Democratic Alliance speech by

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No protection afforded to Gauteng residents against government looters

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**Honourable Speaker,**

**Premier David Makhura,**

**Honourable Members,**

Today, we once again meet to debate the budget allocated to the Office of the Premier.

During his State of the Province Address (SOPA) this year, the Premier alluded to the plans he has in place to ensure that we can get Gauteng working effectively and efficiently.

That the unemployment rate in the province will be reduced through various programmes, which he, along with his executive have decided will help to boost the economy; but these programmes can only work if this administration is prepared to implement consequence management to root out corruption.

Corruption over the years has run rampant within this administration and the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the deep-seated cracks in the checks and balances that have been put in place to ensure that every tender issued by the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) is transparent and corruption free.

The Covid-19 pandemic was the straw that broke the camel’s back. Officials who had interests in companies that specialized in the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) lined up to loot the government coffers.

**Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier** this is why we must have lifestyle audits as a matter of urgency.

If this is done there will be absolutely no room for officials in government departments to manipulate the system in such a way that they and their families and friends who have businesses will unfairly benefit from government tenders.

This in turn triggered an investigation by the Special Investigative Unit (SIU), for which we as taxpayers need to foot the bill.

**SIU INVESTIGATIONS**

**Madam Speaker,** this brings me to another concern, the SIU is owed R36.4 million for investigations that have been carried out by them for the province.

This has a negative impact on this entity as it relies on the state and its entities to pay for services rendered so that they can continue the important work they do.

Furthermore, it is also worrying that to date we have several SIU reports that are still outstanding.

These reports are extremely important if Premier Makhura is serious about running a government that is intent on rooting out corruption and making sure that all procurement is indeed value for money.

From what we can see, this is not the case, or do you have something to hide Honourable Premier?

If you have nothing to hide, then give us a progress report on which officials have been fired, disciplined and money that has been recovered.

Release all the reports that have been finalized so that the residents of Gauteng can know that you are serious about clamping down on corruption.

Furthermore, should your administration have implemented consequence management, the money spent on SIU investigations could have been channelled to service delivery. The money would have gone a long way in supporting small businesses to create employment opportunities for the unemployed citizens of this province.

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**UNEMPLOYMENT IN GAUTENG**

Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier, earlier this year during the State of the Province Debate, I said that Gauteng is currently going through a ‘dry white season’.

This ‘dry white season' is continuing.

Currently, there are 2.7 million unemployed Gauteng residents.

This sharp increase in unemployment is extremely concerning and it appears as if the Tsepo 1 Million programme is not making a dent in this figure.

It is high time that we see the war rooms in the province yield positive results, instead of constantly draining our coffers and not creating employment opportunities.

**Madam Speaker, Honourable Premier,** we do not need war rooms to look at ways of stimulating the economy. What we need are programmes like the Tsepo 1 Million, and the Expanded Public Works Programme to work and deliver on their core mandate.

It is very disheartening when we look at the quarterly reports that almost all the departments do not meet their set targets for job creation.

The only way that we can reduce the unemployment rate is when government creates the correct environment for investment and fosters skills that job seekers need to find long-term employment.

The time for talk is over. What we need to end this ‘dry white season’ is action. We need to see job creation that will see tangible investment in the Gauteng economy by the private sector.

In addition, we hope that through the implementation of the Township Economic Development Act more small businesses will be given business by the GPG. This will go a long way in bolstering the township economy as well as reducing the unemployment rate in the province.

**GAUTENG PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS**

**Madam Speaker,**all our government departments have a responsibility to ensure that proper service delivery takes place in the province.

Sadly, one of the departments that is failing dismally in this area is the Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development and Property Management (GDID).

Premier Makhura admitted that this department is failing to deliver on its core mandate, yet he refuses to take on board our solution to dissolve GDID and relieve MEC Motara of her duties. The DA's proposed solution to this matter would benefit all the departments as they would oversee their own infrastructure projects to ensure that they are completed on time and within budget. It would also benefit the residents of Gauteng as the infrastructure projects will be completed on time and no money will be wasted because of this department's incompetency and lack of skills to manage projects.

We cannot have another pandemic expose the cracks in this department. This department fails to manage projects and contractors properly at the peril of our residents who in turn need to seek out basic services that are far from where they live.

It is not too late for the Premier to hold his executive to account and end the ‘dry white season’ in the province.

If he fails to do so, he will not leave a legacy behind that shows he was a capable leader but one that shows that he was too weak to act when his executive failed in their duties.

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