

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Premier

Distinguished Colleagues in the Legislature

Stalwarts and Veterans of our struggle

Executive Mayors, Mayors, Speakers, Councillors and Managers of Municipalities

Esteemed Traditional leaders here present

Leaders of the ANC and MDM structures

Leaders of the Trade Union Movement

Leaders of the Religious Organizations and Churches

Leaders of the Opposition Parties

The DG and senior officials in our provincial administration

Leaders of Chapter nine and ten institutions

Youth, Women, Business and Community leaders in our midst

Representatives of the media

Distinguished guests

Comrades

The people of Limpopo

Honourable Speaker,

It is an honour and privilege to table before this House:

- The Budget Statements 2009/10
- The Provincial Budget Speech for 2009/10
- The Provincial Gazette
- The Citizens Guide to the Provincial Budget

Allow me to present the budget for the 2009/10 financial year.

We present this budget at a time when the world economic order is in serious disarray. Developed countries of the world have slipped well into periods of recession and the devastating effect of this disorder is clearly being felt by both emerging and developing economies like ours. The most seasoned economists the world over find it difficult to make forecasts and predictions on what can happen to the growth of global economies whether it be in the years ahead, months ahead or even days ahead.

The roller-coaster nature of the value of the rand against other currencies, losses and fluctuations on our own stock market and the shedding of jobs by mining companies in Limpopo give an indication of the volatility, unpredictability and the downward swing of our own economy.

We have already prepared for a drastically reduced growth in our economy and our forecasted revenue collection has been revised downwards.

We have been warned to expect and be prepared for worse things to come (apparently we ain't seen nothing yet). Words that are reserved for explaining adverse medical conditions such as "collapse", "contractions" and "depression" have become everyday use in economic analysis to describe events pertaining to the economy.

What started off as a subprime crisis amongst Wall Street bankers has degenerated into a swirling tailspin putting world economies on the brink of ruin. Leaders of the major economies of the world in Europe and the US talk of “bail-out”, and have committed incredible amounts of money to rescue their bankrupt financial, corporate and in some instances manufacturing institutions.

I am told that more than a hundred and forty years ago, in 1867, Karl Marx wrote in DAS KAPITAL *“Owners of capital will stimulate the working class to buy more and more expensive credits, houses and technology, pushing them to take more and more expensive goods, until debt becomes unbearable. The unpaid debt will lead to the bankruptcy of banks, which will have to be nationalized, and the state will have to take the road which will eventually lead to communism....”*

Honourable Speaker this budget is also presented at a time when we are in the final straits of completing 15 years of our democracy and the third term of the present government in power. The fact that our people eagerly awaited the announcement of the election date and the excitement gripping them in anticipation of the election is in itself a testimony and a tribute to a functioning democracy that has developed, is healthy and continues to mature. In the words of President Motlanthe *“We may even say that, in a strange quirk of fate, many aspects of our Constitutional order have been tested in the recent past; and every one of them has passed the test to reveal a democracy that is exceptionally resilient”*.

It is a democracy grounded in a Constitution which itself is premised on the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter. It is a democracy brought to fruition by the dogged commitment, determination and resilience of our revolutionary democrats and the people of South Africa, who withstood hardships, killings, exile, detention, incarceration and dehumanizing treatment at the hands of advocates and supporters of a pernicious ideology rooted in racist bigotry.

*The African National Congress in 2009 stated that “South Africa’s democratic elections from 1994 to 2004 were about the aspirations and collective desire for a better life for all. Fifteen years into our democracy, together we have achieved much in building a new society, uniting all our people, expanding opportunities that the new freedom brought to our people, reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of millions of South Africans. However, much of the economic and social devastation of apartheid and its scars are still with us. Our common struggle to build a better South Africa continues.”*

Hence, this Budget Speech is presented during an interesting conjecture in our transformation epoch. The 2009/10 financial year serves as a qualitative linkage between the tail-end of the current five year term of government and the beginning of a new term of government.

Honourable Speaker, in our quest to create a better life for all, foremost on our agenda is the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy which prioritizes, inter alia, the creation of employment, reducing poverty and fostering economic growth in the Province. As the recently finalized FIFTEEN YEAR REVIEW REPORT of the Province points out we have made substantial progress since 1994 in terms of accelerated service delivery, transformation of the State, transformation of the economy, eradication of the apartheid era spatial patterns and the implementation of a comprehensive social security system.

Over the last year we have ensured that social services are adequately funded and have strengthened our commitment to accelerate growth, create jobs and reduce poverty through creating sustainable employment, meeting the basic needs of the people in terms of housing, free basic services and improving the lives of all the people of Limpopo. Our economic growth figures show a positive growth rate of 3.1 percent in 2004 up to 4.6 percent in 2006 and only marginally slowing down to about 4 percent in 2008.

Limpopo has experienced an encouraging trend on positive employment growth. According to STATS SA the unemployment figures in Limpopo fluctuate on an annual basis with:

- 28.1 percent in 2001
- 39.4 percent in 2003
- 35.6 percent in 2006
- 32.4 percent in 2007
- 30.6 percent in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2008
- 29.5 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2008.

While the downward trend is encouraging, it is imperative to mobilize all resources, especially the private sector, to contribute in terms of ensuring job retention in the current hostile economic environment. We strongly urge the private sector to consider retrenchments as a last, rather than first resort when responding to the current economic crisis. Other innovative options such as the reduction of working hours and labour intensive methods should be explored with workers to save jobs.

The capacity of the Provincial Government to render services to the people of Limpopo has improved as indicated in the findings of the University of Limpopo's recent Citizen Satisfactory Survey conducted in 2008. The survey found *"Participants' rated the service quality offered as acceptable. Most participants across the Province agreed that government employees made an effort to understand the needs of the Limpopo Citizens."*

For the financial year 2008/09 our Provincial Growth and Development Strategy set out key delivery targets in that all households should have access to potable water, sanitation and electricity.

- The 2008/09 target on households that have access to potable water was 994,798 households or 80 percent of the population. By the end of 2008, 907 753 (84 percent cumulatively) had access to piped water.

- By the end of 2008, 620 596 or 84.2 percent households in the province have access to free basic water.
- In support of the water services provision, the department of Water Affairs has completed the water purification works at the Nandoni Dam with bulk line infrastructure at 70 percent complete. The De Hoop Dam currently under construction is at 30 percent complete. Every clinic in the province has access to water and the water quality is being upgraded through reverse osmosis plants. The IEC Water for Schools programme at voting stations is progressing well.
- By the end of 2008, 564 548 or 45.4 percent of households had access to sanitation.
- At the end of 2008, 957 493 households or 81 percent had access to electricity. While 215 280 households or 29.2 percent had access to free basic electricity.
- The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy targets to eliminate informal settlements by 2014. Statistics SA General Household Survey (2007) indicates that 4.4 percent is the overall percentage of households living in informal settlements in Limpopo. This proportion is significantly lower than the national average which is at 15.4 percent.
- 78% of the clinics in the province operated on a 24 hour basis by the end of 2008. This is an increase from 2007.
- Limpopo's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate has reduced from 21.5 percent in 2005 to 20.7 percent in 2006 and 18.5 percent in 2007 respectively.

The main focus of the Integrated Human Settlement strategy is to eliminate informal settlements by 2014. As at the end of the third quarter, a cumulative number of 7 896 housing units have been built and since 1994, just over 300 000 houses have been built in the Province accommodating 1.2 million people. Key to the success of the department of Local Government and Housing was amongst others ensuring the implementation of the policy on Breaking New Ground thus creating integrated sustainable human settlements. The development of mixed-income high density integrated human settlement at Bendor Extension 100, in line with the Breaking New Ground strategy is an example of such.

May I also then take this opportunity to congratulate Comrade Nkoana-Mashabane and her department, on behalf of the Government and people of Limpopo on winning the National Govan Mbeki Housing award.

In dealing with backlogs, the Department of Education completed the following projects at the end of December 2008:

- 636 Classrooms
- 22 laboratories
- 161 Administration blocks
- 982 toilets
- 90 schools with water supply
- 17 schools with adequate electrification

In addition to the above, we are going to extend the feeding scheme to Quintile 1 Secondary schools. The President set a target of 60 percent of no fee schools. In Limpopo Province, we are already at 70 percent, thus exceeding the target by 10 percent.

Last year we set out to build 27 state of the art schools. We have to date started with 12 schools of which the first school will officially be opened within 8 weeks. These state of the art schools come standard with an administration block, a multi-purpose 1000 seater hall, fully equipped science, biology and computer laboratories, a home economics centre and well resourced libraries.

The Department of Health and Social Development has upgraded and completed 19 of the 20 planned clinics to deal with primary health care. New Nkhensani and Dilokong hospitals are nearing completion with Letaba and Thabamooopo expected to be completed by the end of July this year. Accommodation for staff at various hospitals and clinics include new construction projects which are underway for 62 houses, 182 bachelor flats and 60 hostel rooms.

The Department of Roads and Transport through the Roads Agency Limpopo, has since its inception in 1999 to date spent R5,672 billion on the Limpopo Roads infrastructure. This includes amongst others, the tarring of 942 kilometers of roads, the rehabilitation of 711 kilometers of roads, routine maintenance of 2202 kilometers of tarred roads and the construction of 20 bridges.

Honourable Speaker having shown how the previous budget allocations have been utilized, I now turn to the budget allocation for the 2009/10 MTEF for Limpopo Province. In so doing we remain mindful of the fact that in spite of the tremendous progress and advances made, we continue to face serious challenges of rural marginalization, poverty, high unemployment and deepening inequality. Our focus therefore will have to be on rural development, food production, decent work creation, education, health and the safety and security of our people. It is important that our programmes and plans deal with and be linked to these developmental priorities.

Moving to own revenue, provincial own receipts is projected to increase minimally from R530 million in 2008/09 to R560 million in 2009/10 and will continue to grow marginally over the MTEF to R618 million by 2011/12.

For the period between 2008/2009 projected outcomes and for the 2009/2010 financial year, Provincial own revenue increased by 3.7 percent in nominal terms and recorded a negative growth rate of 1.3 percent in real terms. All Provincial own revenue items are estimated to register a 3.4 percent growth rate in nominal terms over the 2009/2010 MTEF. This limited revenue basis signals the Provincial Government to explore other constitutional and legal ways of identifying new sources of revenue. Moreover, proper costing of estimated revenue collection will contribute to the improvement of revenue collection strategies and a reduction in under-collection by the responsible departments.

We have always argued and maintained that the baseline allocation of the Limpopo Province is less than adequate. Despite this, our baseline has been reduced further for



this financial year by an amount of R372 million as a result of the effect of the economic meltdown and cross border migration. Our total budget allocation for the 2009/10 financial year is R34, 540,445 billion made up of R30, 421, 005 billion as our portion of the equitable share and R4, 119, 440 million as conditional grants.

This represents a 7 percent increase from the 2008/09 financial year. All things being equal, the amount will increase to R38 billion in the 2010/2011 financial year and to R41 billion in the 2011/12 financial year.

In allocating this amount to the various line departments, we have been guided by the policy priorities of government and we hope that these strategic allocations, albeit not up to expectation in monetary terms, will contribute meaningfully towards attaining our developmental goals particularly towards the upliftment of the poor and vulnerable in our province.

Minister Manuel in his 2009 budget speech said *“the quantum of the rands and cents allocated to these programmes is not what provides relief. No, we can only be satisfied when we know that the quality of life of the poor is improving, that children are being properly educated, that learners have access to food in schools, that mothers visiting clinics get proper and dignified treatment, that the criminal justice system is putting those who rob and thief behind bars. It’s what the money buys that matters, and so fixations with the size of deficits or surpluses are illusory detours”*.

Honourable Speaker, in torrid times like this when we have to deal with increased pressures many of which are beyond our control, it is even more important that we utilize our resources in the most efficient and effective way. Improved efficiency and effectiveness on our public spending will not only help to maintain the fiscal discipline needed during these trying times but also provide us with an opportunity to continuously review our programmes and cut the frills, bells and whistles.

Our focus now should be not only on how to cut on unnecessary public expenditure but rather more on increasing the value for money of public spending and how to make the most of limited public resources. The period ahead therefore calls on us to look carefully at the relationship between inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

We must avoid all the unnecessary costs when executing our programmes. Let us tighten our fiscal controls and discipline so that we not only achieve more than 5 unqualified reports from the Auditor General but we also deliver more and more to our people. The people of our Province deserve no less.

Although our horrifying past still sticks to us and we are forced with torrid economic times ahead, we have to deliver on the pledges we have made to our people. Working together we can do more.

We are a winning nation. We are Rugby Champions of the World for the second time, we have been the Champions of the African Football once, and we have produced Boxing World Champions, Golfing greats and Champions at the Beijing Paralympics. In their own backyard, we have just shown the Australians who are the real cricketing champions.

We now have to prove even more, that it is not only on the sporting field that we can deliver the goods!

Honourable Speaker, I will now proceed to present the allocations per department.

### **Department of Health:**

The budget of the Department of Health increases from R7.6 billion to R9 billion for this financial year and increases to R10,7 billion in the outer year of the MTEF. A further unallocated amount of R64 million is set aside for the Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) for doctors. The 2009/2010 MTEF will be used to finance policy priorities such as, the Pharmaceutical Services, Medical Waste Management, Modernization of Tertiary Services, Tuberculosis, Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD), Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), Laundry Services, HIV/AIDS and malaria reduction programme. R50 million is made available for the programme on the Cholera epidemic. Further grants include the forensic pathology grant, hospital revitalization grant, comprehensive HIV and Aids grant. To improve the equity of health care financing and enhancing the quality of care for all South Africans, a task team has been set up Nationally to advise on the development of a national health insurance system.

### **Social Development:**

The budget of Social Development increases from R725 million to R761 million for this financial year and increases to R925 million in the outer year of the MTEF. The allocation is to finance policy priorities such as substance abuse, employment of social workers, and implementation of the Children's Justice Act, Occupation Specific Dispensation and early childhood development.

Presently in our Province 368 690 individuals receive old age pension, 114 545 receive disability grants, 24 492 receive care dependency grants. With effect from April this year these grants will increase by fifty rand which will bring the grant to R1010 per month. 79 759 individuals receive a foster care grant and this will increase to R680 per month. Just over two million children receive the child support grant and this will increase to R240

per month. The eligible age for men who qualify for old age pension will be reduced to 60 years and the child support grant will be extended to children aged 15. The child support grant depending on affordability will in time be extended up to 18 years of age.

Our social security network is being broadened and this goes a long way in reducing poverty amongst the most vulnerable in our communities.

### **Department of Education:**

The budget of the Department increases from R 14.2 billion to R16, 362,123 billion for this financial year and increases to R19, 594,346 billion in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will focus on the priorities such as the extension of the no fee school policy to Quintile 3, achieving a target on teacher/ learner ratio in Quintile 1 schools, support to inclusive education and learner teacher support material, and early childhood development. The National School Nutrition Programme gets a grant allocation of R419 million and a life Skills Education grant of R25 million for HIV and Aids.

### **Department of Roads and Transport:**

The budget of the Department increases from R2.4 billion to R2,989,565 billion in this financial year and increases to R3,481,940 billion in the outer year of the MTEF.

The allocation will finance subsidies to bus operators, through the public transport operations grant of R174 million. Funds are also allocated to Gateway Airport Authority Limited (GAAL), Intermodal Facilities, South African Rail Commuters Corporation (SARCC), law enforcement and skills development. The overload control grant and other priority areas include the upgrading of the R33 road network to the Medupi power station, implementation of the EPWP and traffic management. As a matter of interest, the impact of the Medupi Power Station on South Africa is as follows:

- It will be the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest power plant, 4<sup>th</sup> largest coal plant in the world;
- It will create 8,000 direct construction employment at peak times;
- Current construction employment is at 2,000 for September 2008.

In a nutshell, the People directly impacted by Medupi is averaged at 80,000.

*Plus, keeping the lights on for all of South Africa!*

### **Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism:**

The budget of the Department increases from R654, 045 million to R743,905 million for this financial year and increases to R806,332 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will finance the promotion of economic planning, stimulating growth through industry development, management of environmental activities, land use development, conservation and biodiversity development. The priorities such as Business Process Outsourcing and promotion of tourism are included. Grants will be further allocated to the Public Entities namely LIMDEV, Trade Investment Limpopo, Limpopo Tourism and Parks, Gambling board and LIBSA under the control of the Department.

### **Department of Local Government and Housing:**

The budget of the Department increases from R1.158 billion to R1,401,234 billion this financial year and increases to R1,909,221 billion in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will focus on the implementation of the strategic support to municipalities, site demarcations and implementation of the Integrated Housing and Human Settlement Development which receives a grant allocation of R996 million.

**Department of Agriculture:**

The budget of the Department increases from R1.042,252 billion to R1,185,110 billion in this financial year and increases to R1,438,838 billion in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will finance the implementation of the Revitalization of Smallholder Irrigation Schemes (RESIS), renovation of facilities the land care programme receives a grant of R7 million, Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) receives a grant of R108 million, letšema projects receiving a grant of R5 million and a disaster management grant of R5 million.

**Department of Public Works:**

The budget of the Department increases from R650 million to R723,674 million in this financial year and increases to R795,746 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will be used to finance the implementation of the Government-wide Immovable Asset Management Act (GIAMA), management and updating of the provincial asset register, the implementation of the energy optimization plan, office space audit, the disposal of properties and the renovation and maintenance of government buildings. A further grant of R13 million for the Devolution of Property Rate Funds and an incentive grant of R0,5 million for the EPWP programme. A further allocation of R7 million, R10 million and R10 million has been made available over the MTEF for building capacity as an implementing agent.

**Department of Safety, Security and Liaison:**

The budget of the Department increases from R43.1 million to R47,133 million in this financial year and increase to R53,091million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will finance the oversight functions on the South African Police Service, implementation of the rural safety plan, school safety awareness programme and establish community policing fora.

**Office of the Premier:**

The budget of the Office of the Premier increases from R516 million to R559,181 million in this financial year and increases to R612,429 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will be used to finance the strategic support to traditional authorities, the Community Development Workers (CDW) programme, coordination of Apex priority projects and the overall coordination of integrated development planning in the Province.

**Department of Sports, Arts & Culture:**

The budget of the Department increases from R187 million to R231,040 million in this financial year and increases to R259,107 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will finance cultural programmes, make provisions for library infrastructure and materials and establish the Limpopo sport academy. A grant of R45 million for Mass Sport and Recreation Participation Programme, which is made up of Siyadlala, School Sport and Club development.

### **Provincial Treasury:**

The budget for the Provincial Treasury increases from R305.2 million to R329,544 million in this financial year to R356,4476 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

This allocation will finance the provincial audit fees to enforce financial management, maintenance of systems through SITA costs, rendering support and assistance to municipalities by conversion of the Institute for Municipal Financial Officers (IMFO) reporting system to the Generally Recognized Accounting Practice (GRAP), the development of the Provincial Macro Economic Model, completion of the Medium Term Budget Policy statement and crafting the Socio-Economic Impact of the budget on the Province.

### **Provincial Legislature:**

The budget of the Provincial Legislature increases from R115.8 million to R123,869 million in this financial year and increases to R137,650 million in the outer year of the MTEF.

In the main, the allocation will finance public participation and our interactions with the National Council of Provinces. The funding of political oversight functions and support to the political parties and committees of the legislature.

Having provided the broad overview of the mainstreamed activities of each line function department, Members of the Executive Council will undoubtedly I am sure, render detailed breakdowns per programme when tabling departmental budgets.

Honourable Speaker, I invite colleagues and members of the public to read through the Budget Statement documents we present in this house today for a more detailed



account of the background information related to Public expenditure and other budgetary issues in Limpopo. It makes for interesting reading.

Honourable Speaker, in his address to Parliament and as one of our responses to the financial crisis, President Motlanthe committed government to spending R787 billion over three years on the infrastructure needed for future growth and development. In the Limpopo Province we have allocated a budget of R4,399 billion across departments for infrastructure development as follows:

- Education at R852. 8 million;
- Agriculture at R153. 1 million;
- Health at R714. 6 million;
- Roads and Transport at R1. 546 billion;
- Economic Development at R0. 500 million;
- Public Work at R68. 8 million;
- Local Government and Housing at R939. 6 million;
- Social Development at R92. 2 million and
- Sport, Arts and Culture at R31. 1 million

Our provincial total infrastructure investment over the MTEF will be R15. 9 billion broken down as follows:

- New construction at R6. 3 billion (R1. 9 billion in 2009/10)
- Maintenance and Repair at R3 billion (R680 million in 2009/10)
- Upgrading and additions at R1. 9 billion (R539 million in 2009/10)
- Rehabilitation and refurbishment at R59. 4 million (R29. 1 million in 2009/10)
- Capital Infrastructure transfers at R4. 4 billion (R1. 2 billion in 2009/10)

Since the implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Improvement Programme (IDIP) we have improved planning, improved on expenditure patterns and on the quality delivery of infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure development can help to give access to communities to facilities such as schools, hospitals, roads, water, housing, etc. In this way it will help meet the challenge of basic needs. It will also create employment, develop skills and SMME development opportunities, as the policy and practice of Expanded Public Works Programme is implemented.

To emphasize, infrastructure delivery underpins the very strength of a country's competitive performance and contributes to the welfare and striving for continuous improvement in quality of life of people by the provision of social support structures.

Mr Goolam Ballim an economist at the Standard Bank adds his support *“Public sector infrastructural provision constitutes a highly effective form of public spending...and every rand spent on infrastructure will contribute at least R2 in GDP lift”*.

The Extended Public Works Programme dovetails perfectly well with the infrastructure spend as it relies on lower skilled labour and in turn boosts growth in employment. The Gateway International Airport has been completed and is open for business. The Peter Mokaba stadium will be completed on time and the 2010 FIFA world Cup will be hosted with all the necessary pomp and flair. Eskom will generate electricity from Lephalale. We must take up the challenge of Minister Manuel to claim our fair share of the R4.1 billion set aside for Phase 2 of the EPWP by exceeding, together with our municipalities, our targets for creating EPWP jobs over the period that lies ahead.

In relation to Public Private Partnerships, the Provincial Treasury has and is rendering technical assistance to the following registered provincial PPPs:

- *Renal Dialysis Unit*
- *Phalaborwa Hospital PPP*
- *Schools PPP*: This project explores a public private partnership as an alternative method to accelerate the pace of infrastructure delivery and also to solicit private sector funding.

Honourable members, you may also be aware that in July 2008, the Provincial Treasury in conjunction with the National Treasury, The National Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Provincial Department of Local Government and Housing rolled out the municipal service delivery and PPP guidelines to all municipalities in the province. To date, we are pleased to announce that the Waterberg District Municipality, Tubatse Municipality and Lephalale municipality have registered PPP projects in the solid waste and waste water sectors.

We have no doubt that together with the private sector we will be in a position to deliver services effectively and efficiently and we can only conquer this if we embrace the spirit of partnerships. This partnership between government, the private sector and our communities must extend to all facets of our development agenda in our province – working together we can do more.

Honourable Speaker, we take great comfort and encouragement from the confidence displayed by the leadership of our country as they unveiled the plan to deal with the financial crisis rapidly befalling us. A plan that does not allow us to lose sight of the tremendous challenges facing us in our quest to continue to deliver a better life for all our people. The allocations made in this budget today must give expression to the assertions of Minister Manuel in his budget speech “*our primary goal remains the reconstruction and development of our economy, and the progressive building of a shared future in which we can take pride in the quality of our public services, the creation of jobs for our people and security in our communities*”... “*This means*

*protecting the poor. It means employment and training. It means investing in infrastructure and building a competitive economy. It means sustainable public finances”.... “we are borrowing not to rescue failed banks or to artificially delay the restructuring of our industry and trade, but to construct the roads and the power stations, the classrooms and hospital wards, to modernise technology and transform public service delivery, as the foundations of growth and broad-based development in the decades ahead”.*

May I take this opportunity to thank the Honourable Premier and my colleagues in both the Executive Council and the Legislature for their contribution to the budget that we table today. Colleagues will pardon me if I have not adequately captured their contributions. A special word of gratitude goes to the Head official of Treasury, Rob Tooley for the able manner in which you provide leadership. My sincere appreciation goes to the sustainable resource management and IGFR branch who worked tirelessly throughout the year. The same should be said to all senior management and staff in the Provincial Treasury. A special word of thanks to my executive assistant Gobetse Nchabeleng and Nape Nchabeleng from the Department of Local Government and Housing who worked well into the night in the last two weeks collating and summarizing budget documents and their guidance in drafting the speech.

To the Director General and other Head officials of the provincial departments who worked closely with officials of Provincial Treasury in making this budget presentation possible. A special thanks to all our guests who took time and effort to be with us here. A special thanks to Commissioner Mahoai from the Public Service Commission whose advice on aspects of the budget has been most useful. To the Auditor General, Mr Dirk Strydom for his guidance and assistance on financial accounting and management. To the people of Limpopo listening to this broadcast, we thank you for your patience and support.

A special word of appreciation must also go to Minister Trevor Manuel, Lesetja Kganyago and staff of National Treasury who have guided us through our own budget process.

When the Colossal figure of Nelson Mandela ascended the steps of the Union Buildings with Thabo Mbeki on 27 April 1994 to take the oath of office, and when freedom bells reverberated through all the corners of our land, the embodiment of our struggle committed us to a contract to create jobs, to fight poverty and to strive for a better life for all our people.

When the frail figure of Nelson Mandela in all his greatness and splendor ascended the steps of the Indutywa Stadium last week with Jacob Zuma he confirmed that we are right on track. He endorsed our battle cry *“Working together we can do more”*. *ENKOSI MADIBA! Ndiyabulela*