



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Speech by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Patricia de Lille, MP, at the inaugural Sustainable Infrastructure Development Symposium of South Africa(SIDSSA).

His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa

Deputy President David Mabuza

Ministers and Premiers who are joining us virtually

Ms. Amani Abou-Zeid, African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy

Mr. Sandile Zungu- President of the Black Business Council

Ms. Renosi Mokate from the Economic Policy Advisory Council and Board of Trustees at the Government Employees Pension Fund

Mr. Akinwumi Ayodeji Adesina, President of African Development Bank Mr. Enoch Gondongwana, DBSA Board Chairperson

Mr. Makhtar Diop, Vice-President for Infrastructure at the World Bank

Mr. Martin Kingston, Vice-President of Business Unit South Africa (BUSA) Mr. Jaco Maree, Investment Envoy

Mr. Leslie Maasdorp, Vice-President of the New Development Bank

Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Head of the Infrastructure Investment Office in the Presidency

To all that are joining us virtually

Good morning, goeie more, dumelang, molweni, as-salaamu ailakum, shalom,

1. It is a great honour for me to welcome everyone to the inaugural Sustainable Infrastructure Development Symposium of South Africa (SIDSSA).
2. The SIDSSA has today brought together government, funders, policy makers, State-owned enterprises, academia and the private sector, even though in a very different way to what we ever imagined a few months ago.
3. Just over a year ago at the start of the 6th administration, government was reconfigured with Infrastructure being added to the Department of Public Works.
4. This new department with the added infrastructure mandate to bring all infrastructure projects together in one place was gazetted by the President in August 2019.
5. I have always believed that government must lead in infrastructure- led investment and economic growth that can lead to the crowding in effect from the private sector.
6. Infrastructure-led economic growth is the most effective and significant way as part of our Economic Growth Strategy to grow our economy while at the same time respond to the socio- economic needs of our people.

7. At the preparation meeting for SIDSSA on 18 February 2020 that was arranged by yourself, Honourable President, numerous issues were raised.
8. At that gathering you stated Mr President and I quote: "The scale and gravity of the challenge facing the country calls for a collective South African response. The state will have to galvanize all of society behind an orchestrated, comprehensive and bold effort to turn around the economic fortunes of the country." END QUOTE.
9. Government under the leadership of President Ramaphosa has taken this direction to look at international best practises and to include our fellow African states.
10. At this preparation gathering on 18 February 2020, some of the most critical issues that was raised was:
 - The need for a credible project pipeline of infrastructure projects that are ready and bankable for investment and implementation.
 - The need for a comprehensive, focused infrastructure plan.
 - The need to address the fragmentation of infrastructure delivery
11. Our Country like many others across the globe is facing a recession of enormous proportions and the COVID-19 pandemic has placed South Africa in an even worse position, where the Construction Sector has been hit the hardest.
12. The severe economic recession, together with the COVID-19 pandemic, has now placed an added urgency on us to navigate a New Normal.
13. In this new normal, there is an even greater need to partner in the investment and implementation of infrastructure that will facilitate social and economic growth in a workable and purposeful way.
14. In South Africa, infrastructure investment together with the use of public land and buildings is a critical lever to achieve spatial and economic justice by connecting our people, integrating our communities and bring people closer to work opportunities.
15. The Infrastructure and Investment Office in the Presidency headed by Dr Ramokgopa together with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure embarked on an extensive consultation process and developed a new methodology of planning and project preparation.
16. The new methodology was born out of the consultation process at the 18 February preparation meeting for SIDSSA.
17. This has become known as the Sustainable Infrastructure Development System (SIDS) Methodology.
18. What makes the SIDS methodology different is that it ensures that infrastructure development is not merely undertaken in a transactional manner, which is where we have fallen short for so many years.
19. The SIDS Methodology relates to the identification, consideration, evaluation, approval and implementation of workable infrastructure, in order to ensure bankability.
20. Such evaluation is necessary to ensure that the projects are functional from a financial, inter-sectoral and needs perspective.
21. The Methodology compliments and reinforces the requirements for infrastructure development in South Africa, as envisaged by the Infrastructure Development Act, which in itself is a lever we have at our disposal to achieve our infrastructure development goals and focus on prioritised implementation.
22. I would like to briefly unpack the new methodology:
 - a. The SIDS Methodology specifically focuses on how the projects and programmes address spatial inclusivity and transformation.

- b. Projects and programmes are assessed in terms of how they will advance the national development goals and in particular the National Development Plan and the National 7 key priorities of the 6th Administration of and the African Union Agenda 2063 and the State of the Nation Address commitments.
 - c. The SIDS methodology also places emphasis on skills development, training and education, especially for historically disadvantaged persons and communities, women, youth and persons with disabilities.
23. We are tired of hearing about lack of capacity. This is not true and we must debunk the myth that South Africa does not have the capacity because we do, we only need to recognise the skills we have.
 24. The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is putting together the database of the skills and capacity we have in our country.
 25. We have developed a database of young unemployed professionals and retired professionals, so that we can pull together all the skills we have in our country.
 26. The SIDS Methodology also ensures that projects are evaluated within their sectors and are assessed in accordance with the regional and district delivery model, taking into account the needs and the socio- economic environment or inter-sectoral viability.
 27. The last step in the methodology is to determine the infrastructure value chain of the project, what are the costs and benefits and financial aspects, including the financial viability.
 28. The comprehensive SIDS Methodology has been applied to an initial list of 177 infrastructure projects, with 55 compliant with the methodology.
 29. The projects were divided into six sectors, namely; Water and Sanitation, Energy, Transport, Digital Infrastructure, Agriculture and Agro-processing and Human Settlements sectors.
 30. I these sectors are able to respond to the social imperative to bring about significant job creation.
 31. There is also is an opportunity to introduce new, efficient and green technologies, reduce the carbon footprint and facilitate spatial transformation and social cohesion.
 32. 32. We have also identified a number of labour intensive public programmes that will see to the building of rural roads, building bridges and cleaning of our towns and cities just to name a few.
 33. When we now speak about infrastructure it is across its entire lifecycle, we are no longer talking about new construction but also about maintenance and upgrading of our existing infrastructure.
 34. Innovative construction methods, technologies and management systems are being explored, especially in relation to climate change and the green economy.
 35. We are also exploring the introduction of Green Infrastructure Bonds.
 36. An important change is also the maximisation of commercial returns and ensuring that the project is both bankable and has a management structure that can ensure the implementation.
 37. At a policy level, we must do more to transform the construction industry which is one of the least transformed industries in the country.
 38. It is also a sector which is significantly plagued by corruption and we are working on systems to prevent and detect corruption.
 39. We must realise that corruption steals from the poor and that is something we can ill-afford. Corruption in this crucial job creation industry must come to an end.
 40. The National Infrastructure Plan is to be focused, implementation- oriented and demand-driven.

41. Mr President and esteemed guests, we all know first-hand the mammoth task that lies ahead of us and we know that at this juncture for our country and continent, there is no room to falter.
42. The wellbeing of the people of South Africa and our continent lies on our shoulders with critical infrastructure projects that must be delivered now.
43. We need to see less talk and more action. We must always remember our past but we now have an opportunity to design our own future.

44. As we invest in the implementation of infrastructure we must ensure that we at the same time invest in our human capital.
45. Our investment, delivery and implementation into infrastructure needs to be accountable and data-driven, ensuring that our communities are engaged, involved and resourced.
46. We will embark on a social facilitation programme within our communities together with our partners to engage the communities to support our plan.
47. In closing, I wish to remind us all of our aspirations for the “Africa We Want” as set out in the AU Agenda 2063 and that is:
 - A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
 - An integrated continent, politically united based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa’s Renaissance
 - An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
 - A peaceful and secure Africa
 - An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics

 - An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
 - Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner, and
 - Finally a better Africa and World where infrastructure is the key to growing and building our countries in every sense.
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48. Let us use this platform to engage meaningfully and leave here ready to implement, implement, implement.
49. Let’s stop talking and walk the talk.
50. Thank you, baie dankie, enkosi and God Bless.

ENDS

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