Democratic Alliance speech by

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DA Gauteng Member of the Community Safety

The Community Safety budget must be spent to ensure the safety of Gauteng residents

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Madame Speaker, it is very important to look at the budget in the context of how safe residents in Gauteng feel and to then ask what will be different next time around?

I believe that operations such as O Kaye Molao is a welcome intervention to address the high crime rate in all areas and we would like to see more of these interventions across the province on a more regular basis. For operations such as O Kaye Molao to be a success we must recognize that 93% budget spent is not an achievement when the other 7% could have been used to address the staff shortages that will make Gauteng residents feel safe. R68 million could have been used to fix more than 2000 broken down vehicles in the province or even add new vehicles to a diminishing fleet.

Madam Speaker, we all agree that theft and vandalism of infrastructure remains a priority and I for one welcome Minister Patel's long-overdue policy on scrap metal. The City of Johannesburg is currently hosting an Energy Indaba at the Sandton Convention Centre and we commend the support that the department has offered in addressing issues of cable theft and vandalism of municipal and all government infrastructure.

It is unfortunate that in Gauteng there is still no progress on a state-of-the-art command centre. Madame Speaker, maybe the portfolio committee should visit the Western Cape to see their multi-disciplinary command centre and what can be done if there is a political will to do so.

Last week, Member Bosch and I visited the Pretoria Central police station, and we were shocked to see the state of disrepair of the police station to the extent that detainees in the holding cells had to be moved elsewhere because of the lack of maintenance by the National Department of Public Works. It is true that this is the function of a national department, but maybe we should have a line item that can deal with infrastructure at police stations instead of underspending 7% of the budget.

We welcome the commitment to increasing the number of Green Door facilities across the province, and we urge the department to emphasize the need for ongoing training of officers and volunteers in trauma management and sensitization training at all these facilities. Also, to ensure that facilities are adequately stocked with whatever is needed for any victims of GBV and assault including the LGBT+ community counselling.

When looking at a budget we want to see progress and although this department has a long way to go, a lot of what we see is a step in the right direction, but we will continue to perform our oversight with vigour and without favour.

**Media Enquiries**

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