

**SPEECH BY GAUTENG MEC FOR FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MANDLA NKOMFE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE TABLING OF THE 2009/2010 GAUTENG BUDGET TO THE LEGISLATURE, 24 FEBRUARY 2009**

Honorable Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Honorable Premier, Paul Mashatile

Colleagues in the Executive Council

Honorable Members of the Provincial Legislature

Members of Parliament present here today

Mayors and Speakers from various municipalities

Heads of Department, Government Officials and Leaders of our Agencies

Leaders of various Political Parties

Leaders of the business community

Distinguished Guests

Learners from various schools in Gauteng

Comrades and Friends

The People of Gauteng

*"It is important to give simultaneous recognition to the centrality of individual freedom and to the force of social influences on the extent and reach of individual freedom. To counter the problems that we face, we have to see individual freedom as a social commitment ..... Development consist of the removal of various types of un-freedoms that leave people with little choices and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency"*

*Amartya Sen (1999) Development as Freedom*

## **Introduction**

The Budget we present today seeks to embody a philosophy that lies deep in the struggle for national liberation, a struggle that have ushered in the democracy and freedom that we are all enjoying today.

It is a philosophy of people motivated by the desire as Amartya Sen said I quote to *"remove the various types of un-freedoms that leave people with little choices and little opportunities of exercising their reasoned agency"* and it in turn affirms people inalienable Freedoms, freedom of association, freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom to explore our capabilities and abilities.

Honorable Speaker, The desire to *"remove various types of un-freedoms"* by our people was informed by the understanding that *"freedom is the primary aim of development, and also the principal means of achieving it"*, meaning in order to emancipate themselves from the conditions of abject poverty, the people of South Africa must firstly strive for the attainment of political freedom and secondly for the attainment of economic freedom.

Hence immediately after the attainment of political freedom in 1994, the people of South Africa embarked on a journey to attain economic freedom, this was exemplified by the amount of zeal expressed in the Reconstruction and Development Program, a Program that seeks in the main to extricate them from the yoke of poverty and underdevelopment.

Honorable Speaker, the 2009/2010 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) Budget, we are tabling today, allocates resources in a manner that seeks to consolidate the 2004/2009 mandate and lay a firm foundation for the incoming term of office 2009/2014.

Through this Budget we seek to register and consolidate the advances we have made in realizing the Gauteng Provincial Government Five Year Strategic Priorities 2004/2009.

Honorable Speaker allow me to remind the House about the Strategic Priorities that we set for ourselves Five Years ago, namely:

- Enabling faster economic growth and job creation
- Fighting poverty and building safe, Secure and sustainable communities
- Developing healthy skilled and productive people
- Deepening democracy and nation building
- Realizing the constitutional rights of our people as well as building an effective and caring government.

As we table this Budget we are mindful of the massive progress we have registered in meeting our Five Year Strategic Priorities. As the Honorable Premier indicated in the State of the Province Address, we have indeed (as Government) honored our contractual obligation of Creating Work and Fighting Poverty.

In line with the decisions of the Executive Council and to further strengthen our efforts in consolidating and completing the 2004/2009 mandate, the 2009/2010 MTEF is guided by Four Compelling Principles

- Creating Social Security Safety Net for the vulnerable sections of our society
- Sustaining employment growth and expanding economic opportunities
- Updating the fiscal policy framework for the province
- Promote prudent management of public finances as defined in the Provincial five year plan and in 2008 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS).

## **Economic Outlook**

Honorable Speaker, let me turn to the economic outlook.

## **Global Economy**

The 2009/2010 Budget is tabled against the background of a global economy that can be characterized as the Economy in recession, the US, Eurozone and Japan are effectively in recession with the UK having formerly made an announcement in this regard in January 2009. The recession is largely because of the credit crunch that started in the US in September 2008, and rapidly spread like wild fire to the rest of the world.

The International Monetary Fund's (IMFs) world Economic Outlook Update projects that, world growth will slow from 5,2% in 2007 to 3,4% in 2008 and 0,5% in 2009, this is the deepest crisis since the Great Depression of 1929. It is expected that there will be an annual contraction for advanced economies by 2% in 2009. Growth projections for both emerging and developing countries are also expected to slow down sharply from 6.3% in 2008 to 3.3% in 2009.

Honorable Speaker, South Africa is of no exception to the devastating impact of the Global financial crisis.

The slump in the global demand has led to a collapse in commodity prices which in turn has led to a slowdown in earnings by the commodity-exporting sectors. Close to 60% of our exports were destined for the US, EU and Japan and the contraction of demand from those economies is going to have a direct impact on our manufacturers and the labour they employ (we have heard in the past weeks that some of the Platinum producing Mine are intending to retrench close to about 10 000 workers).

### **Prospects for South African Economy**

Despite our interconnectedness with the rest of the world, South Africa avoided recession due to sound fiscal management. South African economy is estimated to have slowdown to 3.1% in 2008 after an impressive growth rate of 5% in the past four years. It is estimated to slow down further to 1.2% in 2009 before it recovers to 4% in 2011. Household consumption has slowed down in response to the tighter monetary policy before the fourth quarter of 2008.

Honorable Members we provide this information not because we enjoy statistics and numbers but because of the significance of these in our circumstances (we are of the view in order for us to come with a realistic response to our challenges we need to understand the nature and depth of our challenges).

### **The Provincial Economic Outlook**

Gauteng contributes the lion's share of SA economic output and thus income, therefore any projected slowdown in economic growth implies a reduction in provincial economic growth. Over the past four years the provincial economy has average an annual growth rate of 5.9%. According to Statistics South Africa, unemployment rate was at 19.5% in 2007.

Honorable Speaker, we are aware of the difficult times we are facing and we are equally aware of the difficult times that might lie ahead, but as government we want to assure the People of Gauteng that, we remain committed to reduce the levels of unemployment and to fight poverty. And that we are on course to achieve high level of economic growth and development.

Our optimism is informed by the fact that, in the next three years the Provincial Government will invest in infrastructural Projects, valued at around R40 billion rand in transport, construction, roads and related infrastructure in FIFA World Cup, coupled with National and Local Infrastructural investment in the Province. This is expected to be a major stimulus for economic growth and development. We have also encouraged Development Finance Institutions to explore innovative ways to finance strategic infrastructural projects.

Honorable Speaker we are making all this state led intervention with the understanding that economic development as Albert Hirschman (1958) alluded, I quote " depends not so much on finding optimal combinations for given resources and factors of production as on calling forth and enlisting for development purposes resources and abilities that are hidden, scattered, or badly utilized", we are hoping that by rolling-out this massive infrastructural program economic centers that are "hidden, scattered, or badly utilized" will be ignited and channeled towards the creation of new wealth that is required to achieve high rate of economic growth and development.

If the infrastructure investment drive succeeds then it could partially mute the impact of the global credit crisis in our economy, because it is funded directly from government coffers.

Honorable Speaker infrastructure investment is our economic fiscal stimulus package (if the US and parts of EU are investing in the Banks in the form of Bail-Out, we are investing in infrastructural projects that are sustainable and have long term impact on our economy and the lives of our people). To this end, Government investment to the Expanded Public Works Program will be stepped up in the coming years to provide both necessary skills and employment.

We are working with the manufacturing sectors to develop programs to assist them on curbing potential job losses and expanding their capacity to create decent work for sustainable livelihood. We recently introduced as the Premier reflected in the State of the Province Address a support program for the ailing automotive sector.

Honorable Speaker all these things that we mentioned earlier won't happen by themselves, they need a different type of the state a developmental state, according to Roberto Mangabeira Unger I quote "a state able to formulate and implement policy with a substantial measure of independence from the interest of the propertied elite. Such a state can initiate some of the structural reforms, such as agrarian reform, necessary to National development. It can also give to an activist economic policy measure of protection against the perversities of clientelistic corruption, preventing the partnership between government and private firms from generating into straightforward collusion between business and bureaucratic elite". That is the kind of state that can take South Africa to the next phase of social development.

## **Achievements and Success**

Honorable Speaker we have indeed as the Honorable Premier reflected in his State of the Province Address we have "removed various types of un-freedoms that leave people with little choice and opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency"

Some of the "un-freedoms" that the Provincial Government was able to remove in the last five years in order for the people of Gauteng to realize their "reasoned agency" include;

## **Creating an enabling Economic Environment**

The GPG has developed and implemented a wide range of policies and strategies to stimulate and facilitate shared economic growth and development. These include:

- The Province's Growth and Development Strategy, which sets a target of 8% economic growth to be achieved by 2014 and reflects a number of key interventions and levers that GPG will invest in to reach this target.
- The 2010 Strategic Framework, which has provided the foundation for the province to host the important FIFA 2010 World Cup at international standards and in a way that leaves a lasting legacy of infrastructure development, sports development, job creation, increased tourism attraction and other economic benefits.
- The GPG's Broad based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) strategy and strategies to promote SMME's and co-operatives, which have contributed to transforming the economic sector to be more representative of the demographics of the province and to bridging the gap between the first and second economies.
- The perspective and implementation plan to build Gauteng as an integrated, globally competitive city region in which the different parts of the province complement each other to ensure greater prosperity and socially inclusivity.
- The Gauteng Spatial Development Perspective, which provides the basis for spatial planning and public and private investment in a manner that takes into account both economic and social objectives

## **CREATING JOBS-REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY**

Despite growing numbers of job seekers in the province due to in-migration and population growth, unemployment levels in the province have dropped by 6, 4% since 2003 to the current level of 19.5%. While this remains unacceptably high, it is evident that government interventions are having a positive impact.

During this term of government, the GPG created an estimated 200 000 short to long-term jobs in infrastructure development, property management, creative industries, tourism, safety and security, community development and health care. These include:

- The implementation of the EPWP created over 128 000 short-term jobs, of which 1200 were for people with disabilities. A further 30 430 people with disabilities are employed in protective workshops run by government.
- The GPG's road construction and maintenance programmes created over 6000 jobs and social infrastructure development projects created approximately 10 000 jobs.
- A total of 3474 jobs were created in performing property management functions, of which 494 were Women, 1011 Youth and 139 people with Disabilities.
- Jobs were also created in the cultural industries, safety and security, food security, agriculture and conservation, housing and health sectors

Honorable Speakers, the progress we have made in the previous years indicates that we have indeed honored our obligations (as Government) emanating from a contract that we entered with the People of Gauteng in 2004 of creating jobs and fighting poverty, and we have indeed laid a solid foundation for the next term of office to realize vision 2014.

It is this progress that makes us to unequivocally and unambiguously say that "we have removed various forms of un-freedoms that leave people with little choices and little opportunities to exercising their reasoned agency".

### **Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure**

Honorable Speaker allow me to turn my attention and that of the House to the main aspect of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Budget allocations.

The 2009/2010 MTEF budget is reflective of the five year GPG priorities for the term of office 2004/2009, which were largely about the removal of un-freedoms.

It seeks to ensure that we successfully complete our current term of governance and lay a solid foundation for the next term of government. Honorable Speaker this budget is also in line with the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement we tabled before this House in November last year.

Honorable Speaker, despite all the challenges that are facing our economy, this budget does not steer away from our commitment to the people of Gauteng of ensuring a better life for all, it is geared towards expanding the social services, that government provides to the most vulnerable sections of our society. The combined expenditure for social services is 68% in 2009/2010 and rises to 75% in 2011/2012.

The projected revenue for the 2009/2010 financial year is R59.4 billion.

This amount consists of an equitable share transfer of R38.9 billion, conditional grants of R13.3 billion, Gautrain loan proceeds of R4.2 billion from national government and the province's own revenue amounts to R3 billion. The total expenditure for the 2009/10 financial year amounts to R55.3 billion, before clearing the expenditure on Gautrain of an amount of R3.8 billion that took place in 2008/2009.

I will now focus on how the 2009/10 MTEF budget will be allocated to individual departments.

## **Department of Health**

The Freedom Charter commits us to a preventive Health Scheme run by the state; free medical care and hospitalization provided for all, with special care for Mothers and Young Children. As part of honouring those noble expectations of our people as expressed in the Freedom Charter, an amount of R308.9 million is allocated to reduce infant and child mortality.

In line with the government's priority of producing healthy, skilled and productive people, we are allocating R489.8 million over the MTEF for the treatment of the spread of the extreme and multi drug resistant tuberculosis (XDR and MDR TB), an amount of R110.2 million is allocated over the same period for the provincialisation of the TB beds.

An amount of R564.5 million over the MTEF is set aside to address the conditions of service for health care workers and the implementation of Occupation Specific Dispensation for nurses in the province. In order to make the primary health care available for the people of Gauteng, a total of R429.8 million is allocated. A total amount of R763.5 million is set aside for the construction of both Natalspruit and Chris Hani Baragwana Hospital. Chris Hani Baragwanath will be constructed through the PPP arrangement; discussions are at an advanced stage in this regard.

Honorable Speaker the budget for the Department of Health is adjusted to R16.5 billion in 2009/10 before it rises to R19.8 billion in the outer year of the MTEF.

## **Department of Education**

In the quest to improve quality and universal access to education, the nationally agreed funding of priority for the Department of Education over the MTEF relate to:

Extension of the No Fee School Policy to quintile 3 schools

Expansion of the teachers to reduce the teacher to learner ratio in Quintile 1 schools; and

Provision of inclusive education to accommodate learners with special needs in mainstream and special schools.

In the financial year 2009/10 the No Fee School Policy will cover up to 60% of total learners in the Province, the allocated amount for this purpose is R651.7 million over the MTEF.

In addition to the total R52.1 million allocated for the provision of inclusive education (2011/12), total funding available for this purposes increases to R223.1 million in the outer year.

We are further setting aside an amount to the tune of R1.5 billion over the MTEF for the Gauteng City Region Academy to ensure that we have the relevant knowledge, skills and talent required to sustain the modern economy.

An amount of R113.2 million is allocated for scholar transport; R1.1 billion is allocated for teaching support material to support New Curriculum.

An amount of R1.6 billion is allocated to the provision of school infrastructure. The Department will further receive an amount of R532 million for the expansion of the Grade R facilities to cater for about 91 800 learners targeted for 2010.

The allocation for this department is set to increase from R16.5 billion in 2008/09 to R19 billion in 2009/10. Honorable Speaker over the MTEF, we are making available a total of R63.1 billion towards the department of education. This is a practical expression of our resolute commitment to "open the doors of learning to all".

## **Department of Social Development**

Honorable Speaker as government we hold a view that early childhood education is a foundation for human beings to realize their full creative abilities, (be it in Sport, Arts and Culture and Academia Early Education matters the most). Given that understanding, over the MTEF the Department of Social Development is allocated R467.7 million towards Early Childhood Development, which will be utilized towards the upgrading of facilities to meet international standard.

The other key areas receiving funding in the department relate to implementation of the occupation specific dispensation for the welfare services, development of monitoring and evaluation capacity for the welfare services, expansion of home and community based care and expansion of services to children in conflict with the law. A total amount of R264 million is allocated over the MTEF to fund these key areas.

The total amount allocated to the Department is R6.5 billion over the MTEF.

Honorable speaker our resolute commitment to reduce the levels of unemployment, fight poverty and underdevelopment requires all of us to look beyond the fiscus to finance our developmental imperatives and to look at those sectors that we believe have the potential to unlock economic growth and development in the province.

## **Economic Development**

The Department of Economic Development continue to play a catalytic role in ensuring that the provincial economy grows at levels that are sustainable, also ensuring that necessary intervention are made towards those sectors that have potential for major labour absorption.

Key priorities for this department for the coming year are: to strengthen trade and investment, to make targeted intervention in key strategic sectors and to ensure that public entities and agencies are performing at an optimal level.

Honourable Speaker, the department's budget is expected to increase to R913.7 million in 2009/10 to R1.1 billion 2010/12 and R1.2 billion in 2011/12.

## **Department of Housing**

Honorable Speaker the provision of Housing to the People of Gauteng is one of the key tenets of service delivery, because to us (Government) housing is not only about building houses. It is also about transforming our cities and towns into homes and building cohesive, sustainable communities with closer access to work, social amenities, including sports and recreational facilities.

In line with this understanding the MTEF allocates an additional amount of R425.1 Million for such purposes.

An amount of R272.8 million is earmarked for the continuation of the Alexandra renewal project.

An amount of R152.3 million is set aside for the implementation of the identified infrastructure and other projects in the 20 Prioritized Township Programme.

Honorable Speaker the Department is allocated a total amount of R12.7 billion over the MTEF to continue to provide affordable houses and eradicate the informal settlement in our province.

## **Department of Local Government**

Local Government is a focal point of interaction between the people and Government. As such the Provincial Government through the Department of Local Government continues to lend its support to municipalities by promoting capacity through programs such as Project Consolidate and Siyenza-Manje in a systematic manner. It is with this understanding that an additional amount of R676.7 million over the MTEF is made available to the Department, of which a total of R290.9 million is set aside for key programmes including the Community Development Workers, disaster management and revenue management.

A total of R219.7 million is allocated for the Community Development Workers programme. In order to improve the municipal revenue raising capacity, a total of R31.1 million is allocated for the Revenue Enhancement Project.

A total of R40 million is allocated for the disaster management including the acquisition of a mobile disaster management centre to ensure a safe 2010 World Cup within the province.

## **Public Transport, Roads and Works**

The Department of Public Transport, Roads and Works remain central in unleashing massive infrastructural programs. It is within this context that an amount of R11.7 billion is allocated over the MTEF to fund infrastructural programs.

These programmes relate to the construction of Gautrain Rapid Link, implementation of EPWP, Road Infrastructure, Kopanong Precinct project.

The provincial allocation to augment the national funding for the construction of the Gautrain Rapid Link project totals R6.3 Billion over the MTEF.

The provincial allocation to augment the national funding for the construction of the Gautrain Rapid Link project totals R6.3 billion and a total of R1.6 billion is allocated to augment the road infrastructure conditional grant over the MTEF.

## **Community Safety**

The department of Community Safety receives a total allocation of R189.9 million for funding provincial key programmes over the MTEF. These programmes include implementation of the road safety projects and promotion of good community and policy relations.

In enhancing our road safety programme, an amount of R38 million is allocated in 2009/10 which rises to of R39.7 million and R41.6 million in 2010/11 and 2011/12 respectively.

The department further receives a total amount of R35.8 million for safety promotion through Ikhaya Lethemba that provides a comprehensive package of services for abused children and women. To further assist in the victim empowerment, funds totalling R4.9 million are allocated for the reconceptualisation of the decentralised victim empowerment model.

## **Agriculture, Conservation and Environment**

A total allocation of R506.8 million over the MTEF is set aside for the provincial key programmes including agriculture priorities and projects such as waste minimisation, agro-processing and homestead gardens.

A total of R103.6 million is earmarked for the implementation of the integrated waste management (including air pollution minimisation) practice in the province. For its contribution to the Gauteng Development Strategy, agro-processing is allocated R65.1 million.

An amount of R1.5 million is allocated for continuation of wetland rehabilitation projects.

The other allocations relate to the implementation of the essential oils, floriculture, and biotechnology projects and agricultural hubs (R9.3 million).

As an attempt to encourage the community to produce food for their homes, an allocation of R7.5 million is made available for the homestead gardens projects.

In order to assist vulnerable farming communities to increase agricultural production by 10 to 15 percent, the illima/ Letsema Projects have been introduced, an amount of R2.5 million in 2009/10 has been set aside for this purpose before it rises to R10 million in 2010/11 and R20 million in 2011/12 respectively.

## **Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation**

The department receives a total allocation of R148.2 million for funding the provincial priorities over the MTEF.

In relation to the implementation of the Integrated Sport Development Policy Framework a total of R18.2 million is allocated for the sports academy, R21.9 million is allocated for the SoccerEx, R19.2 million is allocated for the Under 17 Soccer Championship and R30 million is allocated for the competitive sport.

The Creative Industries Development Strategy that aims at developing artists, communities, networks as well as arts and cultural events is allocated R6.6 million. Funds totaling R36.2 million are allocated for the craft projects, music and performing arts as well as commemorative days and events.

In relation to the 2010 World Cup Strategy an amount of R3 million is allocated for 2010 World Cup Framework implementation and a total of R13 million is allocated for the communication and marketing.

## **Gauteng Shared Services Centre (GSSC)**

The GSSC receives total allocation of R3.8 billion over the MTEF, out of which a total of R1.6 billion is set aside for key programmes including the Gauteng On line, e-government services and IT security services.

Funds totaling R1.2 billion are allocated for increasing access of schools to computer services through the rollout of the Gauteng On line. In order to improve the stakeholder access to government information and services from a central point, a total of R313.9 million is allocated for the e-government services. The GSSC receives a total of R151.9 million for the IT security to safeguard government information.

## **Gauteng Treasury**

The Gauteng Treasury receives total allocation of R660.8 million over the MTEF, out of which a total of R243.8 million is earmarked for the Gauteng Fund Project Office that explores alternative ways of financing strategic infrastructure projects in the province. The department also receives an amount of R14 million over the MTEF through infrastructure conditional grant amounting to monitor infrastructure development and implementation in the province.

## **Baseline Adjustments**

Departments are allocated R4.3 billion over the MTEF to address all aspects of personnel policy. This amount, which is included in the current baselines, caters for the general salary increases, carry through costs for personnel and increase in departmental establishment. Adjustments to baseline amounts took full account of anticipated cost increase on goods and services, consistent with the outlook for inflation published by the National Treasury.

## **Office of the Premier**

Funding made available to the Office of the Premier over the MTEF relates mainly to the building of Gauteng as a Global City Region and the mainstreaming of youth services. Funds totaling R29.1 million have been allocated for the establishment of Global City Region Observatory.

Funds gradually increasing from R41.7 million to R43.6 million annually from 2009/10 to 2011/12 have been allocated to the Gauteng Youth Commission to implement the youth-related activities in the province.

## CONCLUSION

Honorable Speaker, this is the Sixth budget that we are tabling to this House during the Third Term of our Democratic Legislative Session. It is therefore a bridge between the Third and the Fourth term of the legislature.

Honorable Members would have noticed that in presenting this Budget we have made available resources in a manner that seek to consolidate the Five Year Priorities of the current term.

We have also allocated resources in a manner that give the next term of office a space to maneuver and put their own priorities.

We are acutely aware that the challenges we face are enormous and that resources at our disposal are never enough to meet the needs of the people.

Nonetheless we are confident that, this Budget is a step in a right direction and it will go a long way in "removing various form of un-freedom that leaves people with little choice and opportunity in realizing their reasoned agency".

We wish to urge Departments to identify efficiency gains to improve budget outcomes and deliver more efficient public services. By identifying leakages or inefficiencies in the system departments will be able to direct resources towards core service delivery items and reduce "non-essential items". Efficiency gains can be achieved through reducing activities such as limited usage of consultant, improved contract management, consumables, travel and subsistence, marketing and advertising, non-essential telecommunications, entertainment costs.

The identification of efficiency gains exercise aims to achieve more and better results for the public using the same level of resource, not by making cuts in services. It is critical for the accounting officers and chief financial officers to ensure that efficiency agenda forms part of core departmental planning and performance management process.

As we complete the 2004/2009 Election Mandate and prepare for the next term of office 2009/2014, let us recall the inspiring words of our former Head of State President Mbeki during the 1999 inauguration of the President of the Republic of South Africa, using a metaphor of A Comrade Marathon he said I quote *"those who complete the course will do so only because they do not, as fatigue sets in, convince themselves that the road ahead is still too long, the inclines too steep, the loneliness impossible to bear and the prize itself of doubtful value"*

Honorable members, as Representatives of the People of Gauteng, we must together run our own Comrade Marathon, as Comrades who are ready to take to the road together, refusing to be discouraged by the recognition that the "road is too long, the inclines very steep, the loneliness impossible to bear and the prize itself of doubtful value".

## Acknowledgements

Honorable Speaker, let me take this opportunity to thank the Premier Paul Mashatile for his visionary leadership. The Premier continues to be the pillar of our strength in the Executive Council.

I wish to thank my colleagues, Members of the Executive Council for their continued support to my Department.

I also wish to thank, our provincial head of treasury, Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala and her team for the good work they continue to do as well as the prudent management of our resources.

My appreciation also goes to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Honorable Bheki Qhude'limzwezwe Nkosi, for the constructive manner in which he continues with the department. I appreciate the support of all members of the Finance Committee. Your wisdom has brought considerable strength to our financial process.

My appreciation also goes to my wife Nomalanga for her on-going support. Let me also thank my Family and Friends for their support and encouragement.

I wish to acknowledge the presence on this House of learners from various schools in Gauteng. Many of these learners have taken part in an essay competition on the provincial budget organized by Gauteng Treasury.

I wish all those who took part in this year's competition all the best in their studies this year, after the session in the House I will be awarding prizes to the learners who wrote best essays. These learners wrote on, "How can the Gauteng Provincial Government Spend Resources/Money to improve the conditions of the Gauteng Citizens"

Honorable Speaker, I now present to the House the following documents for consideration.

- The Appropriation Bill for 2009
- The Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill
- Budget Statement 1, 2 and 3
- The Budget Booklet
- The Socio-Economic Review
- A copy of my Speech

Ke a leboga