

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa.

National Assembly.

Budget Vote 28 of Police.

July 2024.

Honourable Chairperson,

We humbly appreciate the privilege to speak on behalf of the African National Congress in this budget vote of the department of Police and its entities.

At the outset, we take this opportunity to send best wishes to the newly appointed Minister and Deputy Ministers of police by the President. In the same vein, let me also congratulate the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Police for your election as a Chair.

Our firm believe is that we all understand that our elections or appointment to various positions of responsibilities in the different arms of the state is to work in an independent and interrelated manner in the service to our people.

We of the ANC understand too well that the point of departure and the point of arrival is to serve the people!

Chairperson, South Africa this year of 2024 is marking 30 years of the attainment of democracy since the inauguration of the first democratically elected president in 1994, President Nelson Mandela, Madiba.

We look back at the journey we traversed since 1994 with pride that the democratic government has changed the lives of our people for the better. We also derive some lessons from the experiences we had in addressing our challenges since 1994.

We are mindful that we are still faced with serious challenges that requires our collective efforts. In this regard, our people are concerned about the level of crime in their communities.

Our people cannot fully enjoy democracy when they live in fear. Our people cannot enjoy their rights as enshrined in the Constitution if criminals undermine those rights. Our people cannot walk freely on the streets if criminals have taken control of our streets.

The last crime statistics released by the police paint a mixed picture in the efforts to fight crime. The levels of the increase of murder crime warrants an urgent intervention.

The crime stats also reported on the decline of sexual offences crimes including, rape sexual assault and contact sexual offences. This decline is welcomed but it is not enough. We need the women of our country to live freely in the communities without fear of criminals.

We must all put an end to these criminals and their acts of criminality!

We cannot allow criminals to take control of our streets!

As part of the Portfolio Committee, we have considered and engaged on the Annual Performance of the department of Police. We acknowledge the commitment of government to reducing the levels of violent crime, fraud and corruption, both in private and public sector.

Honourable Members will bear testimony to this commitment by government to fight crime and corruption as among other things, this past week we came to learn about the sentencing of those who engaged in corrupt and criminal activities that led to the demise of the VBS Mutual Bank. We believe the police will leave no stone unturned in bringing the looters of VBS to book. Our people have lost their investments and monies in the VBS saga, and therefore justice must be served.

We have also got report in the past week that the police have destroyed more 26 thousand firearms since 2019. This is positive developments in the fight against crime, and in particular, crime related to murder.

We know too well that police alone cannot win the fight against crime. It is therefore our collective responsibilities to fight crime. The working together and resourcing of the Community Policing Forums will contribute significantly in the fight against crime.

We are encouraged that the department of police has prioritised the resourcing of the CPFs in its Annual Performance Plan.

The department as part of its priority will be focusing on Gendre-Based Violence and in this regard the SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences will be resourced as outlined in the budget.

The department will also ensure the capacitation of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, the DPCI, Cyber, multidisciplinary units as well as the capacitation of crime intelligence and skills and development.

Of importance is the capacitation of Public Order Policing to ensure public order and the adherence to law by the public in protest actions among other things.

The fight against crime and corruption requires the protection of victims on one side and witnesses or whistle blowers on the other. Victims of crime should receive the necessary support from the state so that they can get back to their lives and not live with the trauma of experiencing crime.

We have seen witnesses and whistle-blowers being murdered and some threatened. The protection of witness of crime and whistle-blowers is critical in the fight against crime and corruption. Again, we are encouraged that the department of Police has made protection of witnesses one of its priorities.

We note that the police will continue with the recruitment of more than 10 thousand police personnel in this financial year. This is important in the strengthening of the capacity of the police.

We also note the undertaking by the department to open new police stations and thus ensuring access to police services by the communities.

The acquisition and use of technology such as drones, body-worn cameras, CCTV and automated number plate recognition will further strengthen the fight against crime in a technology driven way.

Honourable Chairperson, the Operation Shanela is an important initiative in the fight against crime. This Operation should be sustained and be rolled-out to serious crime areas to ensure that our people live in harmony with one another and are not harassed by criminals.

On behalf of the ANC, we support this Budget Vote 28 of the department of Police!