



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPECTATIONS OF THE STATE OF THE NATION
ADDRESS**

STATEMENT FOR THE BUSINESS DAY

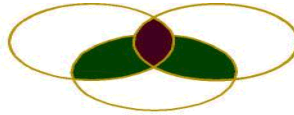
08 FEBRUARY 2011

Local Government has over the past 10 years made significant strides towards service delivery and infrastructure development. However the sector is still beset with significant challenges. With the country looking at a new term and leadership for Local we are expecting a huge Local Government focus in the President's address, giving directive towards better coordinated programmes.

We expect that the President will acknowledge the concerns of South Africans about the functionality and performance of municipalities and address the increasing temptation to roll back our decentralized form of government in which Local Government occupies a position of a strategic interface between government and communities, and is responsible for delivery of services that are linked to the management of built environments. We hope that The President will call upon South Africans to resist this temptation as a decentralized form of government is the backbone of our democratic governance system.

SALGA would like to see a number of Local Government priorities lifted, such as:

- The LGTAS has identified a number of policy and legislative amendments aimed at streamlining the LG system. An important component of the LGTAS is the requirement that all of government must cooperate with each other and with local government in order to enable LG to deliver optimally to its residents and communities
- National, provincial spheres of government and SALGA should **work together to develop and implement an effective programme of induction for new councilors and guide new local leaders to establish effective systems of governance** in their municipalities soon after they take office.



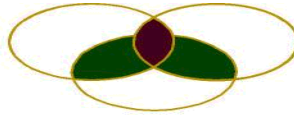
- **Building of local economies to create more employment and sustainable livelihood** through the development of strategies to engage meaningfully with the private sector and positioning Local Government as a facilitator that creates an enabling environment for socio-economic activities to thrive.
- **Strengthening community participation and citizen empowerment** through mechanisms that ensure that inputs made by the community are included in the municipal planning processes and progress is monitored effectively. Improved Municipal communication should be a priority with Councillors ensuring that public participation does not become a mere compliance issue.
- Working towards a **more effective and accountable local government**. Municipal councils should commit to professional administrations and ensure that appointments to the administration have the necessary qualification and experience to fulfil their obligations. The lines of command between politicians and administrators should never be blurred.
- **Human and Community Development** must be at the forefront during this new term of Local Government office. While South Africa has made steady progress in increasing the number of women in political office, including local government structures, progress still needs to be made to realise an enabling environment that promotes full and effective participation in decision-making, policy-making and service delivery. Active participation of people with disabilities in the 2011 local government elections as election candidates should be a priority area.

The progress made by Local Government should be noted.

The proportion of households with access to basic water infrastructure increased from 88.7% in 1994 to 100% in urban areas and 82% in rural areas in 2009. The proportion of population with access to sanitation facilities in 2008 was 79% in urban areas and 46% in rural areas while the proportion of households using bucket systems has been reduced by almost half from 12.5% in 2002 to 7.7% in 2008. The proportion of households with electricity reached 82.2% by 2008.

While housing is not a municipal function, municipal leaders are concerned that their constituents must live in sustainable, resilient communities. There has been an improvement in the delivery of housing between 2002 and 2009. In 2009 75.5% households were living in formal housing compared to the 73.7% in 2002.

Acknowledge that despite ongoing concerns, evidence from government-linked and independent research institutions alike, suggests that significant progress has been achieved by our municipalities.



SALGA

South African Local Government Association

Local Government is at a pivotal moment and the challenges that we have noted are not without solution, however cooperation between spheres has proven to be a serious instigator behind Local Government woes with a lack of understanding of the sphere itself. Key to government's drive should be the prioritizing of cooperation between spheres to ensure that delivery programmes are interlinked and promote the development of communities.

We expect that the President will call upon South Africans to come out in their numbers to elect capable councilors that will effectively serve their communities.

ISSUED BY:

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