

Keynote Address by **Dr Nasiphi Moya**
ActionSA Tshwane Mayoral Candidate

Vuka Tshwane! This Capital Will Not Build Itself!

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President Herman Mashaba,
Leaders of ActionSA,
Members of the Senate,

ActionSA councillors and public representatives,
Our activists and community leaders,
Distinguished guests,
Members of the media,
And most importantly, the residents of Tshwane,

Dumelang.
Thobela.
Avuxeni.
Molweni.
Sanibonani.
Good afternoon.

And welcome to the capital city of South Africa.

It is truly an honour to stand before you here in Mamelodi today.

Mr President, Ntate Herman Mashaba, it is with deep humility, gratitude and a full heart that I accept the nomination to serve as ActionSA's mayoral candidate for the City of Tshwane.

I want to thank you, the Senate and the leadership of ActionSA for the trust you have placed in me.

It is a profound responsibility, and one I carry with deep appreciation and care.

Serving as ActionSA's first ever Executive Mayor, and having the privilege of leading our nation's capital over the past 18 months, has been one of the greatest honours of my life.

And today, I accept this nomination as I ask residents for five more years to continue restoring Tshwane and deepening the progress we have begun to make together.

Because my vision for Tshwane is clear: I want us to build a capital city we can be proud of again.

From its founding in 1855 to its role in South Africa's democratic journey, the Jacaranda City is a city with deep history, rich heritage and extraordinary potential.

But beyond the monuments, landmarks and government buildings, it is the people of Tshwane who truly define this city.

It is home to diplomatic missions, universities and global companies like BMW, Ford and Coca-Cola that help drive our economy.

It is the home of Lucas Moripe, AB de Villiers, Dikgang Moseneke and Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng.

The home of the Blue Bulls and Mamelodi Sundowns.

The home of artists and cultural voices like Vusi Mahlasela, Focalistic, Pabi Cooper and the late Sibusiso Khwinana.

And of course, the home of the legendary Cullinan Diamond.

But above all, Tshwane is home to more than four million residents who wake up every day determined to build better lives for themselves, their families and their communities.

And it is to those residents that I want to speak today.

But fellow residents, I want to begin somewhere far away from Tshwane, and far away from this stage.

Far away from government buildings, and far away from politics.

I want to begin in a small village in the Eastern Cape where I grew up as a young girl.

Like many children growing up in rural South Africa, I learned responsibility very early in life.

I herded livestock and helped at home. I watched my family work hard every single day to build a better future with very limited resources.

We did not grow up with privilege, but we made do.

We learned early that hard work means little when opportunity never arrives.

Many young people I grew up beside were brilliant. Hardworking, capable, full of potential.

But opportunity did not reach all of them.

I was one of the fortunate ones.

What changed my life was education.

Education opened a door that poverty had tried to close. It allowed me to imagine a future bigger than my circumstances.

And that experience stayed with me because it shaped how I think about government and leadership.

I believe government must create opportunity.

That belief is why I entered public service, and it is why this election matters so much to me.

At its heart, this election is about whether more people can build better lives in Tshwane.

That is the future I want us to continue building together.

But dear residents, no Mayor and no government can rebuild a city alone.

Progress depends on partnership between residents and government, workers and businesses, investors and the city.

That spirit of partnership has carried Tshwane through the past 18 months.

And I believe it must continue guiding us over the next five years as well.

Fellow residents,

When I took office in October 2024, I inherited a city in crisis.

The finances were unstable, infrastructure was deteriorating, and service delivery systems were failing.

Investor confidence had weakened and communities had lost trust.

After years of instability and political chaos, many people had simply stopped believing Tshwane could recover.

The city had lost direction, and residents could feel it.

My focus as Mayor, and our collective focus as a coalition government, had to be stabilisation.

That is the work I have focused on over the past 18 months.

And today, for the first time in many years, residents are beginning to feel that Tshwane is moving again.

Not perfectly, but steadily.

The work of restoring the capital is well underway, and that is why I am asking residents for five more years.

Because the first 18 months were about stabilisation. The next five years must be about restoration.

Restoring our economy.

Restoring public trust.

Restoring opportunity.

Residents of Tshwane,

Today, as I set out my mandate for the next five years, I want to reflect on the values that will continue guiding my leadership and the work of this government.

And the first value that must guide the next five years is economic prosperity.

Economic prosperity sits at the centre of what ActionSA believes, embodied by our President, Ntate Herman Mashaba.

A man who rose from humble beginnings, built businesses, created jobs and proved that with opportunity, hard work and determination, people can transform not only their own lives, but the lives of others too.

That belief in opportunity continues to shape our mission in Tshwane.

Work gives people independence and hope.

I have seen the frustration of young people who want to work but cannot find a way into the economy.

I have spoken to small business owners carrying the weight of keeping companies alive through difficult economic conditions.

And I have met families stretched to breaking point by unemployment.

That is why creating the conditions for economic growth must remain our central mission over the next five years.

That is also why, in April 2025, I led the adoption of the Tshwane Economic Revitalisation Strategy, or TERS.

TERS gives us a practical plan to rebuild Tshwane's economy.

It commits us to growing Tshwane's economy to an average of 3.9% by 2029 and creating at least 80 000 new jobs.

Those targets matter because behind every job statistic is a person trying to build a future.

And already, I believe we are beginning to see signs that confidence in Tshwane is returning.

In Rosslyn, BMW continues expanding production at one of the most important automotive plants on the African continent. Thousands of Tshwane families depend directly and indirectly on that industrial economy.

In Pretoria West, ACTOM has reopened a former facility, restoring around 250 jobs.

Now, new investment is building around it through the Tshwane Automotive City masterplan, which will bring manufacturers, suppliers, logistics companies and supporting infrastructure together in one integrated industrial hub.

At our first Tshwane Investment Summit, we set out to secure R5 billion in investment. Instead, we secured R86 billion in commitments.

But investment is not just about numbers or announcements.

For families across Tshwane, it means groceries in the cupboard, school fees being paid, and greater stability in homes that depend on jobs and growing businesses.

But Tshwane is not only built by the formal economy.

It is also built by informal traders, township entrepreneurs and small business owners working every day to support their families and grow local economies.

As part of our effort to support local spaza shop ownership, we introduced the Informal Trade and Township Economy By-law.

We want informal trading opportunities to benefit local, South African businesses first.

I have spent time speaking to many of these traders and business owners across Tshwane, and one thing comes through consistently: people are not asking government to build their future for them.

They are asking for a fair chance to succeed.

That is why we are investing in township economies and supporting informal traders.

In Marabastad, we are building safer and better trading facilities because informal traders are not a problem to be managed.

People like Thabo Mosimanga, who shared with me how difficult it had been to access a proper trading space as a local trader, and how he is finally beginning to see progress.

Or Lesedi Montsho from Philip Nel, who said the improvements gave her the confidence to apply for a trading licence and take her business more seriously.

Stories like these remind me why this work matters.

I now want to speak directly to the young people of Tshwane today, because I know you have been among the hardest hit by our struggling economy.

I understand that frustration personally.

During COVID, despite having three degrees and years of experience, I found myself unable to secure work.

There was a point where I seriously considered becoming an Uber driver simply to pay the bills.

And I remember thinking: if this can happen to someone with my qualifications and experience, then it can happen to anyone.

I never forgot that feeling.

Because behind the unemployment statistics are real people carrying uncertainty, anxiety and disappointment about their future.

That is why I launched the Ithuba Youth Economic Development Programme.

Too many young people are excluded not because they lack talent, but because nobody opened the door.

At the launch of the Ithuba programme, I met 19-year-old Jimala from the University of Pretoria, who spoke passionately about the need for job creation to move beyond promises and become something young people can genuinely feel in their lives.

That conversation stayed with me.

Because young people are not asking for handouts. They are asking for opportunity.

Fellow residents,

But fellow residents, economic prosperity cannot be sustained without financial stability.

No investor commits to a city that cannot manage its finances.

No business can plan when governance is unstable.

And no municipality can deliver reliable services while constantly moving from one financial crisis to the next.

That is why the second value guiding the next five years must be financial stability and responsible governance.

Stable finances are what allow cities to grow and invest properly.

When I took office, Tshwane's finances were under severe pressure. Debt had ballooned to more than R13 billion, including R6.7 billion owed to Eskom.

Financial controls had weakened, and confidence in the institution was deteriorating.

We knew Tshwane could not continue like that.

When cities become financially unstable, services decline and investment slows down.

I knew we could not rebuild Tshwane on unstable foundations.

So we made difficult decisions.

We restored discipline, strengthened revenue collection and began rebuilding credibility inside the institution.

Today, for the first time in years, Tshwane has a fully funded and cash-backed budget again.

Cash reserves have grown from R835 million to more than R1.9 billion.

And confidence in the city is beginning to return.

Even Moody's has recognised the improving outlook of Tshwane.

That stability gives Tshwane room to invest and plan properly again.

Fellow residents,

The ActionSA Values Charter speaks about building a government that delivers real results in people's daily lives.

That is why infrastructure and service delivery matter so much.

One of the first things I understood as Mayor was that we could not ask residents to believe in the future of this city while basic infrastructure continued failing around them.

Over the past 18 months, I have seen how badly Tshwane's infrastructure had deteriorated.

I have sat with residents who shared how, for too many years, communities experienced government through failure.

Burst pipes, power outages and potholes became part of everyday life.

And as you know, no city can create jobs, attract investment or unlock opportunity while basic infrastructure continues collapsing around its residents.

That is why infrastructure must sit at the centre of Tshwane's recovery.

It is also why I have prioritised increasing the city's capital budget from R2.8 billion to R3.5 billion.

That is why I prioritised both the Water Stabilisation Plan and the Electricity Stabilisation Plan.

In Mamelodi, residents in Ikageng and Mahube Valley lived without reliable water for years. Today, water is flowing again.

In Hammanskraal, families spent years living with uncertainty around clean water.

Today, long-delayed projects like the upgrade of the Rooiwal Waste Water Treatment Plant, are finally moving toward completion. While we are not yet where we want to be, the progress is visible and measurable.

And we are laying the foundation for even greater change over the next five years.

Earlier this year, when pressure on the electricity grid intensified, communities across Tshwane experienced the consequences immediately. Homes, schools, clinics and businesses were all affected.

I remember visiting some of those communities and hearing directly from residents and business owners who were exhausted by the uncertainty and disruption.

That is why stabilising key substations became one of my top priorities.

Kwagga Substation is critical to keeping large parts of Tshwane running, so we moved urgently to strengthen and protect it.

The same work is happening at Wildebees, Pyramid, Rosslyn and other critical substations that support both residential communities and economic activity across the city.

And again, this progress is only possible through partnership.

I want to acknowledge our business chambers and partners, including the Rosslyn Improvement District, who continue working with the city to strengthen infrastructure, support investment and help create jobs.

Infrastructure matters because it connects people to opportunity, while public transport connects communities to opportunity.

A young person in Mamelodi or Atteridgeville should not be cut off from economic opportunity because transport is unreliable or unaffordable, which is why expanding bus services matters so much.

But transport does not end with buses. Residents also need roads that work.

When roads collapse, the cost is felt everywhere.

Fixing roads and repairing potholes is not cosmetic work. It is economic work, and it is essential to building a capital city that functions properly and supports growth.

That is why, across Tshwane, more than 220 kilometres of roads have already been resurfaced. And that work must continue.

Residents of Tshwane,

A growing city also requires safety, order and stability.

That is why the fourth value guiding the next five years is respect for the rule of law.

ActionSA believes no society can prosper in a state of chaos.

Because no family thrives where fear becomes normalised. No business invests where criminality dominates public spaces. And no resident should feel abandoned by the rule of law.

Over the years, too many parts of Tshwane experienced urban decay, hijacked buildings, illegal utility connections and criminal networks operating openly while communities felt increasingly unsafe and neglected.

I was not prepared to accept that as normal for our capital city.

That is why I prioritised the Reclaim Our City strategy and strengthened coordinated operations between TMPD, SAPS, Home Affairs and other agencies to begin restoring order and reclaiming public spaces for lawful residents.

Some of the buildings shut down during these operations were sites of trafficking, exploitation and abuse hidden in plain sight.

Women and young girls were being exploited inside buildings that had effectively fallen outside the control of the law.

On a personal level, it was deeply disturbing to witness the harm being inflicted on vulnerable people and the fear that criminality had created inside affected communities.

That cannot become normal in Tshwane.

And under my leadership, it will not be ignored.

We closed the Ipi Ntombi Sports Bar in the Pretoria CBD, where more than 40 rooms were being used for illegal activity.

We shut down the Savoy VIP Lounge in Marabastad, which had become a front for criminal operations.

E seng mo Tshwane. Not in Tshwane.

We are sending a clear message that lawlessness, criminal exploitation, illicit trade, counterfeit goods and illegal activity linked to illegal immigration cannot be allowed to take root in our city.

But again, this work depends on partnership.

Rebuilding safety requires residents, law enforcement, communities and government working together to reclaim our city.

And over the next five years, I want us to deepen this work significantly.

We must recruit more TMPD officers, strengthen visible policing, protect infrastructure from vandalism and theft, and improve enforcement against illegal activity that undermines communities and economic growth.

Because respecting the rule of law means ensuring that law enforcement agencies have the capacity and support to protect residents properly.

I want to acknowledge the work of our MMC for Community Safety, Alderman Hannes Coetzee, who has initiated the training process for 200 new TMPD officers.

There had been no recruitment into TMPD since 2015. But now that has changed.

That work too must continue, because safety is not separate from dignity or opportunity.

Fellow residents,

None of the progress we are building will last without ethical and accountable government.

Because corruption does not only steal money. It steals opportunity.

That is why the fifth value guiding the next five years is ethical leadership and restoring public trust.

The ActionSA Values Charter makes it clear that government must be professional, accountable and focused on serving residents with integrity.

As many South Africans would have seen following the revelations at the Madlanga Commission, ActionSA does not hesitate to act when the integrity of its own members is compromised.

And that is the same commitment I want to continue bringing to the fight against corruption and maladministration inside the City of Tshwane.

When I took office, the Auditor-General identified deep institutional weaknesses inside the city administration.

I knew that if we wanted residents to believe in local government again, we had to confront those problems honestly and directly.

Investigations into corruption and irregular expenditure are underway.

Internal controls are strengthening, consequence management is improving, and accountability is slowly returning to the institution.

And while important challenges still remain, audit qualification areas have already reduced significantly during my term as Mayor.

Our goal is clear: we want Tshwane to achieve a clean audit.

And if residents entrust me with another five years, that remains my commitment.

Residents need a government that spends public money responsibly, acts professionally and places service ahead of self-interest.

Fellow residents,

Over the past 18 months, I have travelled across this city listening to residents and hearing directly how years of instability affected their lives.

I have met gogos who waited decades for title deeds.

Families frustrated by years of unreliable services.

Young graduates desperate for work.

Business owners trying to keep companies alive through difficult economic conditions.

And one story has stayed with me deeply.

A 90-year-old goggo from New Eersterus, Gogo Francina Nxumalo, finally received her title deed after waiting since 1994.

At a time when she felt abandoned by government and her eyesight had already begun to fail, she never lost hope.

And when we handed over that title deed, it was about far more than paperwork.

It meant security.

It meant dignity.

And it meant something she could finally pass on to her daughter and granddaughter.

Moments like that remind me why this work matters.

Because government is not ultimately about reports, policies or political debates.

It is about whether people feel seen.

Whether they feel respected.

Whether they feel life is becoming more stable, dignified and hopeful.

That is also why I spend so much time out in communities across Tshwane.

I believe leadership means being present in communities, not sitting behind a desk.

I am reminded of Helen Khumalo from Eerstefabrieke Hostel in Mamelodi, who volunteered with us during a clean-up campaign and spoke passionately about wanting her community to feel clean, safe and dignified again.

That spirit has stayed with me.

Because despite everything this city has endured, the people of Tshwane have not given up on it.

Neither have I.

Fellow residents, as I conclude, I want to reflect on another important form of partnership: coalition government.

Coalition government is now part of South Africa's democratic reality, and I respect that reality.

I know that for many South Africans, coalitions have become associated with instability, political drama and governments that struggle to deliver.

But over the past 18 months, I believe we have shown that coalitions can work when leaders place residents ahead of politics, stability ahead of ego, and delivery ahead of headlines.

That is the approach we have tried to bring to Tshwane.

As we approach the election on 4 November, our first prize remains clear.

We want ActionSA to earn an outright mandate to govern decisively and accelerate the rebuilding of our capital city.

But I also understand that stronger leadership creates stronger and more stable coalitions.

That is why I am asking you, the residents of Tshwane, for a stronger mandate over the next five years.

A mandate to lead this coalition with greater stability, clearer direction and the confidence to deepen the work already underway.

Because the foundation has now been laid.

The recovery has begun.

And now we must build on it together.

That is why I am asking residents for five more years.

Five more years to create more jobs and opportunity.

Five more years to deepen investment and grow our economy.

Five more years to rebuild infrastructure and improve service delivery.

Five more years to strengthen safety, restore order and uphold the rule of law.

Five more years to build a government residents can trust again.

Residents,

Actioneers,

In the spirit of partnership, I want to thank the leadership of ActionSA for your guidance and belief in this mission.

Thank you to our councillors, activists and volunteers for your hard work, dedication and commitment to serving the people of Tshwane.

And most importantly, thank you to the residents of Tshwane for placing your trust in this journey.

Because partnership built this recovery.

And partnership will complete it.

Re simolotse.

Jaanong re a fetsa.

We have started.

Now we finish.

I thank you.

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