

**Address by the Premier of Gauteng Panyaza Lesufi during the 2024 State of the Province Address, Change Bible Church, Katlehong, Johannesburg**

**15 August 2024**

Madame Speaker, Honourable Morakane Mosupyoe;  
Deputy Speaker, Honourable Nomvuyo Mhlakaza-Manamela;  
Chief Whip of the Governing Party, Honourable Lesego Makhubela;  
Members of the Executive Council;  
Leaders of Political Parties in the Government of Provincial Unity;  
Leaders of Political Parties and Members of the Provincial Legislature;  
Executive Mayors;  
Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mme Angie Motshekga;  
Former Minister and Chairperson of the African Union, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma;  
Former Premiers of Gauteng Province, Professor Mathole Motshekga and Ms Nomvula Mokonyane;  
Traditional and Religious Leaders in Gauteng Province;  
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Distinguished Guests;  
Members of the Media;  
The People of Gauteng:

**INTRODUCTION: TONE SETTING AND CONTEXTUALISATION**

We have convened you this evening, as political parties constituting the Government of Provincial Unity, to share with you our wishes, aspirations and vision for a better Gauteng.

We've invited you here in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni Region, a township once ravaged by sponsored violence, to pay homage to our beloved leader, Mama Bertha Gxowa and a galaxy of leaders like, Grace Flatela, Sam Ntuli, Bavumile Vilakazi, Duma Nkosi,

Elizabeth Thabethe, Thandi Swakamisa, Lungile Mtshali, Ntombikayise Constance Zikalala, Thumbu Mahlangu, Moses Makwakwa, Bobo Mokoena, Viva Mokoena, and many more leaders who led us to rebuild this region today know as Ekurhuleni, a Place of Peace under the stewardship of our Executive Mayor Nkosingiphile Doctor Xhakaza

Gauteng is not an ordinary province; it is the central hub for the flow of people, goods, and capital across the country and beyond its borders. This broader city-region includes a network of interconnected cities, towns, and semi-urban areas that together form the economic, social and cultural heartland of South Africa.

It also includes major industrial and commercial centres that complement Gauteng's economic activities, such as the Rustenburg platinum mining, Sasolburg (petrochemicals), and Secunda (alternative energy generation).

Gauteng has three metropolitan municipalities, which is unique to our country. It includes the City of Johannesburg, once the world's most important centre of gold production and today South Africa's financial capital, the City of Tshwane, the country's administrative capital, and the City of Ekurhuleni, the gateway to Africa and the manufacturing hub of South Africa. A water city, Sedibeng region, as well as an agro-processing hub in the West Rand region, (*Le rona re Batho*).

## **CELEBRATING WOMEN GIANTS**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

As we celebrate this month of August, allow me to pay tribute to two outstanding women, who influenced us to the cause of freedom and to date they remain pillars of inspiration. I want to acknowledge an outstanding woman and leader who has joined us today, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma.

## **Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma**

Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma is one of the women pioneers in the liberation of oppressed people and women in South Africa and throughout the continent.

She defied the odds at a time when it was largely unheard of for young African women to launch themselves into revolutionary politics. Her courageous activism inevitably attracted the perilous attention of the authorities, leading her to flee the country into exile. There, she completed her medical education in the United Kingdom and temporarily settled in Swaziland, where she continued to practise medicine as an ANC activist.

She was appointed to cabinet by President Nelson Mandela and she has since served under all presidents holding key portfolios in building our democratic society. She holds the distinguished record of being the first woman to lead our continental organisation, the African Union.

She has exemplified a life of selfless service to the people of our country and continent. And for that, we want to express our deepest gratitude.

## **Honourable Members;**

### **Dr Naledi Pandor**

Allow me to also acknowledge yet another gallant woman in our country's political history, Dr Naledi Mandisa Pandor.

Coming from a family steeped in the anti-apartheid history, she has lived a life of unwavering activism, staunch opposition to injustice, and passion for education.

Her educational accomplishments remain inspirational to all of us. After serving in various positions in the nation's legislative arm of government, she joined the executive branch in 2004.

When everyone was retreating and quietly watching the Israeli regime committing genocide in Gaza, she spoke out on behalf of South Africa and the world. She championed South Africa's push for the International Court of Justice to act against Israelis with conviction.

She was unwavering in her call to protect and strengthen multilateral institutions to build a better Africa and the world. She also carried on from where Dr Dlamini-Zuma left by demanding that the continent's voice be heard and the multilateral institutions be reformed to reflect a free and globally significant Africa.

History will always remember these two remarkable South African women who flew our flag high. We will convene a special legislature sitting later this month to bestow these women with special awards.

Sadly, today we buried a woman with special talents, a committed South African, an outstanding actress, mme Connie Chume, we are proud that our President Cyril Ramaphosa granted our request for a special provincial official funeral. May her soul Rest in Peace.

**Madam Speaker;**

### **HIGH-LEVEL REPORT BACK**

In February this year, I stood before this House to deliver what amounted to the last State of the Province Address of the Sixth Administration. In it, I set out both the ongoing and the coming development programmes which the provincial government was implementing.

It is with great pride that I share with you some of the key deliverables since then.

## **People of Gauteng;**

- Last time when we met like this, we committed and promised to do away with e-tolls, today e-tolls are gone.
- Last time we met like this, loadshedding was a headache, but that headache is now gone. Thanks to our President, our Minister and team Eskom for the remarkable work.
- Last time when we met like this, we committed to establishing a state bank and pharmaceutical company. We are pleased to report that we have since been approached by various banks, local and international, who want to partner with us to realise our dream of a provincial state bank as a vehicle to change the look and feel of the Gauteng townships. More details in this regard will come to light as and when developments unfold.
- Last time when we met like this, we committed to conducting lifestyle audit on all heads of departments and CEOs of the GPG Agencies. This work has been completed. We have just received a report from the Special Investigative Unit (SIU). I will in the coming weeks meet with the SIU to get the full brief so that the matter can be finalised and appropriate actions taken where required.
- Last time when we met like this, we announced that we would change the electricity/energy shortcomings of our province. To date, in just under six months since this commitment:
  - To date, we have installed 485 transformers across Ekurhuleni, Vaal, Johannesburg, Westrand and Tshwane. This has brought much relief to communities which have languished without electricity;
  - To date, 28 of our health facilities inclusive of clinics, hospitals, community health care centres and five schools, have an alternative energy supply;

In propelling our plan forward, we launched priority areas for Phase 2 of the Energy Response Plan which crafts a roadmap to identify an additional 3000 megawatts to add to the national grid.

I am pleased to announce that the John Ware Open Cycle Gas Turbine, with a capacity of 50MW, was commissioned on 17th April 2024, and the Durban Street OCGT is expected to be operational by 30th August 2024.

This would not have been possible without the dedicated collaboration and valued contribution of our partners, Eskom, City Power and the Executive Mayors of our municipalities. Our commitment to securing and enhancing Gauteng's energy infrastructure remains steadfast, aiming to safeguard our essential services and communities from the impacts of load shedding.

We recognise that the primary aim of the state is to create conducive conditions for economic investment, growth and development as a prerequisite for employment creation. In a drive to accelerate our response to the unemployment crisis, we will partner with the private sector to bring new innovative solutions to the fore to execute high-impact job creation initiatives across priority sectors and programmes.

Last time we met like this, we committed to attracting new investments to our province, to date, we can proudly declare the following investments.

- ACSA intends to invest just under R6 billion in the next four years, positioning ORTIA as a gateway for regional economic development. These include adding extra cargo capacity that will make ORTIA globally competitive. This cargo development will allow the airport to accommodate 750 000 tonnes of Cargo annually.
- Vodacom has committed to invest R3 billion in ICT network infrastructure in Gauteng, which will advance digital connectivity across the economy;

- We welcome the recent announcement from the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition regarding the Vaal Special Economic Zone. Citibank has pledged a substantial amount of R1.4 billion to develop a new infrastructure project in the Vaal area, which will include a significant new international airport;
- Heineken Beverages will be investing R3 billion in Gauteng in the next three years and will include maltery plant, mega plant (sorting and packaging) as well as Enterprise and Supplier Development. The potential jobs to be generated by the investment are projected to be 1000;
- Transnet Pipelines have proposed the construction of the PL6 Pipeline, extending from Jameson Park in Heidelberg to OR Tambo International Airport, to address the anticipated Jet Fuel shortages by 2028, due to insufficient supply capacity from Sasolburg. The project, with an estimated cost exceeding R800 million and a completion target of May 2028, is vital for securing the airport's fuel supply, particularly against risks such as major floods or rail disruptions;

In keeping with the spirit of partnering with the private sector, we will soon launch the ABSA partnership valued at more than R200 million to expand SMME access to affordable funding.

- To give effect to the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP), 15 Gauteng smallholder Grain Farmers have been approved for funding of about R70 million, in partnership with Land Bank and PepsiCo.

Further to that, we will be signing the Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) totalling about R55 Million with 8 commercial farming entities operating across different sub-sectors. These include sunflower processing, poultry farming, hydroponic vegetable farming, rooftop farming and retail. These commercially oriented projects will contribute to sustainable employment creation, food security and transformation of the sector.

- In addition, the partnership with CNS Beverage and Food Supply (Pty) Ltd has seen the setting up of a food and beverage factory in Midrand with R150 million having been already invested. The R300 million will be invested over a period of 3 years.
- The Ukuvuselela Project, a High-Capacity Freight Rail project between Tshwane and Port Elizabeth, will be launched. Its goal is to modernise an existing railway line and turn it into a high-volume, sustainably operated freight rail logistics system that serves the South African automotive industry. As a result, the Gauteng economy will solidify and maintain its leading position in the manufacturing and automobile industries. It is envisaged that Project Ukuvuselela will result in nearly 4000 construction jobs and just over 1000 permanent operations jobs.
- The Limpopo Gauteng speed train has now entered the feasibility study phase and will accelerate our desire to work with our counterparts in Limpopo. This is expected to create over 18000 jobs during the construction period. In reality, slowly but surely Gauteng and Limpopo Provinces are coming to each other, therefore it should be easy to move from Gauteng to Limpopo and from Limpopo to Gauteng.

### **Inter-Provincial Collaboration**

#### **Honourable Members;**

Re-building the economy of Gauteng demands that we re-think the traditional models of provincial economic growth and development. South Africa is a unitary state. Nothing prevents our provinces from re-imagining provincial economic contours and possibilities for mutual benefit.

In this regard, we will be moving beyond the boundaries of our province to connect with neighbouring provinces where there is a potential for such mutual benefit.

We want to move beyond provincial boundaries and **strengthen economic linkages** with provinces through capital investment projects.



Given the proximity of **Harrismith** to the provinces of Gauteng, KZN and Mpumalanga, it offers an **e-commerce potential**. It is well-positioned to become a transport and logistics hub for the movement of goods across provincial borders.

Secondly, in Emfuleni, we want to take advantage of the link stemming from the close proximity of **Sasolburg to Gauteng**. This presents an opportunity to create a new economic hub through building new roads, houses and the creation of a tourism hub, as well as taking advantage of the Vaal Dam and Vaal River.

For this reason, we will address the crises around the Vaal Dam, collectively with the municipality.

The third opportunity is for **Gauteng to be linked with Rustenburg**. There is an opportunity for additional inter-provincial transport and the development of new cities and towns to mutually benefit both the economies of Gauteng and Northwest.

This will increase investment in this area and also ensure that the area of Magaliesburg grows economically, using Rustenburg as an anchor. We will propel the development of the Lanseria Smart City and link it with the economy of the West Rand.

We are also strengthening our work on international relations and operations. We will in due course announce collaborations with among others, the UAE, Finland and China following the successful outbound trips we undertook in the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration.

With a view to upholding the position of Gauteng as the economic hub, we will accelerate our infrastructure investment.

- In less than two years, the Gauteng Government will invest 120 billion in the expansion of Gautrain to the following areas: Soweto via Fourways; Mamelodi; Atteridgeville; Lanseria; and Springs. This expansion is expected to create over

125 000 jobs during construction over a five-year period. The bid to construct these lines closes at the end of October this year.

- We are expanding our investment in ICT infrastructure by R2.3 billion to roll out a stable GPN network and ICT connectivity across the Gauteng City Region. We are broadening access to ICT by providing Wi-Fi connectivity to hospitals and schools and to the 26 proclaimed townships;

We will soon convene the Provincial Investment Conference to further attract and expand private sector investments. Public-private partnerships remain central to our policy, fostering joint development projects that catalyse economic growth.

We cannot realise this investment if armies of the unemployed are not re-skilled to take advantage of these opportunities. It is within this context that we signed a groundbreaking agreement with the national skills fund at the value of R 1.1 billion and UIF with whom we signed R 8 billion to re-skill almost 500 000 unemployed residents of Gauteng. And from next month the training programmes will resume.

To prepare for the skills of the future, we are changing what is being taught to our children inside the classroom by expanding schools of specialisation programmes. To date, we have 36 schools of specialisation.

- Rhodesfield Engineering School of Specialisation focusing on aviation;
- Soshanguve Engineering School of Specialisation focusing on automotive;
- Curtis Nkodlo School Specialisation with a focus on maths, science, ICT, Commerce and entrepreneurship;
- Mohlodi School of Specialisation with a focus on Maritime;
- In this very township, we have the Katlehong School of Specialisation focusing on manufacturing transport and logistics. It is worth noting that since inception the Katlehong School of Engineering has been recording above 90% performance. This school is supported by Mercedes Benz SA and merSETA.

This is our pledge: to prepare Gauteng's youth to lead and excel in an AI-driven world, and to drive our province towards unprecedented economic growth and prosperity.

**Honourable Members;**

We can embark on ambitious programmes to create jobs and fight unemployment, but if we do not defeat the scourge of crime all these will remain a pipedream.

Crime and corruption remain a blight on the soul of society. For this reason, fighting crime is our apex priority which commands our urgent attention as the provincial government. I wish to reassure the people of our province that we will continue to ramp up measures to drastically reduce crimes.

We are hard at work to arrest the proliferation of land invasion and illegal mining, to stamp out drug dealing and drug use; to eliminate the culture of hired killings (inkabi); to eradicate the possession of illegal firearms; to prevent car high-jacking; and to emphatically protect children and women from perpetrators of gender-based violence, kidnappers, and human traffickers. We will continue to implement the six pillars of the National Strategic Plan on GBV.

We have invited both municipalities and the private security firms to join our law enforcement agencies and provincial government in this epic battle for the soul of our province. I am pleased to report that the process of improving the co-ordination and integration of our operations has already begun.

- To date, we have handed 250 vehicles to the SAPS to strengthen the fight against crime and
- We have deployed over 400 visible policing vehicles,
- We have three helicopters, and the deployment of drones to high crime areas, which are all linked to our interim command centres and are working closely with other law enforcement agencies.

- To date, over 30 000 e-panic and physical buttons have been distributed to citizens as part of the new e-policing initiatives. The e-panic application is a game-changer in fighting crime, particularly gender-based violence and femicide. We encourage all communities to download and use the App.

In the majority of major crime incidences, a motor vehicle is involved. It is within this context that we are overhauling our number plate regime to disrupt the involvement of vehicles in criminality. From January 2025, these new registration plates will be rolled out for all motor vehicle owners.

Equally, our Department of Roads and Transport is beefing up our capacity to combat public transport conflict and taxi violence in partnership with the Road Traffic Management Corporation, SAPS and Metro Police units.

Now that we have successfully recruited over 7000 Traffic Wardens, excluding the over 2000 Military Veterans who are in training, we are monitoring their impact in high crime hotspots in all corridors.

We are implementing our Anti-Land-Invasion Strategy to ensure that no new informal settlements are established. In implementing this strategy, we have created a **Land Invasion Monitoring and Inspection Tool (LIMIT)**, a first of its kind in the country.

This tool leverages advanced geospatial technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to detect and monitor land invasions and illegal expansions in real time. The use of GIS and AI to combat crime and prevent land invasions will be launched next month. Gauteng is looking forward to hosting the Minister of Police, who has embraced our use of technology to fight crime in our province.

To our new provincial commissioner of police, **Lieutenant General Mthombeni**, your mandate is clear: go on and defeat crime with whatever means it takes.

We are confident that victory is certain, that law-abiding residents will reclaim their peaceful existence.

- When we met earlier during SOPA, we committed to creating more job opportunities for our unemployed through our *Nasi Ispani* programme.

It is now public record, as per the latest labour survey report, that Gauteng has recorded a net increase of 115 thousand jobs between Quarter 2 of 2023 and Quarter 3 of 2024, while provinces such as the Western Cape saw the largest decrease in employment.

Gauteng continues to account for over 30% of national employment and over 40% of labour market growth, which highlights its role as an economic hub of our country.

To date, almost 130 000 people who were unemployed a year ago are in job opportunities. We are ramping up this drive to provide immediate relief to unemployed people in this province while enhancing the delivery of critical social services to the residents of Gauteng.

Unfortunately, we lost 32000 young people who were teacher assistants. We are proud that we were the only province that had extended their contracts. We will open new opportunities for them and other young people of our province with time.

While we realise the potential of this programme, the fiscal constraints are a reality which can only be overcome by aggressively exploring funding opportunities and partnerships.

**Madam Speaker;**

On May 29, 2024, we held free and fair National and Provincial Elections whose outcomes have shaped the political direction of the 7th Administration. Accordingly, we have responded to the wishes of the electorate by constituting the Government of Provincial Unity, after a long consultative process.

This 7th Administration is committed to ensuring that we consolidate our provincial developmental vision to secure the future of its residents for generations to come.

Our focus is essentially centred on Growing Gauteng Together 2030, which is our provincial interpretation of the National Development Plan.

In terms of our key objectives, Gauteng's five-year Mid-Term Development Plan will focus on the following three strategic priorities aligned to President Cyril Ramaphosa's Opening of Parliament Address:

- Inclusive economic growth and job creation;
- Improved living conditions and enhanced health and wellbeing;
- A capable, ethical and developmental state.

### **A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE**

The state is the driver of development. A weak and ethically compromised state will not rise to the challenge of realising the key national objectives of transformation and addressing inequality, unemployment and poverty. It only when our state is ethical, capable, and attuned to the needs of society that it can live up to its mandate of meeting developmental goals.

As indicated above, in the 7th Administration, we will continue to up the tempo in the eradication of the identified key challenges weighing down on the lives of the people of Gauteng. Crime, corruption, unemployment, sluggish economic growth and poverty, as well as building the capacity of the state are of extreme urgency for the Gauteng Provincial Government.

## **Governance and accountability**

### **Honourable Members;**

I have already indicated that for us to realise the goals of the GPU and the 7th Administration, a professional civil service is a prerequisite.

The 7th administration is committed to transforming Gauteng into a province characterized by ethical leadership, transparency and accountability. We will attract highly qualified and competent individuals. In this spirit, we urge those who were considering to leave our province to reconsider.

As part of our process to professionalise Gauteng's public administration;

- We commit the 7<sup>th</sup> Administration to recruit the best of the best;
- We commit the 7<sup>th</sup> Administration to only appoint suitable competent entities for government contracts;
- We commit the 7<sup>th</sup> Administration to be merciless on corruption and we are embarking on consequence management systems in this regard.

I have had detailed discussions with all MECs and HODs to ensure that the commitments we make are properly resourced and included in the MTDP and budgets of departments. This must be reflected and monitored in the plans of the departments.

In the next 100 days, I will be signing Delivery Agreements with each MEC to spell out the commitments we are making to improve the lives of all Gauteng residents over the next five years. These delivery agreements will be made public and I will hold routine sessions with MECs to assess progress and identify blockages that impact our ability to deliver.

### **People of Gauteng;**

We will introduce innovative technologies to enhance e-services and platforms. This will include digital payment and application solutions for state transactions to create a

cashless, paperless environment and reduce queue-based services. These developments must ensure strong and co-ordinated governance across the province and ensure robust cybersecurity and data protection.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Regulation, Governance and Management**

### **Madam Speaker;**

Gauteng's highly-urbanized nature contributes to environmental and sustainability challenges. Our concern around the grime and decay in our province and cities, together with the ever-increasing impact of climate change have compelled us to act decisively by separating the department of environment from the department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Gauteng is the only province in the country, that finalises EIAs within 30 days whilst other authorities and provinces take 107 days prescribed as legislated timeframe. We are committed to finalising 98% of applications within 30 days to support infrastructure and economic development.

### **Reduction to low carbon emissions**

### **Madam Speaker;**

We welcome the promulgation of the Climate Change Act in July 2024, which is a crucial step towards a meaningful response to climate change. This sets the tone for provincial government to implement the Gauteng City Region Overarching Climate Change Response Strategy.

We will convene a Climate Change Indaba in October 2024 to engage stakeholders on financing climate action.



### **People of Gauteng;**

In view of the continued increase in waste generation and depletion of landfill space, the province is working on a multi-pronged approach to fast-track infrastructure for waste recovery and recycling, thus alleviating pressure from municipalities.

We will not tolerate a culture of pollution, non-compliance to legislation and ecological degradation by industry.

The new stand-alone department will continue to work with municipalities, the private sector and civil society in developing climate mitigating and adaption strategies, guided by the GCR overarching climate change response strategy and action plan.

### **Public Finance Sustainability and Strengthening the Fiscus**

#### **Honourable Members;**

Fiscal sustainability is part of the key underpinnings of a capable and developmental state. Our priority as the province is anchored on the need to increase our existing own revenue resources to modernise the revenue collection efficiently and cost-effectively.

We recognise that municipalities need assistance with strategies and capabilities to maximise revenue collection, and exploring innovative revenue generation strategies including debt management.

### **Integrated Planning and Co-operative Governance**

#### **Madam Speaker;**

Municipalities are the coalface of delivery of services, which often means the difference between a better life and misery for communities. We will promote inter-governmental relations and regional collaboration by formalising partnerships between the three spheres, stabilising coalition agreements and ensuring improved service delivery and municipal efficiencies.

The Provincial Government will support municipalities with critical service delivery initiatives and ensure that a functional disaster management response centre is operational that would be able to respond to unplanned disastrous occurrences.

We will also introduce an integrated e-indigent register to ensure uniformity across the province in dealing with matters affecting the poor.

To achieve this, we must strengthen integrated planning and co-operative governance between the three spheres. It is only through one district, one plan that we will have a coherent, effective service delivery and development.

## **Water security**

### **Honourable Members;**

To address the current water crisis, we are firming up our strategic water resource protection interventions. We will enhance the implementation of wetland rehabilitation, river health, groundwater monitoring and related interventions.

We will work with municipalities to drastically reduce leaks in their distribution systems and support them in improving the performance of their water systems.

Lastly, Honourable Members, we must collectively strive to implement an intensive water savings and demand management programme. Together, we can ensure a sustainable and secure water future for our province.

To this end, an **Inter-governmental Relations Summit** will be convened in October to deal with:

- Crime;
- Energy;

- Hostel Redevelopment;
- Special Economic Zones;
- CBD Revitalisation;
- Water.

## **INCLUSIVE ECONOMY AND JOB CREATION**

### **Revitalising Central Business Districts (CBDs) Into Vibrant Economic Hubs**

We have expanded our priority on Townships, Informal Settlements and Hostels to include Central Business Districts (CBDs). We will transform all strategic CBDs in our province into dynamic urban centres, driving the broader economic development for Gauteng.

Let's all accept that the current state of the Johannesburg CBD is an embarrassment for the people of Gauteng. But we can't be sorry forever. We must act. We must not improve Johannesburg for nostalgia, but we must improve it because of strategic significance. This task is not easy; this task is risky, but this task must be undertaken. A new Carlton Centre must rise. A new Carlton Hotel must rise. And the new Centre must bring back the entertainment needed today. A Johannesburg where we will live; a Jozi where we will shop and a Jozi where we will play will rise!

In collaboration with the City of Joburg, we will kickstart this important initiative with the Johannesburg CBD to unlock significant economic opportunities, including attracting investments and businesses, creating jobs, boosting tourism, supporting SMMEs, enhancing real estate values and improving infrastructure.

Having vacated Carlton Centre in 2018, Transnet has decided to relocate back to CBD in the spirit of the CBD revitalisation. This move by Transnet complements our work and injects the required vitality into the regeneration process, through the following interventions:

- Commitment of the sum of R460 million for the rehabilitation of one of its office buildings in Rissik Street, upgrading it to A grade status;
- Repurposing the Carlton Hotel in collaboration with the Housing Development Agency and Provincial Department of Human Settlement to redesign the development of Carlton Centre into new housing opportunities;
- Pursuing other retailers to re-establish their presence in the Carton Centre. Among them are Foschini and Shoprite etc.;
- Develop a strong relationship with other players in the CBD, including Jozi My Jozi team to revive inner-city development;

For its part, the GPG will establish a CBD forum which includes civil society, property developers and property owners. All relevant organisations will be represented there. In addition, we will convene a summit on Johannesburg CBD in September this year.

From next month we will immediately deploy tons of security law enforcement agencies, day and night, around the CBD. We will also broaden our CCTV network. As soon as we have received the report of the Khampepe Commission on Highjacked buildings, we will invigorate the efforts to reclaim highjacked and abandoned buildings. This announcement should serve as a strong warning to the criminal underworld who have turned Johannesburg into their private fiefdom that the arm of the law is about to strike and strike hard.

Through these interventions, this once attractive landmark of our city will be returned to its former glory.

### **People of Gauteng;**

We are pleased to inform the people of our province who commute daily in their numbers to places of work at great cost that PRASA has successfully recommissioned railway lines connecting the three metros in Gauteng at a value of over R3.4 billion. Nine (9) routes have been successfully reinstated, benefiting the communities of Mabopane, Tembisa,

Katlehong, Soweto, Germiston and Saulsville/Atteridgeville. There are plans for further extension by the end of the financial year.

And now PRASA is refurbishing the Ellis Park Station in preparation for the All Blacks and Springboks Rugby Test Match happening on 31 August 2024 at the Emirates Airline Park (Formerly known as Ellis Park Stadium).

We have also completed the following roads:

- K73 (/Allandale) road;
- P241 (Lenasia) road
- D483 (Cullinan) road;
- 40 municipality streets (Emfuleni);

The following are currently under construction:

- Suurman road (Hammanskraal)
- P175-Potchstroom road;
- K50 Sinkhole—Delmas road;
- K174 Vaal River City interchange;
- K175-Ekadustrail/BRONKHORSTSPRUIT

## **Infrastructure investment and maintenance**

### **Honourable Members;**

Infrastructure investment is crucial for unlocking economic growth and creating jobs, as it provides the essential foundation for attracting private sector investments in mega projects.

Investments in the sector would stimulate economic activity, improve quality of life, and create both direct and indirect employment opportunities, making them indispensable for fostering a vibrant and competitive economy.

The focus of this administration is on large-scale social and economic infrastructure. Important to this, is the availability of reliable bulk infrastructure. In strengthening the delivery of bulk services and the service delivery response system. We will establish a Unit for bulk infrastructure in the Department of Infrastructure Development.

### **Tourism**

In this administration, we will prioritise destination marketing to drive increased international arrivals, domestic trips and generate revenue out of the visitor economy.

Over the next three years, it is anticipated that the tourism sector in Gauteng will generate over R120 billion from international arrivals and R50 billion from domestic tourism, while creating over 10 000 jobs in the tourism sector.

Together with the creative economy, we will increase tourism demand in this province by generating new and engaging tourist experiences and raising awareness of lesser-known locations such as the Constitutional Hill, Maropeng, the Cradle of Humankind and Dinokeng. This will drive increased visitor arrivals, with positive spinoffs for job creation and building our destination competitiveness

To contribute towards the realisation of these prospects, we have initiated and fully resourced the #VisitGAUTENG – Zwakala campaign that will extend to other key markets.

### **Major bidding and hosting of events**

In bringing back the spirit of the destination of choice, we will aggressively bid and host high-impact significant events in categories of sport, arts, culture and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE). As Gauteng, we view these as an invaluable part of our economic development.

We have allocated R40 million for bidding for and possibly hosting major sporting events that will stimulate the economy and inspire the youth.

We will continue to support our home-grown events like the Soweto Marathon, City to City Marathon, 94.7 Cycle Challenge, 702 Walk the Talk, Joy of Jazz, the DSTV Delicious Festival and the Festival of Motoring to promote the province's potential as a world-class city.

## **IMPROVED LIVING CONDITIONS AND ENHANCED HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **Education, sports, arts, and culture**

#### **People of Gauteng;**

Expanding **access to quality early childhood development (ECD) Programmes** and ensuring child readiness for primary school remains our commitment.

We have identified 6 hostels in which Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres will be prioritized. To date, we have completed functional centres in Denver, Mzimhlophe, Sebokeng, Boipatong, and Kwa-Thema Hostels. This intervention will eventually be expanded to the 15 Hostels across the province.

In 2021, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) found that 81% of Grade 4 learners in South Africa cannot read for meaning. It is for this reason that we are **expanding comprehensive Educational Improvement Programmes, through the implementation** of the Language and Reading Improvement Programme and Maths Improvement Programme.

#### **Honourable Members;**

None dare challenge me when I say that Gauteng is the home of champions. Today this august House is privileged to be joined by, among others, Tatjana Smith, Bradley Nkoane, Bayande Walaza and Shaun Maswangane. All of these distinguished athletes, including

Akani Simbini, have put Gauteng on the map. We are ready to unveil our incentive package to these athletes as a token of appreciation by the Gauteng Government.

As part of our investment in sports and the creative arts, we have allocated a budget of R340 139 million in the 2024/2025 financial year for **school sports and recreation programmes** to ensure that young athletes have access to quality training, facilities, and competitions through the renewal of the Wednesday League School Programme.

There are currently 800 township schools participating in the Wednesday League programme that includes the codes of football and netball. These interventions will go a long way in ensuring the implementation of health, anti-drug, and girl-child support initiatives.

We will **revitalise community arts centres, community halls and community recreation centres** and make them the nerve of community cohesion in the province. In this regard, we will provide infrastructure maintenance and programmes to Rabasotho Community Hall in Tembisa; ensure the renovation of Mphahlalatsane Theatre in Sebokeng (Vaal); capacitate and program the Moses Molelekoa Arts Centre; Uncle Toms Hall and many other community halls that have now been hijacked.

## **Health and Wellness**

### **Honourable Members;**

We remain committed to the ongoing improvements in key health outcomes. These include **enhancing the experience of healthcare in the province** for both users and providers and accelerating the system reforms in preparation for universal health coverage, or NHI as signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

### **People of Gauteng;**

We will continue to monitor the outbreak of Mpox in our province and acknowledge the Africa CDC's and the WHO's decision to declare it a public health emergency.



As part of preventative measures, Gauteng Province is capacitating clinicians in all five Health districts. Moreover, Mpox campaigns are ongoing in the communities to educate communities about the disease.

We acknowledge the ongoing concerns of cancer treatment in the province. We shall promptly designate an impartial group headed by cancer specialists to serve as a mediators between the Department of Health and interest groups.

The provincial government will continue to make investments in ensuring expanded capacity to treat this highly specialised area.

Construction at both Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital is expected to commence before the end of this financial year. Once completed, the radiotherapy centres will provide treatment rooms for Linear Accelerator machines thus accelerating care for patients awaiting radiation oncology treatment.

The province plans to build four hospitals to service residents in Daveyton, Olievenhoutbosch, Diepsloot and Orange Farm. **Daveyton Hospital** – the National Department of Health has approved the Business Case and the project has been handed over to GIFA for commencement.

In partnership with the Workers Investment Fund, we are expanding access to hospital care for people without medical aid. A partnership for access to trauma units by members of the scheme is being pursued with private hospitals and will be finalised in due course.

The Provincial Government currently has 4 MOU agreements with private healthcare providers including, the Clinix Group, Zamokhule, The Apex Surgical Hub and Mediclinic. The MOUs cover mainly Orthopaedics and Motor Vehicle Accident Trauma.

### ***Collaborations and Partnerships***

We are also having engagements with the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital for the treatment of neonatal and paediatric patients; with the Solomon Stix Morewa Hospital for the treatment of mental health care users and the Life Health Group for contracted care related to Mental Health.

We will **expand the use of E-Health within health administration to eliminate paper use and enhance efficiency**. An allocation of R284 million has been set aside in 2024/25 and R893 million over the MTEF for the rollout of the comprehensive health information system to realise the 1 patient 1 file dream.

### **Madame speaker;**

In strengthening the efficiency of forensic investigation, we will maintain a robust fingerprint system and forensic services health information systems. We are pleased to report that the construction of the state of the arts Johannesburg Forensic Pathology Centre is at 95% completion with a scheduled practical completion by the 15th of December this year.

### **Improvement of our townships, informal settlements, and hostels**

#### **Madam Speaker;**

Hotels are no longer hostels of old but family units lets embrace this reality.

Working with municipalities, we have identified five local government-owned hostels in Johannesburg, Tshwane, West Rand, Sedibeng and Ekurhuleni. Each of these hostels will transformed into decent family units.

We are also focusing development efforts on the informal settlements. We have identified Makaanzi Informal Settlement in Germiston as our starting point, which will be followed by the Alexandra Township in Johannesburg.

## **Food Security: Eradication of Urban Hunger, Food Production**

### **People of Gauteng;**

Urban hunger is a silent pandemic with invariably adverse outcomes. It deprives our children of the ability to learn and develop appropriately due to early childhood stunting.

It is our duty, as the 7th Administration, to close the urban-rural spatial divide and accelerate the fight against hunger using all available resources. To this end, we will expand our interventions to include food production value chains, food markets, parcels, daily cooked meals, and community nutrition centres.

Gauteng Province is not traditionally a key agricultural production region. It is constrained by limited land available for agricultural activities. The Department of Agriculture is tasked with identifying farm areas in the province, establishing a state farm to develop the food production value chain, creating farm markets for small-scale farmers to sell their produce setting the foundation for commercialisation and markets will ensure that residents have access to affordable nutritious food.

### **Bana Pele Programme**

#### **Madam Speaker;**

In February, **we committed to revive and expand the Bana Pele Programme** by rolling out a pro-poor basket of services. The expansion of this programme will be based on the indigent needs of all children in Gauteng.

We are collaborating with municipalities to realise this programme. Provincial COGTA will consolidate the provincial automated indigent register (database). In this regard, we will provide social support services, which include school uniforms, dignity packs, school nutrition, free textbooks, contraceptives, free data, seeds, and monthly food parcels in collaboration with NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.

We wanted to make sure that no less than 100, 000 learners would be wearing their school uniform provided by the government of the day, by 2025.

One of the initiatives we are exploring is a state-run Food Distribution Centre (warehouse), which will reduce over-reliance on NPOs, especially in times of emergency.

We are also committed to enhancing **support for homeless and vulnerable persons**. Our work will include exploring safe spaces and occupying unused buildings in the CBDs to allow homeless people to have decent sleep during the night.

## **Substance Abuse**

### **People of Gauteng;**

Our fight against hazardous behaviour of Substance Abuse remains on course. We have allocated over R427 million towards the fight against substance abuse in the current financial year and over a billion rand over the MTEF period. We will also ensure that no person with substance use disorder is turned away when they are seeking assistance.

This will be done through the establishment of substance abuse calls and walk-in centres in each township across the province. We are also moving towards repurposing the Emmasdal CYCC in Lesedi to become an additional state-owned substance abuse facility.

### **Madame Speaker;**

We cannot deliver all these social service interventions without the **support of Non-Governmental Organisations**. We need to strengthen the work of NGOs and provide necessary support to the NGO Sector, including improving the records management for all the NGOs in the provide.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **Madam Speaker; Honourable Members;**

This GPU has been charged with the responsibility to drive the transformation agenda while igniting our economic growth to lift the people of our province from the condition of want, poverty and destitution. I want to thank 8 of the 11 political parties which supported our budget while noting one party which abstained and the two parties which opposed it. This government is a people's government, not a minority government.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to all the parties which set aside ideological differences and came together in response to the electoral mandate of the people of Gauteng.

We have configured the 7th Administration to give full expression to this new reality. I am fully confident that, under the rubric of the GPU, all the parties will spare neither effort nor strength in our determination to translate the next five years into a qualitatively better living experience for the residents of our province.

It is an absolute imperative that the provincial government of unity live up to its calling by transcending constituent members' selfish consideration for the greater good of our province. The people of our province expect no less.

At the same time, let me thank all the parties which took a conscious decision to opt out of the GPU. We are pleased with their stated commitment to continue to work for the common vision of Gauteng from the vantage point of the opposition benches. Their contribution to the developmental agenda will be no less meaningful because they are sitting on the other side of this chamber's aisle.

Ultimately, their choice is motivated by our shared determination for improved, ethical, capable, responsive and effective governance.

I am humbled to remain the Premier of the Gauteng Province, the mainstay of our country. I am equally humbled by the responsibility to lead the Government of Provincial Unity and pledge to work for unity in action.

I appreciate the immense responsibility on my shoulders to ensure that we maintain a stable, coherent and effective government of provincial unity undistracted by nothing.

Above all, I remain committed to the ethos of a clean, ethical, capable and developmental provincial government focused on making a palpable difference in the lives of the people of Gauteng.

### **Residents of Gauteng;**

We have heard you. The message is that the Government should talk less and do more. The message is to leave no one behind in this monumental task to change the lives of the people of Gauteng. The message is to collaborate rather than compete. This we will do in partnership with you, the people of our province, to ensure that you are the agents for change.

As the 7th administration, we have a responsibility to reignite the system so that it can restore people's confidence in us. The 7th administration must be about quality work and service, but most importantly it must be about satisfying the people of our province.

Let me conclude by quoting Mother Theresa: 'Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin'. To the 7<sup>th</sup> Administration, let us begin. The journey starts now!

***I thank you; ke a leboga; ngiyabonga; ndiyabulela; Ditebogo; Thank you; Dankie!***