



MINISTRY
PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
HON. INKOSI MZAMO BUTHELEZI, MP**

**REMARKS
ON THE LAUNCH OF THE INTEGRATED PUBLIC SERVICE MONTH**

3SAI Military Base, Kimberley - Northern Cape: 5 September 2024

Thank you, Programme Director.

Honourable Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr Zamani Saul and Members of your Executive Council.

The Executive Mayor and all Councillors of the Sol Plaatjie Local Municipality.

All protocol observed.

Colleagues,

It is an honour to be here with you in the beautiful Province of Northern Cape, specifically in this historic city of Kimberly - as we officially launch the 2024 Integrated Public Service Month (IPSM).

This province, not only boast the largest landscapes in our country, but it is also a region that is rich in natural beauty, cultural richness and a significant heritage.

This city, famously known as the “City of Diamonds” also holds a profound historical significance.

With the discovery of diamonds in 1886, it was at this very soil and mountains that the foundation of South Africa’s modern economy was laid, marking the beginning of the diamond rush that led it to evolve from being a humble mining town to a symbol of the country’s economic heritage.

This city’s ability to honour its past while adapting to the demands of the present, is a powerful reflection of the journey our government has embarked on.

As we launch the Integrated Public Service Month here today, the story of this city serves as a true metaphor for our purpose. Just as Kimberly has reinvented itself – so too must be the 7th administration – which is the Government of National Unity.

This government is not just a continuation of the old but a renewal and a rebirth of our commitment as public servants to serve the people of this country.

It is then so fitting that we are gathered at the City of Diamonds to revive the spirit of our country. I hope this is symbolic enough to realise that although we may have arrived here as rough diamonds – we would leave as refined gems – because this launch, symbolises a new dawn.

The above is a true testament of resilience, innovation and a fighting spirit displayed by this town and that is what is expected from ourselves as public servants.

As we are gathered here today, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose – as we again remind ourselves that public service and being a public servant is not a job but a noble calling.

Each of us seated here – including those who have joined us via virtual streaming - play a critical role in building a capable, ethical and developmental South Africa.

We carry a flag of being the custodians of progress of our nation - and the trust of over 60 million of our people rests in our hands.

That is why even our approach to this year's Integrated Public Service Month has evolved from being a September event to a year-round commitment that ensures every National, Provincial and Local government department works together and in unity when it comes to addressing the most pressing challenges.

This change also reflects the diversity, energy and strong political will of our Government of National Unity, which demonstrates that we are truly united in dealing with the challenges that our country is facing and are committed in mobilising a public service machinery that acts in the best interest of our people.

As I announced at the recently held media briefing in Pretoria, that our theme this year, **“A Government That Works For**

You', - is not just a slogan but a call to action and a sincere appreciation to the men and women who have dedicated their lives to serve their fellow citizens.

A Government That Works for You is a recognition of those public servants who have gone above and beyond their duties in creating a lasting impact both in government and society.

This launch also offers a unique moment. We are not only celebrating 30 years of a post-apartheid public service, but we are reflecting, recommitting and reviving our efforts in restoring public trust.

While we are aware of the challenges and reasons that led to the eroding of public service, we must not forget that the public service - much like the heart to the body – is vital to the functioning of our country. Without it, South Africa cannot thrive.

We are the alpha and omega - therefore the responsibility we carry is immense. Each decision we take directly impacts the lives and livelihood of millions of people of this country.

Therefore, as public servants, we are compelled to work diligently to rebuild our relationship with the communities we serve.

Let us then embrace this “calling” with pride and a relentless commitment to excellence. That, colleagues, is the only way to earn their trust.

It is important that we build on the strengths of our government while taking decisive measures to root out inefficiencies and elements that do not serve our people.

We need to go back to our respective roles with an enthusiasm that ensures that every action we take when performing our duties and responsibilities - takes us closer to a South Africa we all aspire to be proud of.

Again, as mentioned during our media briefing, the department, has identified key priorities and programs that will strengthen inter-departmental collaboration while providing solutions to the challenges we face.

We will enhance our Monitoring and Evaluation Systems to ensure that our government is both responsive and effective.

Colleagues, it is very important that we actively engage with the communities we serve, listen to their needs and respond with tangible actions.

Failing to do so would not only erode public trust but it will weaken the same integrity that I keep strongly emphasizing.

If we all can recommit ourselves to the cause by closing all leaks within the system, fighting all elements that undermines service delivery, uphold the principles of Batho Pele and committing to

excellency - then we can say we collectively contributed to a government that delivers.

Colleagues, diversity and inclusion remain central to our progress. We are committed to ensuring compliance with regulations that prioritise the representation of women, youth and people with disabilities in senior management positions, as well as in any other advancement opportunities that exist.

It has been proven through surveys and statistics that diverse leadership brings fresh perspective, which is why it is essential that our public service reflects the people we serve.

Again, Programme Director, we also cannot shy away from the pressing concern which is the state of our economy – the very reason why economic transformation remains the number one priority of our government.

Initiatives like the Northern Cape Green Hydrogen Master Plan, a project aimed at reducing climate emissions as well as the Upington Industrial Park, currently functioning as a vehicle testing ground - are not just about economic growth but also about creating meaningful job opportunities, especially for the youth because investing in their future is an investment to the future of our country.

This Integrated Public Service Month, going beyond, should be an opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitment to ethical governance and accountability.

My trust in you to build a strong foundation lies in the faith that I have in each of us because I am confident that you are not only the architect of a capable and ethical nation, but you are also the builders of such.

Every morning when you wake up to go and serve, know and appreciate that your dedication and integrity is the ONLY cornerstone upon which the progress of our nation rests.

As we pursue social transformation - prioritising education and skills development should be essential in making a capable and developmental state, a reality.

Indeed, we remain fully committed to educational reforms, particularly within agricultural education as we must bear in mind that food security is at risk.

It is imperative therefore that we adequately equip our young people with the requisite skills they need, so that they can thrive, in whichever specialisation they choose in the field of agriculture and Agri-processing.

Colleagues, in addressing our social ills that have become the enemies of our progress as South Africans – we have no other choice but to unite with our communities to combat crime, violence, extortion, kidnapping and substance abuse through active partnerships and by collaborating with our law enforcement, community policing fora and civil society to create safer communities for all.

At the heart of these efforts lies the public service; the very centre of everything we aim to achieve.

Without us, there is no future as all ambitions for a better South Africa begin and end with our dedication.

We are the centre hold - just as the heart is essential to the body, so are we to the citizens. We therefore dare not fail.

I urge each and every one of us to embrace this month as a time of unity and commitment while aligning our goal with the priorities of the Government of National Unity – which is to inspire action and accountability in all that we do.

As we conclude this launch, I wish to express my deep gratitude for your presence and active participation. Colleagues, our task is clear – it is to build on the foundation of those who came before us.

Going forward, let us carry the spirit of Kimberly into our work and be reminded of the importance of balancing our respect for history with our responsibility to serve and drive progress.

In doing so, we will not only honour our heritage, but we will be creating a legacy of service and dedication that will benefit future generations, even when we are long gone. It begins with us!

Together, let us ensure that our actions as public servants contribute to a government that is transparent, accountable and truly committed to the well-being of its people.

Let us work in unity so that we overcome the challenges.

Let us build a stronger and a more resilient public service - a service that is truly a government that works for its people.

Thank you!

End.