

Speech by Siviwe Gwarube

4 October 2023

Cost of Living March

A government that does not look after the most vulnerable is government not worth having

Good morning;

Molweni Democrats;

It is good to be back in my home province.

I always feel so excited when I can come back home, but unfortunately that excitement is short lived and is replaced with a sense of anger and sadness.

It is because I am heartbroken to see what the ANC has done to this province.

A province once admired for its wealth in political talent and its potential is now broken.

The ANC has left this place with a stench of poverty, joblessness, hopelessness and corruption.

Bayitya imali yabantu bade bayosulele entloko.

Zizikhohlakali ezinjani ezibukela abantu besokola kangaka?

To imagine that some of the giants like Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki and Oliver Tambo hail from here and yet their struggle for liberation of poor black people has been made a mockery.

If only they could see what their beloved province has become.

It is a shame to see what the people of the Eastern Cape have been subjected to by an uncaring government.

The Eastern Cape is the province that has been taken for granted by the ANC.

They come to our small towns and villages to demand your vote; but will neglect you soon after.

They will leave children, abantu abadala, abantu abakhubezekileyo to fend for themselves as poverty sweeps through this province.

People are battling to put food on the table.

A family survives on iPapa and cabbage; while any meat is a luxury.

The rising cost of living, including rising food prices, rising fuel costs, and non-payment of grants, has placed an unbearable burden on the shoulders of the most vulnerable.

Statistics show that the Eastern Cape province is imprisoned by poverty.

It is estimated that more than 60% of the province's population lives in poverty.

That is 6 out of 10 who are living in poverty.

The Eastern Cape is the poorest province in South Africa and has the highest unemployment rate in the country.

These statistics are not just numbers; they tell the sad reality of what South Africa has become under the ANC government.

This is the same party that promised a better life for all in 94- especially the poor - but over the 30 years, they have become ohlohlesabo.

They could have created jobs – they chose give them to their friends

They could have cut food costs – they chose to spend money on VIP protection for themselves.

They could have slashed fuel prices – but they don't care because they don't spend their own money on fuel and taxi fare.

They could have brought down crime – but they are not the ones dodging bullets in their own communities.

They could have invested in keeping the lights on – but they have stolen the money plunging us into an energy crisis.

They could have saved South Africa – instead they destroyed it!

What happened to uMama wase Tholeni nabantwana bakhe should have never ever happened.

The lives of those innocent children and those who die of hunger are lost because of an uncaring government.

As we speak today, the price of petrol and diesel went up last night.

Soon, taxis will be notifying you that the fare is going up.

Soon, the price of basic foods will be going up – bread, peanut butter, mielie meal, sugar, baby food – will be unaffordable for most people.

The real crime is that this can be avoided.

The DA has long called for basic food items to be zero-rated.

The ANC refused!

If they are determined to starve our people; let us starve them at the polls.

The only way we have change the future of places like Butterworth and the Eastern Cape is if we remove this government next year.

It is time to rescue the Eastern Cape and rescue South Africa.

It is time to liberate the forgotten people of this province from the clutches of the ANC.

The only way we can do that is if people turn out to register in November.

Only the registered will have the power to fire this government at the polls.

Only the registered can usher in a new government that cares.

A government that is focused on cutting the cost of living.

A government that is focused on providing quality education for our children.

One that will create jobs for young people.

Fight crime and eradicate corruption once and for all!