

## **NPC welcomes Deputy President Paul Mashatile's commitment to supporting bold efforts aimed at attaining goals of the National Development Plan**

During a meeting held at the Union Buildings earlier today, the National Planning Commission (NPC) has urged Deputy President Paul Mashatile to help facilitate the **institutionalisation of long-term planning across government departments and spheres** if the country is to meet its developmental goals and improve service delivery. This was one of three issues tabled for discussion, the other two were, **social cohesion**, and the **district development model**.

The NPC is a diverse and independent planning body, comprising experts in various fields, appointed by the President to advise on the country's long-term development as contained in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030.

The work of the NPC is organised into three thematic areas focusing on the economy, social protection, as well as state capacity and active citizenry. The meeting, which was organised by the state capacity and active citizenry workstream focussed on the functioning of the state, building the leadership required by a capable and developmental state at all levels, the role of an active citizenry, institutional planning, and social cohesion and nation-building.

The Deputy Chairperson of the NPC, Prof Tinyiko Maluleke, was adamant that despite "persistent levels of inequality, and the still visible apartheid spatial arrangements, there is hope" and that hope resides in implementing the NDP.

The NPC brought the Deputy President up to speed on the following areas:

- ***Institutionalisation of Planning through the draft National Development Planning Framework (NDPF) Bill***

The draft National Development Planning Framework (NDPF) Bill aims to embed and institutionalise a coherent planning system across government and inclusive of the broader citizenry. Only such an integrated approach to planning can lead to better service delivery and the advancement of the development goals of NDP. The draft Bill centralises the NDP in the long-term planning processes of both the state and government, and envisages the NPC, as well as the DPME as key, permanent and formal planning instruments. The NPC appealed to the Deputy President, in his capacity as the Leader of Government Business, to put the weight of his office in support of the speedy passage of the National Development Planning Framework (NDPF) Bill through Parliament.

- ***Social Cohesion and Nation Building***

The NDP envisages that by 2030 South Africa will have made significant progress towards achieving social cohesion. Amongst others, social cohesion should be demonstrated through reduced inequalities, greater integration of living spaces between citizen groups, enhanced inter-group

interactions and greater employment. The NPC is of the view that the country has not made sufficient progress towards the attainment of these noble goals.

To this end, the NPC is developing a Framework for Social Cohesion, which sets out a process that aims to involve all segments of society so as to expedite the attainment of social cohesion goals set out in the NDP. The NPC Framework for Social Cohesion will propose the development of a social cohesion gauge, drawn from a variety of indicators, as a way of measuring the state of social cohesion in the country.

Since social cohesion and nation building are part of the Deputy President's mandate, the NPC has proposed to the Deputy President that a multiparty, parliamentary portfolio-type committee, focussed on social cohesion and reconciliation should be established. The NPC also proposed that social cohesion be elevated to the highest priorities of government and that it be included among the functions of the Presidency.

- ***District Development Model (DDM)***

The DDM is a relatively new operational model to improve co-ordination and collaboration among different spheres of government and stakeholders at a district level in order to accelerate development and service delivery. The NPC welcomes this timely instrument and recognises its potential to expedite the implementation of the objectives of the NDP. The NPC presented several proposals aimed at strengthening the implementation of the DDM to the Deputy President. The NPC appealed to the Deputy President, who is allocated the DDM as part of his portfolio, to accelerate the suggested initiatives to strengthen intergovernmental relations, build capacity through merit-based appointments, and separating the political administrative interface at all levels of government.

Deputy President Mashatile expressed his full support for the NPC's work, in general, and, in particular, its efforts to recentre the NDP as the vision for the country. He was unequivocal saying "I believe in long-term planning. You have a friend in long-term planning now."

He committed to assisting with the issues raised by the NPC and assured the NPC of ongoing engagement. In addition, he called on the NPC to provide advice about broader economic concerns, mooting the possibility of a 'Codesa' about the economy. Deputy President Mashatile said "We must bring all stakeholders together. We must sort out the South African economy. We can do it!"

Deputy President Mashatile also asked the NPC to advise and provide guidance about suitable modalities that will allow for stable coalition governments.

The meeting agreed that there should be a continuous working engagement between the Commission and the Office of the Deputy President by virtue of his position as the Leader of Government Business.

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