

**Minister of Public Works
Ms S Sigcau
31 July 2003**

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Handover of R22 million worth projects in Centane

Salutations

The Premier of Eastern Cape, Reverend Makhenkesi Stofile
My colleagues, the Minister of Safety and Security Mr Charles Nqakula and the Minister of Health, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang
His Majesty, King Xolilizwe Sigcawu
His Worship, Councillor S Somyo, the Executive Mayor of Amatole District Municipality
His Worship, Councillor Ntenjwa, Mayor of Mnquma Local Municipality
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

When the ANC government came to power in 1994, we were overwhelmingly voted for because we were the only political party with both willpower and the business plan to transform South Africa from apartheid to democracy. We condemned apartheid and rightly believed that the racial - system was responsible for conditions of poverty, deprivation and hopelessness, which our people found themselves in. Poverty is characterized by many factors, among others lack of opportunities, lack of political and social rights and more glaringly lack of infrastructure. Prior to 1994 there were fewer or no new houses, schools, decent rural roads, community halls etc for our communities. Thanks to the efforts of this government, we have managed in 9 years to lessen the impact of colonialism and apartheid, which took 350 years and 50 years respectively, to solidify.

Today our old folks have better improved access to pensions, children receive social grants, feeding schemes are up and running for our learners at government schools, for the last four years government has been announcing reduction of taxes for people with lower incomes. Most remarkably this government has given houses to almost 4 million people and connected water to many millions more. As we do all that, we called on our people and their communities to come and bear witness to their own development. In the meantime, opposition parties continued to do exactly that, opposing government efforts to build a better for all. Except making noises in public, opposition parties have not built a single house or repainted a school or issued a single pension. For us, those are our daily tasks, improving the quality of life of our people.

In 1994, the National Department of Public Works was given a simple yet complicated mandate by government to:

- i. Provide government and its departments with infrastructure they can use to maximise their own service delivery targets.
- ii. To eradicate poverty and create jobs by rolling out a rural infrastructure development programme called Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) and in the meantime engage the expertise of the construction industry in doing so.

As a result, my Department is responsible for the construction and maintenance of police stations, prisons, magistrate courts, military bases, community safety centres, among others. We also acquire office accommodation for other government departments including home affairs, agriculture, environmental affairs and others. This we do throughout the country.

The two projects we are handing over today, were both constructed by my Department. Starting with the Centane Multi-Purpose Community Centre, my Department spent over R1 million building this MPCC. This is the sixth such MPCC to be established in the Eastern Cape alone. Other are at Tombo, Sterkspruit, Cofimvaba, Zalu Hill near Lusikisiki and Sandrift in the Tsitsikama region. If this does not signify delivery, I don't know then the meaning of delivery.

Almost 20% of the contract value was spent on local community labour where 47 people were both trained and employed to build this structure. They included 17 women and 16 youth. In conjunction with the Department of Labour and in line with the wishes of our President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, these people received the on the job technical training, some (about 12) received further training in Operation, Maintenance and Management. The completed MPCC will house Home Affairs, Government Communications and a Tele centre. More than 97 000 beneficiaries will save time and money to access government services such as identity documents, births,

marriage and death certificates and other government information and activities.

To date government has delivered 40 MPCC's in all the provinces and the government is in line to achieve its target of 61 by end of 2004/2005. In 2002/2003, my Department, through its rural infrastructure programme called CBPWP, invested R70 million in the Eastern Cape alone, building 173 infrastructure projects and creating 8 500 job opportunities.

The second project we are handing over this morning is the Centane, Community Safety Centre, which is situated side by side with the MPCC, clearly indicating the government's approach of coordinated and integrated delivery. The difference between the MPCC and Community Safety Centre is that the CSC has crime prevention as its focus. Despite crime prevention, Community Safety Centres are essential to Urban Renewal Programmes.

All the provinces in South Africa have at least a single community safety centre. Eight are operational including Centane. The one at Thabong in the Free State is at a planning stage and we hope to bring it on streams soon.

Here at Centane Community Safety Centre, my Department managed a total budget of R21 million which included the construction costs as well as other social-economic imperatives of government as listed below:

- More than R1 million went to local enterprises
- About R600 000 was spent on local supplies
- Another R1, 73 million went to local manufactures
- Whereas R3, 56 million was invested on local labour
- And R96 000 was invested on training

The Community Safety Centre is a facility that offers holistic community services across clusters of government departments with generic interests. The Centane Safety Centre boasts a Police Services Point, Logistics and Finance Office, crime investigation services, holding cells, two magistrate courts, correctional services, parole office, victim support centre, a clinic with four-beds ward, a day care centre for children, 14 staff houses and 33 bachelor flats.

Logically the services that will be rendered from this Community Safety Centre will encompass social security, health care, justice, policing, correctional services and community recreation. These will supplement home affairs services at the MPCC and will be supplemented by municipal services, postal services, community halls and constituency offices available in the immediate vicinity.

In conclusion, I need to remind the people of Centane that we have recently completed the R8,5 million Police Station at Butterworth. We built that facility using black contractors as prime contractors under our Strategic Project Initiative to accelerate their development in the construction. Another police station is under construction industry at Tsolo. I want you to look beyond these infrastructures we build. Instead I want you to concentrate on the benefits they offer such as:

- a) Creating infrastructure where none existed before
- b) Renewing our urban areas and developing our rural communities
- c) Creating jobs and developing human resources in line with the poverty eradication vision of the President.
- d) Bringing essential services to the areas where we live.

Our experiences over the past 9 years have taught us a number of important lessons. As we work tirelessly to eradicate poverty, eliminate apartheid and its legacy and improve the quality of life, we are today guided by the vision of President Mbeki as contained in the Expanded Public Works Programme. According to the President, the objectives of this programme is to:

- i. Build social and economic infrastructure
- ii. Create jobs
- iii. Develop Human Resources through skilling and training

Contrary to current programmes, the EPWP will be coordinated and finely integrated in approach, using available procurement muscle of government to make a noticeable impact on lessening of poverty. My Department has been given the responsibility to steer EPWP into place and guide it to fruition. Given our past

record in driving CBPWP as a rural infrastructure programme, we feel honoured and recognized by this confidence shown in our ability to drive this presidential programme. We dare not fail the people of South Africa.

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