

President Zuma urges South Africans to work together

Parliament - President Jacob Zuma has called on South Africans to unite in a partnership, working together with government to do more to realise the vision of a better and more prosperous nation.

"Fellow South Africans, working together we can do more to realise our common vision of a better and more prosperous nation.

"This is the partnership we are calling for," President Zuma told a joint sitting of parliament when delivering his maiden State of the Nation Address on Wednesday morning.

Referring to the turnout at the recent General Elections, the President said, in their overwhelming numbers, South Africans confirmed that working together "we can do more to fight poverty and build a better life for all".

He said that while the South African economy had not been affected to the extent that a number of other countries had been, its effects were now being clearly seen and the country was in a recession.

"It is more important now than ever that we work in partnership on a common programme to respond to this crisis."

He said government's starting point in the response to the international economic crisis was the framework concluded by government, labour and business in February this year.

The President was firm that since the implementation of government's programme would take place in the face of the economic downturn, the administration would have to act prudently.

"... No wastage, no rollovers of funds - every cent must be spent wisely and fruitfully. We must cut our cloth according to our size," the President said.

He also told South Africans that in the era of renewal, government will become more interactive.

And to this end, work has begun on the establishment of a public liaison capacity in the Presidency.

In addition to receiving letters and emails from the public, government, he said, would establish a hotline for easier access.

"Staff will handle each public inquiry as if it was the only one, following it through all the channels until it receives the attention it deserves." - *BuaNews*