense, engineering, finance and commercial fields, among others.

Chairperson, it is with heavy hearts, although, with great determination, that we will for the first time since the inception of the Mandela Day, be volunteering our services in recognition of his selflessness without Madiba. May His Soul Rest in Peace!

In line with the 2014 Mandela Day theme and the call by the President to take pride in our country and clean South Africa, the Department has identified two projects.

On Friday we will spend our 67 Minutes of service at the Porter's House for Women and Children and The Rivoningo Care Centre in the City of Tshwane. Over and above cleaning, we will initiate legacy projects at the two centres which will go a long way in empowering women and young women with the basic skills

that will enable them to be economically active.

In conclusion, we will during this term strive to ensure that women are lifted from a status of victims to victors.

We are committed to work with all stakeholders to bring about the desired change and make true of the saying that: “nothing about women without women”.

As women take centre stage in shaping their own future, the cause ahead of us dictates that we must not shy away from being unpopular as this might be inevitable, especially since we will be more visible from an oversight perspective.

The responsibility we have been charged with demands that we be firm and resolute in ensuring that women are major beneficiaries of all interventions in this second phase of our transition.

Chairperson may I take this opportunity to thank the Director-General Ms Veliswa Baduza of the Department of Women in The Presidency and her team for their sterling work they have done in ensuring that we are well prepared for the Budget Vote.

May I solicit for your support of Budget Vote 08.

Ke a leboga!

Issued by: [Department of Women](#)