

**Correctional Services Budget Vote Speech - 2014/15 by Advocate Michael Masutha,  
Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, MP at the National Assembly - Cape Town**

16 Jul 2014

Honourable Speaker  
Honourable Members of Parliament  
Deputy Minister of Correctional Services Mr Thabang Makwetla  
Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Mr John Jeffrey  
Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services Dr Mathole Motshekga  
Acting National Commissioner of Correctional Services Mr Zach Modise  
Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services' Judge Vuka Shabalala  
Chairperson of the National Council of Correctional Services Judge Seraj Desai  
Chairperson of the Medical Parole Advisory Board Dr Ramatisela  
Distinguished guests from our strategic partners  
Executive Management and officials of Correctional Services  
Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity to present the budget vote speech - Vote 21 - to this august house to mark the beginning of a new journey of the fifth democratic parliament with our revamped and integrated Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services.

Honourable Speaker, we are encouraged by the President's decision to integrate the two ministries of Justice and Correctional Services. This decision is set to mark a new beginning in the efforts of this government to build a "just, fair, prosperous and equitable" society that everyone can proudly call home as envisaged in the National Development Plan (NDP).

The Department of Correctional Services contributes to the achievement of a safe country through implementation of a number of programmes, and the following are Key Issues for Service Delivery:

**Down management of congestion in correctional centres**

The resolve of the South African government to fight crime through, among others, the introduction of minimum sentence legislation and the broadening of the sentencing jurisdiction to cover lower courts, resulted in an exponential increase of inmate population between 1995 and 2004 from 116 846 to 187 036. This worsened the country's international profile in respect of incarceration rate registering 403 inmates per 100 000 population.

To address overcrowding, a multi-pronged overcrowding management strategy was adopted, including the strengthening of diversion programmes, alternative sentencing, building of additional bed spaces, better management of the parole system and promotion of successful social re-integration and reduction of re-offending.

These bore good results as we reduced the inmate population by 31 000 from 187 036 in 2004 to 157 170 by the end of March 2014, a reduction of 29866 in ten years, which equals 16%.

We still have a long way to go because despite progress made in reducing overcrowding in general and incarceration rate from 403 to 292 inmates per 100 000 population. Part of the solution is the construction of 5900 additional bed spaces by 2019, broadening of the use of electronic monitoring of inmates and their placement under community corrections.

## **Strengthening of oversight and advisory structures**

Besides overcrowding we have noted that incidents of violence and gang related atrocities among offenders as well as the stabbings of officials continue to increase in some areas. We have set up a high level national task team to investigate these incidents, assess our security systems and make recommendations on the type, scale and scope of intervention to arrest and reverse them. The task team has begun its work in St Albans Correctional Centre in Nelson Mandela Bay – Eastern Cape, where we have witnessed continued incidents of violence.

I note with appreciation the good work of the Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services under the leadership of Judge Vuka Tshabalala. We will endeavour to ensure that nothing inhibits their ability to provide the constitutionally guaranteed judicial oversight on Correctional Services going forward.

## **Improving the remand detention system**

In March 2014 the Department of Correctional Services concluded a ground breaking policy framework on the management of remand detainees, with the passing of the White Paper on Remand Detention in South Africa. The policy seeks to close a gap left by the White Paper on Corrections passed in 2005 as well as the amendment made to the Correctional Services Act.

Through continued transformation of the country's remand detention system, South Africa is now urging closer to the ideal international target of 25% of all inmates being remand detainees, Since the year 2000, remand detainees have been reduced by 31.9% from 63 954 to 41 690 in June 2014, of which 5% (1922) has spent at least two years in custody.

This is a product of increased collaboration by various partners within the criminal justice system which will be further enhanced with this establishment of an integrated Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services. Interventions include the tracking of these categories of remand detainees for periodic referral to courts in line with Section 49G of the Correctional Services Act as amended. The Office of the Criminal Justice Review has recently started looking at the top 20 longest awaiting trial detainees in order to address human rights issues and the right to a speedy trial.

It is estimated that over 95% of inmates will return to the society after doing time for various offences. Presently in South Africa 69% of 157 170 inmates are the youth of 35 years of age or younger, most of them are from broken families, with a weak understanding and commitment to key social values, poor education levels and generally with little to lose.

We will continue to build on the foundation established since the advent of democracy in terms of our rehabilitation interventions by ensuring that from 2014/15 financial year, 64% of offenders complete correctional programmes and that an 80% participation rate of offenders enrolled in education and skills development programmes is maintained.

We will step up the collaboration with among others, established universities, the National Youth Development Agency, the Sector Education and Training Agencies, the Departments of Basic and Higher Education as well as Labour.

## **Health Care Services**

The department has ensured access to effective primary health care while those in need of secondary and tertiary health care services are taken to public health care facilities. The fight against the scourge of HIV and AIDS as well as tuberculosis will be intensified. We will improve the percentage of inmates that

tested for HIV from 68% of 157 170 inmates to 70% while the TB cure rate will be improved from 75% to 80%.

### **Optimising technology alternatives to incarcerations and for victim participation**

In November 2014 we expect to launch a video-conferencing system in all 53 Correctional Supervision and Parole Board (CSPB) offices in South Africa. This innovation is intended to help reduce the barriers of participation in the parole hearings like physical distance and language barriers to our efforts of centralising victims in the determination of offender parole hearings. Although phenomenal progress was made since 2009 in mobilising victims to participate in parole hearings of the CSPB, from just 108 to 1125 cases per year, this still represents less than five percent of hearings that result in parole placements of offenders that roughly reaches 25 000. With this video conferencing capacity, built with funding from the Criminal Asset Recovery Account (CARA), victims can be informed to go to their nearest CSPB offices and be linked to the actual parole board hearings.

### **Social Reintegration:**

We will embark on an intensive campaign of promoting alternative sentences within the cluster, establish social compacts to strengthen social acceptance of ex-offenders, enhance restorative justice and tightening the supervision of parolees, probationers and remand detainees. Although there has been phenomenal improvement in compliance with conditions of probationers and parolees from 82% in 2012/13 to 94% in 2013/14, the department will invest more on building the credibility of the system among the criminal justice partners and communities.

Honourable Speaker, I am delighted to say there are many pockets of excellence within the Department of Correctional Services where unemployed youth from surrounding communities gets brought in over a period of time to be trained with offenders in among others motor mechanic, furniture making, electrical engineering and in business management.

### **Building of institutional capacity**

We shall ensure that the department functions at full capacity with respect to the filling of strategic vacant posts including the posts of National Commissioner, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Management and the Regional Commissioner of Limpopo Mpumalanga and North West region. This will be done as part of ensuring that all strategic and operational vacant positions are filled. We have planned to also train an average of 16 500 officials each year in line with the Workplace Skills Plan to gear the Department of Correctional Services for a heightened delivery of services over the next five years and beyond.

Alongside the human capital focus, will be the modernisation of the correctional system in order to provide a reliable, integrated and secured information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and system. This includes an Integrated Inmate Management System for a single-view of inmate and offender information based on biometric identification of inmates and offenders to curtail instances of identity fraud and erroneous releases.

### **Budget and good governance**

The budget of the department for the 2014/15 is R19,721 billion, projected to increase over the MTEF to R20,795 billion in 2015/16 and to reach R22,081 billion in 2016/17 at an average growth of 5.6 per cent.

Amounts totalling R72,6 million in 2014/15; R72,8 million in 2015/16 and R77,9 million in 2016/17 have been reprioritised within the 2014 MTEF baseline from non-core Goods and Services items for spending on the following policy priorities:

- Implementation of Victim-Offender Dialogues;
- Purchasing of Security Equipment;
- Replacement of dilapidated Workshop and Agricultural Machinery and Equipment; and
- Integrated Inmate Management System (IIMS)

Of great concern is the fact that up to 2012-13, the Department of Correctional Services has been receiving a qualified audit opinion on movable tangible capital assets.

Last year a number of interventions were implemented including the deployment of all senior managers in the department in various management areas to verify both the existence, completeness and the state of assets. It is anticipated that this intervention will bear positive results with regard to the audit outcomes of 2013/14.

I am committed to ensure, through continuous improvement on compliance with various prescripts and good governance principles, that the Department achieves an unqualified audit opinion. I am scheduled to meet with the Auditor General before the end of this month to see what else can be done.

## **Conclusion**

The Department of Correctional Services in collaboration with Justice, Police and other players within the criminal justice system, is poised to take delivery of services to unprecedentedly higher levels. We have what it takes to realise the ambitious ideals outlines in the National Development Plan. The endeavours require everyone, from families, to communities, to the labour movements, to business, faith-based and non-governmental organisations to put all their hands on deck so that together we can move South Africa forward.

Let me express my deepest appreciation to the Deputy Minister of Correctional Services Mr Thabang Makwetla for his outstanding support. To the newly established and integrated Justice and Correctional Services Portfolio Committee and particularly its chairperson Dr Mathole Motshekga for their guidance and wisdom shared during the presentation of our political overview to the committee. Gratitude also goes to the Acting National Commissioner of Correctional Services Mr Zach Modise, his executive management and staff for their demonstrated passion and commitment to make the ideals we have discussed a reality during this term of government.

Last but not least, I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to my family for their love and support.

I thank you.

Issued by: [Department of Correctional Services](#)