

■ MINISTERS

New-look Cabinet down from 36 to 28

Ramaphosa says this will promote coherence and improve efficiency

STAFF REPORTERS

AS PREDICTED, President Cyril Ramaphosa last night announced the combination of portfolios in the national executive, thereby reducing the number of ministers from 36 to 28.

Ramaphosa, in announcing the new executive, said this was done to promote greater coherence, better co-ordination and improved efficiency.

In this regard, the Trade and Industry Ministry has been combined with Economic Development. Higher Education and Training merged with Science and Technology and Environmental Affairs with Forestry and Fisheries.

In terms of the new structure, Agriculture was combined with Land Reform and Rural Development; Mineral Resources with Energy; Human Settlements with Water and Sanitation; and Sports and Recreation with Arts and Culture.

Ramaphosa said the changes were guided by the need to build a modern developmental state.

“We have been guided by the need to build a modern developmental state that has the means to drive economic and social transformation, to embrace innovation and to direct effort and resources towards where they will have the greatest impact,” Ramaphosa said.

He said that in the elections of May 8, South Africans provided the administration with a clear mandate to accelerate inclusive economic growth, act with greater urgency to tackle poverty, improve government services, fight corruption and end state capture.

“If we are to give effect to this mandate, we need a capable, efficient and ethical government.

“Today, we are announcing some of the outcomes of the reconfiguration of national government.”

Ramaphosa said all South Africans were acutely aware of the great economic difficulties the country had been experiencing and the constraints this had placed on public finances.

“It is therefore imperative that in all areas and spheres of government,

we place priority on revitalising our economy while exercising the greatest care in the use of public funds.

“We had already combined the portfolios of Communications and Telecommunications and Postal Services.

“We have also decided to add responsibility for infrastructure to the Public Works portfolio and to add the responsibility of employment to the Labour portfolio.

“If we are to make effective progress in building the South Africa that we all want, it is important that we deploy into positions of responsibility people who are committed, capable and hard-working, and who have integrity.”

Ramaphosa said that in appointing a new national executive, he took a number of considerations into account, including experience, continuity, competence, generational mix and demographic and regional diversity.

“The people who I am appointing today must realise that the expectations of the South African people have never been greater and that they will shoulder a great responsibility.

“Their performance – individually and collectively – will be closely monitored against specific outcomes.

“Where implementation is unsatisfactory, action will be taken.”

Ramaphosa said the men and women appointed to the executive were drawn from all corners of the country.

“For the first time in the history of our country, half of all ministers are women. We have also included a significant number of young people.

“This is in fulfilment of our commitment to giving young people roles of responsibility in all sectors of society. This is part of a generational transition in which we are creating a pipeline of leaders to take our country further into the future.”

The president also expressed his appreciation to all those outgoing members of the executive who served the country during the fifth administration.