



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE CBE
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SPEECH**

**DELIVERED BY DEPUTY MINISTER NOXOLO KIVIET
05 JULY 2022**

Salutation

Chairperson of the board Dr Dlamini & all

Board members

CEO

All our presenters, notably Prof Ramokgopa

Senior Government officials

All stakeholder

[all other to be confirmed]

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour for me to speak to you all today as stakeholders of the Council for the Built Environment in particular and DPWI in general. As we celebrate Mandela month, we ought to have concerted efforts in exchanging ideas and views on how we, together, can recalibrate this industry and put it at the centre of a resolution to the biggest challenges that our country is currently facing: unemployment, poverty and regressing development. In quoting Nelson Mandela during this important month “***We must work together to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth, opportunity and power in our society***”.

I also want to take opportunity to congratulate CBE on being a co-signatory to the Infrastructure Built Anti-Corruption Forum’s (IBACF) anti-corruption pledge, signed on the 30 June 2022, whose main objective is to serve as platform to develop innovative and preventative measures and advisory initiatives using the latest analytical tools to help find loopholes in procurement legislation that renders it vulnerable to corrupt practices. The signing of the pledge is symbolic in many respects, showing a common determination to ensure the built environment is a sector that ‘*does the right thing*’ at all times- this symbolises a rebirth of the built industry in South Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a well-known fact that we have gone through a very rough and tough time as a nation in the past two and a half years due to combination of negative factors globally and in our country. Our economy has been decimated by a combination of factors although the biggest culprits have been the Covid19 pandemic and the massive

diminished investment in the built industry. And earlier this year, a natural catastrophe brought on by the vagaries of a changing climate pattern, visited four of our provinces with KZN and the Eastern Cape being hardest hit. So, as a Nation we find ourselves in a great deal of pain. Our economy is in the shadow of dark days where all seems hopeless. But the reality, ladies and gentlemen is that we simply do not have the luxury of throwing our hands in the air in despair. We have to pull ourselves by our bootstraps and fold our sleeves and go to work. There is no time to mourn and as government we are counting on you, the professionals, for your critical ideas and inputs on how to pull our country out of the mire.

As professionals in the built industry, we have a duty and a responsibility to help the Nation to transcend the current stormy waters, to also live up to what our constitution so profoundly implores all of us in its preamble “**to improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person**”. Our public entities, especially CBE, play an important role in concretising our tasks of providing policy leadership to the wider construction and property sectors. We must remember as our former President Thabo Mbeki once said, I quote “**Gloom and despondency have never defeated adversity. Trying times need courage and resilience. Our strength as a people is not tested during the best of times**”

I want to urge all of us in this Stakeholder Engagement to be true and alive to the critical and crucial tasks facing us in this country. Built environment professionals need to come to help government to bring to fruition the goals of the Economic Reconstruction & Recovery Plan. The floods that hit our country in April this year, call for built environment professionals to come up with innovative building policies, plans and materials to ensure

that these disasters are minimised as we face the ever-changing weather patterns. We must build and maintain the infrastructure taking into consideration this severe climate change. To this extent, I applaud our Entities including CBE for mobilising professionals to serve in the Work stream where Built Professionals were assigned to assist in this regard under the auspices of DPWI. The Infrastructure Investment Plan of Government is critical to the ERRP, in terms of creating jobs and bring about this industry back to its critical importance.

Ladies and gentlemen, our Department is hard at work, working to ensure that infrastructure is not only spoken about, but that it actually rises up and serve people of South Africa. Since last year, the Department has completed the drafting, approval and gazetting of the National Infrastructure Plan 2050. This is a long-term plan for Infrastructure development across the country that will ensure that there is a long-term view regarding infrastructure to drive economic and social transformation to achieve the goals of the National Development Plan. A huge financial investment is called for in the NIP 2050. The latest example was the sod-turning ceremony here in Pretoria at Salvokop on 28 June 2022, where five Head Offices of Government Departments are being constructed with about 80 000 jobs expected to be created during construction. This is an undertaking worth billions on Rand over a number of years. The development is a first of its kind for South Africa. It is aimed at achieving spatial integration by bringing government departments to a central location in proximity to economic development and mixed typology residential developments for households and various income streams.

We need more innovation from our built environment professionals on a whole range of issues confronting this industry as well as the the country. Advancing transformation of the built environment system continues to be

a national priority. We are pleased to note that to this end, the CBE has developed a set of Transformation Collaborative Committees to guide its contribution to transformation of the built environment system. These TCCs were supposed to engage with all relevant public decision makers and industry role players to resolve key challenges identified by stakeholders such as the advocating for change in the implementation of policies and transformation programmes. I sincerely hope that this Stakeholder engagement will go a long way in ensuring that these Transformation Collaborative Committees are given real teeth and they carry out the tasks that they have been set up to do. Please, make them work because if all the TCCs could be effective in realising the purpose for which they were set up, that would fast move our country forward.

The reconfigured Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has been given the opportunity to refocus toward the achievement of its existing and new infrastructure mandate in the implementation of quality public services for public good. The seven outcomes of the Department and its Public Entities were all aligned to one or more of the national seven priorities, in order to focus on implementation and targeted infrastructure service delivery that addresses the ever-increasing needs across our country. Our focus as government has to be on **Infrastructure-led Economic Growth**, which will then facilitate the crowding in of the private sector

The consolidation of the infrastructure mandate under one ministry was intended to promote coherence, better coordination and improved efficiency in government. To give effect to this mandate, the Investment and Infrastructure Office in the Presidency was evolved into Infrastructure South Africa, to be the central point of reference for strategic infrastructure

planning, infrastructure development and alignment, In addition, ISA is coordinating and aligning the work of various structures responsible for both economic and social infrastructure, oversee the Infrastructure Fund as well as coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of infrastructure development. We hope that our built environment professionals, through the various Councils, will give ISA their unstinting support for the heavy lift of infrastructure development and maintenance in our country.

We would also like to see more vigorous governance oversight for built environment professionals. The CBE gazetted the identification of work document in 2020. This is a critical tool to guide the six Councils for the Built Environment in developing their rules to enable them to regulate the registered built environment professionals. This is important to ensure public safety in that built environment professionals conduct work in the areas that they are most proficient in and qualified for. It also guarantees consequence management for professionals that do shoddy work. I would like to know how far this document has been implemented by Councils and whether there are any improvements that have been gleaned.

On skills development, during the 2020/21 financial year, another worthwhile report was produced by CBE: the Throughput Study report on the Built Environment skills pipeline (supply and demand). The study apparently showed that the trend in the supply of BE professionals starting at matriculation level up to tertiary level and candidacy level, was good preparation for eventual registration of professionals. The throughput study recommended that the gazetted infrastructure projects should be used to expose candidates and unemployed graduates to the respective competencies as required for professional registration. The study proposes the use of simulated projects (amplified by technologies such as

virtual and augmented reality) within the professional development space in order to facilitate and expedite professional registration to address the training of the unemployed graduates and candidates to fast track their development to prepare for their registration process. These are all great ideas but as they say, the taste of the pudding is in the eating. Therefore the question remains- How far are we with implementing these recommendations?

The CBE and its stakeholders need to be more vigorous and ensure that workplaces are monitored and evaluated on their implementation of the Structured Candidacy Programme. This should ensure that Built Environment candidates achieve optimal quality development and professional registration status in the shortest possible time.

We need acceleration at which work is done in order ameliorate the job losses and high unemployment among professionals. We would like to know whether the Built Environment Research Hub, is working as it should and whether there are any tangible results.

We are all well aware of the devastating impact that COVID 19 has had on the built environment. It is our hope that with the learnings we have had over the last two and a half years under the pandemic and the easing of the pandemic, we can all go back to work. We shall do all that we need to do on the legislative and policy front to move the work forward. But government cannot carry the burden alone. The private sector will need to also do bit in order to lighten the burden and open all the vistas of growth.

We hope that this Stakeholder Engagement has come at an opportune time for professionals to take stock of the situation (professionals on the

platform should start thinking about load shedding challenges. We would like to see this gathering delving much deeper into the content, substance, quality and relevance of your work as professionals the context of an ever-changing world.

I wish you well in your endeavours.

Thank you. Enkosi. Ke a le boga. Dankie