



DEPUTY MINISTER ZIKALALA CALLS FOR PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT TO BE USED TO UPLIFT WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

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Deputy Minister Sihle Zikalala delivered the keynote address at the South African Women in Construction and Built Environment (SAWIC&BE) Conference that was held yesterday in Johannesburg. The purpose of the conference was to discuss issues of women empowerment and elect new leadership that will chart a way forward for women in the construction sector.

When he took to the stage, Zikalala called for more work to be done to ensure the participation of women in the built industry, including the use of preferential procurement to target women-run businesses. "As a department, we promise to continue engaging with SAWIC in order to advance the transformation of the built environment, by prioritising the empowerment of black women as a designated group" said Zikalala.

SAWIC is an organisation empowering women within the Construction and Built Environment Industry. Deputy Minister Zikalala spoke about the department's commitment in empowering women, as a lasting

legacy of the late former Minister of Public Works, Stella Sigcau, who was very instrumental in the formation of SAWIC during the first democratic government. During the conference, new leadership was selected for the organisation. Deputy Minister Sihle Zikalala said he was confident that the newly elected leadership and the policy proposals from the conference will assist government to drive inclusive growth and job creation, reduce property and tackle the high cost of living while building a capable, ethical and developmental state.



MINISTER DEAN MACPHERSON GIVES UPDATE ON THE STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT TO THE MEDIA

The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure held a media briefing on Wednesday, 28 August 2024, at the GCIS Imbizo Center in Parliament, Cape Town. Minister Macpherson conducted the briefing to give the media an update on the state of the department.

The following are the Key Points Minister spoke about during the briefing;

- ⇒ Infrastructure South Africa (ISA) is being empowered as the lead entity for national infrastructure projects by significantly expanding the construction book of bankable projects to attract investment from development agencies and the private sector to turn SA into a construction site.
- ⇒ Key reforms are being implemented, including appointments to key divisions to conduct a skills audit across the senior management service level, ensuring the department has the skills required to deliver.
- ⇒ Investigations into stolen money and failed projects, including the Telkom Project in Tshwane and a R300 million IT theft over 10 years, are underway to ensure accountability. A tender for an independent investigation into the Telkom Towers project, where over R1 billion was spent but the buildings remain unusable, has been issued.
- ⇒ The Department is cracking down on corruption, including proceeding with the case to recover R20 million from Kroucamp Plumbers. There will now also be increased oversight into HR practices by the DG and Minister to ensure that hiring panels are adequately constituted, and disciplinary cases proceed.
- ⇒ The Prestige Unit, responsible for managing key state properties, has been moved back under the Director-General's office to enhance oversight and prevent wasteful expenditure, such as the R246 million security upgrades to Nkandla.
- ⇒ Financial oversight has been significantly tightened, with the restructuring of financial decision-making powers that previously allowed expenditures of up to R20 million without the accounting officer's approval, to prevent financial mismanagement like the R3 billion overdraft.
- ⇒ A national summit will be convened to combat the Construction Mafia, which has disrupted the construction sector. The ministry is also considering revisiting the 30% procurement rule to ensure that it empowers SMMEs without enabling criminal syndicates.
- ⇒ Discussions have begun on the possibility of restructuring the Property Management Trading Entity (PMTE) into a South Africa Property Company. This entity would focus on converting state-owned assets into income-generating properties, with the revenue generated being reinvested into the maintenance of critical public infrastructure such as police stations, hospitals, and schools.
- ⇒ Minister Macpherson will join President Cyril Ramaphosa on a state visit to China, where they will meet with new development finance banks to attract investment into infrastructure projects in South Africa.
- ⇒ Options for the reconstruction of Parliament, including using the Dome from Nelson Mandela's funeral, are being considered to ensure that they are financially viable. The Minister and Speaker have also received fortnightly reports from DBSA on Parliament's reconstruction to ensure that the project proceeds on time and within budget.