

Ramaphosa cuts to the chase

By  Katja Hamilton

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As outlined in the framework of South Africa's Youth Day, which will be honoured on 16 June next week, this year's theme looks at promoting sustainable livelihoods and resilience of young people for a better tomorrow. The call to action is for youth to forge resilience and pursue opportunities for a sustainable livelihood, today and in the future.



Source: Supplied.

It's fitting therefore that SA President, Cyril Ramaphosa in his reply to the debate on his budget vote, [tabled](#) on Thursday, highlighted that The Presidency continues to set its transformative sights on the labour market.

This is a mandate it set in stone with the youth in mind - two years ago.

Ramaphosa addressed Parliament today on this mandate despite opposition parties causing gross disorderly conduct at the onset of his reply, and attempting to prevent him from tabling the Presidency budget yesterday.

They cited the criminal investigation into the robbery at his Phala Phala farm in Limpopo.

"I will not respond to insults," Ramaphosa retorted following the EFF scuffle.

"What the South African people want above all else is to see their quality of life improved. They do not care for political

squabbles, rivalries, plots, and intrigue. They want better basic services. They want jobs and opportunities to better themselves," Ramaphosa [said](#).

He went on to [say](#) that the robbery that took place on his farm Phala Phala in 2020 is the subject of a criminal complaint, and that the law must take its course.

"Due process must be followed. I will therefore not be responding to speculation, conjecture, allegations, or so-called revelations. These must be ventilated in the proper and appropriate forums. I repeat, the law must take its course," Ramaphosa stressed.

SA's 'bread-and-butter' issues

When addressing his initiatives to combat unemployment, he drove home the "bread and butter issues" of South Africans. "The rising cost of fuel, food and utilities like water and electricity has made it increasingly difficult for people to get by, to pay their bills and to feed their families.

“ People are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward. ”

"People are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, and to guarantee the future of their children," Ramaphosa said.

His impetus two years ago, to transform the labour market for youth, came at a time when private-sector job creation was constrained and hampered by the pandemic, and many livelihoods were in danger or had been lost.

"Working with social partners and government departments - we designed and have been driving the implementation of the largest mass public employment programme in our country's history," said Ramaphosa.

The Presidential Employment Stimulus

"To date the Presidential Employment Stimulus has successfully provided work opportunities to close to a million beneficiaries who would have otherwise not been absorbed by the constrained job market."

Ramaphosa said it is SA's youth who are suffering most from unemployment and exclusion. He added that of the 1 million beneficiaries of the employment stimulus programme, 84% are youth, and 62% female.

He said young people are also expected to be the primary beneficiaries of the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention

and the Social Employment Fund.

“ At the heart of our growth strategy is a bold and far-reaching economic reform agenda. These reforms are being driven by the relevant departments and agencies and supported by [#OperationVulindlela](#), an initiative of the Presidency and National Treasury.

<https://t.co/B7gyV9Sko9>— Cyril Ramaphosa 🐦🐦🐦🐦 (@CyrilRamaphosa) [June 9, 2022](#) ”

He didn't elaborate on these initiatives. He did, however, cite economic development and job creation as part of some of the desired outcomes inherent in The District Development Model (DDM), a Presidency initiative launched at a pilot site in the OR Tambo District Municipality in 2020.

"Although the onset of the pandemic set back our efforts to roll-out the DDM in more municipalities, the process has resumed in earnest.

"As part of operationalising this model, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs has been working with districts and municipalities to finalise their One Plans.

"These One Plans outline the respective approaches of districts to resolving service-delivery challenges, economic development, job creation and key deliverables," Ramaphosa said.

He spoke of the Presidential *izimbizo* as an opportunity to listen to the life experiences and concerns of young people.

Ramaphosa said he was "giving great consideration" to having the next Presidential *imbizo* in the Western Cape on the Cape Flats.

"No doubt such an *imbizo* will bring in people from a number of surrounding areas where our people live," he said.

He said The Presidency is setting itself the target of rolling out the DDM in all 52 of the country's districts, and The Presidency will be conducting oversight in this regard.

"District-based development is a transformation of government planning.

“ It is a break from the past where departments worked in silos, fruitless expenditure on irrelevant projects was

common, and where development was not aligned to national objectives. ”

"It is a break from the past where departments worked in silos, fruitless expenditure on irrelevant projects was common, and where development was not aligned to national objectives.

"Once this model is fully institutionalised, it will result in better use of resources, targeted development, and responsive planning.

"It will enable districts and municipalities to develop but also harness existing local economic initiatives such as Special Economic Zones, industrial parks, and agri-hubs," Ramaphosa concluded.

To read President Cyril Ramaphosa's full reply on The Presidency Budget Vote go [here](#).

ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

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