

# Perspectives

## on KwaZulu-Natal

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### Reporting back to the KwaZulu-Natal legislature

KwaZulu-Natal Ministers recently presented mid-year reports in the legislature. *Perspectives on KwaZulu-Natal* reproduces edited snippets from the speeches made by four of the representatives.

#### **Economic Development and Tourism Minister, Mike Mabuyakhulu**

Five key priorities have been highlighted for KwaZulu-Natal. These priorities are as follows:

- i) The development of a new trade port and logistics platform with the King Shaka International Airport as a key node;
- ii) The establishment of a dynamic and strong new trade and investment promotion body in the province which would implement strategies to ensure significant rates of investment and exports;
- iii) The realignment of activities of agencies related to the Department, in particular:
  - a. the restructuring of Washesha (Bush Company) and KwaZulu Transport;
  - b. the establishment of Ithala Limited and pursuit of a banking licence for Ithala;
- iv) The implementation of an innovative strategy to attract increasing numbers of tourists to the province and to build empowerment in the tourism industry;
- v) The increasing development of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism as a world-class agent of economic development. Capacity in the Department is being developed with a focus on bridging the gap between so-called first and third worlds, through best practice strategies and methodologies, and through a coalition with a range of stakeholders.

In pursuance of the President's State of the Nation address earlier this year, we are vigorously pursuing discussions with national government and other relevant stakeholders to reach the final decision on the King Shaka International Airport project. Due to the sensitive nature of such discussions, I am not able to divulge further information at this point. We can say we anticipate that a final decision will be taken on the project within weeks of today and that we are extremely hopeful.

Related to the King Shaka International Airport project is our 'bigger picture' initiative, which we are calling the establishment of a Logistics Platform for KwaZulu-Natal. This is the 'bigger picture' because the airport is really only one mode of transport at which investors and local companies look when deciding where and with whom to do business and where to create jobs. In truth,

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investors look at all modes of transport infrastructure and the supply chains that would underpin their business and their links to markets across the globe. We have thus started an initiative to develop plans for developing this platform for business - all of which ties to transport, logistics and industrial strategy for this region. We are looking to strengthen our strategic partnership with Gauteng in this regard and ensure that the economic supply chain between our key provinces becomes globally competitive and attracts real fixed investment and trade from key markets across the world.

In June 2001 the new provincial public entity, called Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal was launched. This agency was borne out of the integration of the KwaZulu-Natal Marketing Initiative and the KZN Economic Council. The new board is in the process of finalising strategic business plans for the organisation. These strategic plans relate to both the internal resources required by the organisation to operate effectively, as well as the key projects and initiatives, which the organisation will implement.

Our challenges are indeed many in the weeks and months ahead, but we are determined to keep our focus and ensure delivery on the few critical success areas. Whilst pursuing projects and initiatives which focus on the so-called 'new economy' and the world-class industries and investment, we are not failing to hear the call of our people for jobs and economic regeneration in the less urban parts of our province.

More than this, however, is our determination to build a stronger partnership, not only with the private sector, but also with ourselves. In other words, co-ordination within government and between government departments is going to be critical to make any meaningful impact in the more poverty stricken areas of the province.

### **Minister of Traditional Affairs Inkosi Nyanga Ngubane**

The primary agent for the traditional affairs branch of the department is the Institution of Traditional Leadership. The traditional courts have been identified as one of the critical structures that would make it possible for traditional communities and their leadership to revive a system where genuine freedom of expression can be practiced at all levels of the community. These buildings are going to be transformed and used as an extension of various government department activities.

I am fully aware of the extensive engagement by the South African Law Commission on the review of functional relationships between the traditional courts and the judicial function of traditional leaders. It is our strong view that traditional courts should continue to be recognised where they are already established, that is, in traditional areas, within the areas of the jurisdiction of amakhosi and that such courts should continue to be presided over by amakhosi. Traditional courts should be regarded as courts of law and be given the status and respect of courts of law. In order to achieve this, para-legals should be trained and appointed by the department of justice to assist traditional courts. These clerks should be trained in customary law and have a basic understanding of the Bill of Rights. Formal rules of procedure and evidence should not be imposed on traditional courts as the customary procedure is generally compatible with rules of natural justice. However, it is recommended that para-legal clerks of traditional courts should make summaries of evidence and judgements that can subsequently be relied upon on appeal or review.

The deliberate exposure of tribal conflicts has been misused to grease the unfortunate perception that traditional communities are intellectually inferior and therefore cannot solve their own problems. This, of course, is nonsense. In our traditional communities, disagreements and debates

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are common features of the system of governance. The department is instrumental in assisting the communities to resolve their differences of opinion and reach a consensus on the possible course of action. My department has realised that differences of opinion, per se, are unimportant. The freedom to express those differences and the ability to settle them peacefully is more important. The department is compiling a database of qualified mediators or negotiators and retired magistrates. This database will be used to institute commissions of inquiry that are required by relevant legislation in mediating traditional conflicts. The purpose of these commissions is to assist affected communities to carefully diagnose causes of conflict, prescribe a solution, and monitor the efficiency of the prescription. Officials will assist the appointed commissioners to analyse the background cultural issues, examine all possible causes, both external and internal, make objective assessment, and propose viable solutions for implementation.

With regard to the promotion of tradition and customary law, we intend holding an indaba on various customs and traditions as a way of identifying and knowing the areas where certain customs and traditions are practiced. Contrary to the widely and wrongly-held belief, the initiation custom is not only about virginity testing and circumcision, it is also about inculcating, encouraging and promoting those values that are the cornerstone of the moral fibre of our society.

### **Premier Lionel Mtshali**

As South Africa is increasingly stepping out of isolation, the number of interactions on the international front is steadily increasing. Indeed, the area of international relations is destined to become the arena where comparative advantages will be exploited in order to secure positive and value adding relationships.

On August 29, 2001 I signed a memorandum of understanding and co-operation between KwaZulu-Natal and Shanghai. This makes provision for a collaborative approach to mutually beneficial exchange of resources and specific co-operation with the business sector. I honestly believe that the signing of an agreement with the Shanghai Mayor Xu Kuangdi will pave the way for the reduction of unemployment in the province. Chinese investments in Dannhauser, Dundee/Glencoe and Colenso/Weenen will boost development. This will have the effect of resuscitating the closed down industrial areas, in particular the Durnacol Coal Estate and will open opportunities for small, medium and micro enterprises. The agreement also provided for various other fields, for example, youth entrepreneurship and information technology.

The Chinese industrialists are considering opening a bicycle assembly plant in Dannhauser. This will be the first in the southern hemisphere. This massive investment will bring to the poor, not only much needed employment, but for the first time make it possible for everyone to be independently mobile. Transport will be affordable to everyone.

Memoranda of understanding have also been signed with Aarhus in Belgium, India and Lesotho. Preparations are underway for co-operation with Reunion Island, Austria and Maryland. These agreements will promote investments and tourism in KwaZulu-Natal.

I have set a personal goal to bring government closer to the people especially to the previously disadvantaged communities. I firmly believe that it is our duty to be a listening, hearing and responsive government. I have continued to conduct community visits and have visited the South Coast, Uthukela district, Umkhanyakude district, Izingolweni, Mzumbe, Ofafa, Utrecht, Hluhluwe, Star of the Sea and other areas.

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## **Minister of Housing, Dumisani Makhaye**

The Constitution of this country provides for everybody to have a right to adequate housing. In South Africa, with its history of racially skewed distribution of resources and the neglect of the majority of our people when it came to housing, fulfilling this mandate was always going to be an arduous task. We have been thrown into the deep end of the pool but we intend to emerge victorious.

From our humble beginnings in 1994, we have moved quite a distance in fulfilling our Constitutional obligation. Today more than five million people in our country have access to adequate housing. In most instances building these houses ensures that our people have access to clean water, roads and healthy sewerage facilities. In some areas telephones and electricity have been installed as spin-offs of these projects.

Cynics will argue that the size of these houses we have built our people is small and that they are of an inferior quality. Unfortunately these cynics, the so-called experts, have never known the deprivation and the indignity that comes with being homeless and landless in their own country. They are people who have never been embarrassed by the fact that they cannot give out their addresses simply because they do not have a fixed place of abode. But despite these utterances by our detractors we know that: Gradually we are addressing the scourge of homelessness and united in action we will emerge victorious. The department of housing in KwaZulu-Natal has contributed in no mean way to the improvement of the quality of life of our people.

From 1994 to day, we have created 224 169 housing opportunities. In the same period 90 281 actual houses have been constructed. We have also in the same period completed 155 670 serviced sites. Our delivery rate has increased by a phenomenal 80 percent for the financial year 2000/2001 when compared to the previous five financial years. While the average number of completed houses for the previous five financial years has been 10 439, in the 2000/2001 financial year this figure shot up to 18 592.

The department has set aside R37 million for rural housing projects for this financial year. But there is a perception that says that homelessness is most acute in urban and peri-urban areas. The national department and all provincial departments are grappling with this and other questions relating to the rural housing programme. Ideally rural housing projects should be implemented in line with the Integrated Rural Development Strategy. One prerequisite thereof is that departments should be clustered and work together to maximise the impact of service delivery. Since our clusters are themselves still getting off the ground, this co-ordinated approach to rural development cannot, as yet, be implemented to its maximum potential. This, however, does not mean that our people in rural areas should suffer. Indeed, the fact that 17 rural housing projects valued at R210 million were approved between December last year and July this year attests to the fact that despite these hostile conditions, we are fulfilling our mandate.

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