



**public works**

Department:  
Public Works  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# **Meeting of MINMEC**

**Hilton Hotel, Durban, KZN, 7 December 2012**

## **Closing Remarks**

**Mr TW Nxesi MP, Minister of Public Works**

Let me again thank the MEC: KZN for the hospitality shown and for agreeing to share the ocean with the rest of us on this occasion.

Also thanks to the CIDB for the successful launch of the NCDP (National Contractor Development Programme) last night.

It is almost exactly one year since our first scheduled meeting together. A MINMEC was scheduled for 8 December 2011. Unfortunately we had to postpone, because we could not get a quorum.

So not a good start – but since then we have managed to meet regularly during 2012 – and I believe that our initial encounters have been very fruitful.

I have tried to encourage the approach that MINMEC must be seen as a gathering of the wider Public Works family – national, provincial and entities – and an opportunity for real engagement with the objective of sharing information and best practice, providing mutual support, and also an opportunity where we develop new thinking about the strategic direction in terms of our mandate as Public Works, as well as in regard to the future transformation of the built environment.

The first time I met with MINMEC, I announced my turnaround strategy. Let me report to you:

We have agreed – with National Treasury – to develop a 7 Year Plan – and on this basis we have been assured of turnaround funding for the

balance of this year and the following 3 year funding cycle. I believe that this is good news – and represents a vote of confidence in Public Works.

A three phase approach to turnaround and fundamental change has been adopted:

- *Phase 1: The kick-start stabilisation phase* - which takes us up to April 2014 and which is well underway. I have already mentioned these initiatives – and as I said already - Treasury has already allocated funding.
- *Phase 2: Efficiency Improvement* – working with DPW management and staff to manage performance and improve business processes.
- *Phase 3: Sustainable growth* – characterised by deep diagnostic and review of the Department's core mandate and business model and long-term transformation involving fundamental process re-engineering.

### *Stabilisation of Management*

I said initially, that key to any successful turnaround would be the stabilisation of the leadership of the Department. Steps taken in this regard include the following:

- Finalization of the permanent appointment of a DG. We were able to find a settlement with the former DG which has allowed us to advertise to fill this post. We will now be focusing on stabilising at DDG level. *[Do you need to make an announcement re DG – and thank A/DG?]*
- At the political level, on a lighter note, I need to announce that I am still here. I've been minister for over a year now – a record for Public Works, at least in recent years.

Despite the constraints and challenges, we have made real progress this year as DPW – and as the Public Works family. Our processes are gathering momentum. We have the funding, and by early next year we will have in place the necessary human resources and skills.

On the other hand we have less than 18 months before the elections and the end of the term of this Administration. We have to make every day count. It cannot be business as usual.

At the heart of any vision for the future must be to rebuild the technical capacity of Public Works – to manage projects, to manage the supply chain and relations with service providers and contractors. This is also the way that we ensure accountability and value for money for clients – and in terms of safeguarding the public purse.

This also relates to a larger national agenda. If Public Works can put its house in order, I believe we can make a massive contribution to the successful roll-out of national infrastructure development plans over the coming years and decades. More fundamentally, a technically-capacitated DPW – providing a quality service to client departments – must lie at the heart of an effective and successful developmental state – which in turn is charged with the mandate to deliver to the public, and in particular to the poor and the marginalised. In a very real sense a technically-capacitated DPW is the engine driving the developmental state.

Have a good Christmas, travel safely, and return reinvigorated and ready to work in 2013.

I thank you.