



Parliamentary Caucus

National Assembly

Budget Vote Debate on Human Settlements

Comrade SL Ditsebe ANC, (MP)

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Promoting the transformation of the country's informal settlements to reduce the social and economic burden on informal settlement dwellers by guaranteeing the security of tenure and providing housing, security, and comfort.

Honourable Chairperson;

Honourable Minister Simelane

Honourable Deputy Minister Mahambehla

Honourable Members;

Ke ema mona, ho tshehetsa ditekanyetsokabo tsa lefapha la tsa Phumantsho ya Bodulo (Human Settlements) tsa lenane la bomashome a mararo a metso e meraro (Budget Vote 33 of HS), lebitsong la MaAfrika Borwa a dulang dibakeng tseo di ntseng di fetolwa ho ba tse molaong (informal settlement upgrade programme).

Ke bua ka baahi ba 66, 67, 68, ekasita le “school site” (Kutlwanong, Matjhabeng)), Freedom Square (Mangaung), Bosthabelo West (Mangaung) Gugulethu (Thabong, Matjhabeng), Slovo Park (Gauteng), Banana City (Durban) le ba dulang tlasa marogo le hohle moo ba ipehileng teng Cape Town, le ba babang bao ANC e etsang ho matleng, ho ntlafatsa maphelo a bona.

On June 26, last Thursday, we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter, a clarion call and vision that gave us a sense of not only what our future nation-state would look like, but, our nation too, as expressly stated in its preamble that “our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace, by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; that our country will never be prosperous or free, until our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities.”

The 3000 delegates to the Congress of the People in 1955 demanded that people "live where they choose [and] be decently housed," and that, "slums [shall] be demolished, and new suburbs built where they all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, crèches, and social centres" in order to "bring up their families in comfort and security."

Today, we stand here as the ANC and urge all and sundry, who love their people and country, to unequivocally support this budget because, to do otherwise, means delaying the eradication of slums and informal settlements, for the majority who are black and still suffer from the legacy of decades and centuries of forced removals and land dispossession and above all, to not support this budget, will worsen their asset poverty and state of inequality. We dare not linger...

We stand here with a great sense of pride and gratitude to President Tambo, who laid a solid foundation for us to reach this glorious end, by laying a firm foundation for the architecture of South Africa's Constitution [*hoist Dear Cde President book and copy of the Constitution*].

Honourable Chairperson, colonialism and apartheid have exacted indelible scars on the fabric of lives of our people in villages, towns and cities and despite attempts to resist spatial justice and integration, we owe it to the volunteers and crafters of the vision of a non-racial future of the Congress of the People of 1955 and the beneficiaries of our current Constitutional order, to stay engaged with all our people and actively facilitate their freedom to live where they choose and rights as enshrined in s 26 (1&3) of the Constitution.

We applaud the strides that the Department of Human Settlements is making, to upgrade informal settlements, despite a severely constrained fiscal space.

We commend the **R21, 481 973** billion budgeted for the next three years, to upgrade informal settlements and the current financial year's budget of **R8, 126 334** allocated to provinces, metros and different ISUPG sub-programmes.

With this year's allocation, the Department of Human Settlements, together with the 9 provinces and the 8 metros, will see the upgrading of **63 informal settlements to Phase 1 and another 104 and 55 informal settlements upgraded to Phase 2 and 3, respectively**. This paves the way to amenities such as electricity, roads, refuse collection, water and sanitation for those that were once asset poor.

Thus, we call on communities to work together with municipalities and provincial departments, to avoid an unlawful occupation of land because this often breeds several other human settlements amenities challenges such as water, sanitation, clinics, roads and many more.

Honourable Chairperson, to lend dignity to our people, the ANC spearheaded the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act of 1998.

To this end, we support the revival of the amendment of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act Amendment Bill by the Department, so as to decisively deal with illegal evictions and an unlawful occupation of land and we do not support attempts that aimed at duplicating this process.

We commend the Department for the work done on the 295 out of the 3445 blocked projects, to ensure value for money, outcomes and impact in sustaining livelihoods.

Honourable Members, in this financial year, we expect the department to deliver at least 40000 units across the country for the benefit of those households that earn less than R3500, so as to give them the freedom to build and own their homes.

As parties in this House, we can facilitate knowledge and understanding in communities, with regards to their freedoms, rights and opportunities, by working closely with them, to discourage the illegal conduct of land occupation.

Honourable Members, the Expropriation Act can be used legitimately and credibly, to promote order, social and economic development in the human settlements sector.

The Housing Development Agency's current financial year's **R43 891** million and the **R137 741** million for land acquisition over the next three years, will not be sufficient without a meticulous look at what the Expropriation Act can do to complement this disbursement of funds for land acquisition.

The African National Congress welcomes the initiative by the department to work closely with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), to ensure a fair and cost-effective land acquisition regime to benefit the landless and homeless.

The African National Congress welcomes President Ramaphosa's proclamation (No. 265 of 2025), to investigate malfeasance and corruption at the HDA and urge the HDA and the Department to cooperate, while continuing projects that are already in the pipeline, to avoid prejudice to the beneficiaries.

I thank you.