

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS, MR NTOPILE KGANYAGO, MP, HANDS OVER THE MELODING POLICE STATION TO DEPUTY MINISTER OF SAFETY AND SECURITY, MS SUSAN SHABANGU

DATE: 03 March 2006
VENUE: Meloding Police Station, Virginia, Free State

- **The Deputy Minister of Safety & Security, Ms Susan Shabangu**
- **The Premier of the Province, Ms Beatrice Marshoff**
- **The MEC for Public Safety, Security & Liaison, Mr. France Morule**
- **The MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport Mr. S.J. Mohai**
- **The Deputy National Commissioner of SAPS, H M Hlela**
- **All senior leadership and management**
- **Distinguished Guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The Meloding Police Station is the third such facility to be officially opened in the Free State with me as a witness. My first public appearance after I was appointed as the Deputy Minister of the National Department of Public Works was when I officially handed over the R15 million, Mangaung Police Station to Minister Charles Nqakula at Bloemfontein in June 2004. I was privileged again to do the same in July 2005 at the official opening of the Mafube Police Station at Namahadi, Frankfort.

Our relationship with the SAPS pre-dates my appointment and extends far beyond the borders of this Province. It was important for me however to cite these three examples because it says to me, and I hope to the people of Free State, that government is serious and earnest about public infrastructure development as part of service delivery and poverty alleviation.

Under apartheid, structures such as this Meloding Police Station, were far and few in between. Where ever they existed, they were characterized by poorly resourced buildings which were used mainly as torture chambers to enforce the draconian rules of apartheid. An integrated approach to crime solution was never part of apartheid social planning. It was only after 1994 that the new government passed the National Integrated Crime Prevention Strategy of which the Department of Public Works was a prime participant in terms of infrastructure development and its management.

The key mandate and function of the National Department of Public Works is to provide physical space for the accommodation of government and its departments. This includes functional accommodation such as police stations, prisons, courts of justice and military bases. Between 1994 and 2004, the Department spent in excess of ten billion rand (R10 billion) in the execution of seven thousand, six hundred and ninety two (7692) construction-related projects. We are proud to mention that SAPS, over the years has been one of our top four clients along side Correctional Services, Justice and Defence.

Our main contribution to crime prevention was firstly the implementation of Project Five Star which identified key SAPS facilities for major upgrading, renovation and improvement. Our belief is that the police can successfully combat crime if they have all-round support and resources, including ideal physical space from which to manage their affairs and discharge their duties including incarceration of law-breakers. Our other involvement was the construction of one-stop multi-purpose Community Safety Centres. To date we have erected and handed-over Community Safety Centres in seven of the nine provinces. The latest one to be opened was the thirty five million rand (R35 million) Galashewe Community Safety Centre just outside Kimberley in Northern Cape.

The good news to the people of Free State is that there are two other multi-million rand projects in the form of seven million rand (R7 million) and six million rand (R6 million) police stations currently under construction at Verkykerskop and Phuthaditjhaba, respectively. If one considers the completed eleven million rand (R11 million) and thirteen million rand (R13 million) magistrate courts at Botshabelo and Kroonstad, one will understand that government is on the move and that service delivery is neither negotiable nor compromised.

We like to thank the construction industry as our suppliers for the gusto with which they approach all our projects. Let me state for the record that government relies on the expertise and patriotism of this sector to deliver all government infrastructure needs in line with the millennium goals as enshrined in NEPAD. Very soon, the Minister of Public Works, Ms Stella Sigcau, will promulgate the Construction and Property Transformation Charters that will promote growth, development and transformation of these industries, with the aim of drawing in more black people, women and small entrepreneurs. Most importantly, government wants these sectors, like many others, to align themselves with socio-economic imperatives necessary to nation-building.

I want to congratulate the people of Meloding for being the recipients of this building. We believe they shall play their part as responsible citizens in ensuring that the facility serves their purpose. I call on the people of Free State to record such gains and make them part of their communal collective memory each time they discuss their milestones as part of a better life being created for them.

I take this opportunity to hand over this structure to the Deputy Minister of South African Police Services, Ms Susan Shabangu. I THANK YOU.