

# ANC 5th NATIONAL CONFERENCE

## PART 2 GOVERNANCE THE STATE AND THE ECONOMY

In 2009 the fourth ANC administration took office and set out to implement the directives of Polokwane.

The ANC Government adopted five priorities, which were education, health, rural development and land reform, the fight against crime and creating decent work.

The 2009 Election Manifesto, unpacking the resolutions of Polokwane, called for the reconfiguration of government to enhance delivery on the five priorities and general work.

The Manifesto said: "We will ensure a more effective government; improve the coordination and planning efforts of the developmental state by means of a planning entity to ensure faster change. A review of the structure of government will be undertaken, to ensure effective service delivery".

Indeed the structure of government was reviewed. Some new departments were created and others were reshaped to enhance delivery.

Departments that were reconfigured were the following:

- Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs, to enable us to put into action our goal of changing the face of rural areas through meaningful socio-economic development initiatives.

- We decided to split Agriculture and Land Affairs and created a Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The special focus on agriculture was prioritized to better support the commercial and emerging sectors. Fisheries are a critical part of the limited natural resource base of the country and would require special focus, especially with regard to regulation and oversight.

- Housing was changed to Human Settlements, a paradigm shift towards transforming our cities and towns and building communities with closer access to work, social amenities, including sports and recreation facilities.

- Mineral Resources, Energy and Tourism were made stand alone ministries and were no longer clubbed with others, to enable focus.

- We split basic and higher education as we realized that Basic Education had been not receiving as much attention as it should have previously.

- The International Relations and Cooperation configuration refined the mandate of the former Department of Foreign Affairs to include peace efforts and developmental cooperation on the continent.

- A Ministry was established to deal with issues relating to women, children and persons with disability. The ANC Government also laid the foundation for a more

performance-oriented government in 2009, with the introduction of the Ministry of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency.

There is already evidence that these changes are bearing fruit. For the first time, Ministers signed performance agreements with the President and with their colleagues with whom they work on aspects of their work, which has increased levels of accountability.

The responsiveness of departments to cases referred to them from Chapter 9 institutions and from the national Anti-Corruption Hotline has improved.

Compliance rates have improved regarding important issues such as finalising performance agreements for heads of department and submission of financial disclosure forms by senior managers.

Turn-around times have also improved in some areas of service delivery. For example, the average time taken to issue an ID book has been reduced from about 150 days to about 30 days.

The average time taken to process an application for a social grant decreased from 30 days in 2010 to 21 days in 2012. There has also been an improvement in the average time taken for police to respond to calls for assistance.

However, there is still much room for improvement in departments, particularly in areas such as payment of suppliers within 30 days.

Comrades, The NPC this year produced the country's ground-breaking National Development Plan a major achievement for the fourth administration.

The plan is comprehensive and covers a number of sectors. These include tackling the problems of poverty, inequality and unemployment, infrastructure, education and skills development, small business development, education and the national health insurance.

We now have a plan that has been welcomed by all sectors of society and not just government and the ruling party alone.

Also, our economy is integrated in the global economy which often exposes us to turbulences and uncertainties such as the present global economic crisis.

In such conditions, it is easy to lose sight of our vision and strategic priorities, in favour of short-term solutions. Having a national strategic vision as a country helps us stay on track. Thirdly, we must accept that the process of overcoming unemployment, poverty and inequality, of building a national democratic society will be long and hard.

The President also reflected on Social Transformation issues which included amongst others, HIV/AIDS, Education with special mention of the Limpopo Textbook saga

\* Full report can be viewed from ANC website



Picture: Mbusi Mahlangu

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