



water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
AFFAIRS, MRS B E E MOLEWA DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE PAUL ROUX –  
BETHLEHEM BULK WATER SUPPLY PROJECT**

**THE 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014**

*Programme Director*

*Honourable Ministers*

*Honourable Premier and M E C 'S present*

*Dikgosi and traditional Councils*

*It is indeed a moment of joy and pride, to stand here before you together with my Cabinet colleagues and provincial leadership at all levels as we celebrate the launch of yet another momentous achievement in the history of our democracy.*

*There is a popular saying “straight talk doesn’t break any friendship”. I feel it is important to reflect back to our dark history in order to appreciate how far we have come as a nation. We have fought very hard and diligently for our democracy to be where it is today. We have made sacrifices along the way for the sake of everlasting peace and the dignity for our people.*

*Who will ever forget the sacrifices by our predecessors to get us to where we are today. Stalwarts like the late great Chief Albert Luthuli, through to our revered Nelson Mandela, Oliver Reginald Tambo, Walter Sisulu and many others come to mind. The list is endless.*

*Today I am proud to be one of the leaders in this beautiful country of ours, one of those who have come before you, most importantly to add our voices to the good story that*

*the ruling party, the African National Congress through its President His Excellency Jacob Zuma, is telling after 20 years of freedom and 20 years in government. Remembering where we come from is important, so that we can appreciate the road we have traversed so far.*

*Just how "miraculous" was South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy, I dare ask?*

*A lot of naysayers, from here and abroad, expected to see anarchy and mayhem reign supreme when our country took to the polls in 1994. Following a series of tense negotiations and years of liberation struggle, including that most senseless act of the killing of one of our most respected heroes Chris Hani; an act that brought this country closest to a civil war than all the actions of the previous years combined, it is now a known fact that there was a collective resolve to hold the first democratic elections even sooner, which elections were held on the 27th April, 1994. This election changed the history of South Africa. It paved the way towards a new democratic dispensation and a new constitution for the country. For the first time all races in the country were going to the polls to vote for a government of their choice, the final step to freedom.*

*It is now history that the African National Congress won those elections and has been running the country for the past 20 years. **We have a good story to tell.***

*By electing the African National Congress to govern, by way of a truly democratic process, South Africa embarked on a journey of revolutionary change from apartheid to democracy. We moved together as a people and a country, from being a pariah amongst the nations of the world, to one recognised around the world as a country that is exemplary in a lot of ways, most of all as one that epitomises forgiveness and reconciliation. For Africa, it was the completion of the liberation of a continent; for the world, it was the final repudiation of racism.*

*By finally consigning that ugly word – APARTHEID – to history, South Africans were on the verge of creating a good life for themselves; a life that would see the rate of poverty diminishing with the ultimate goal being complete eradication; a life that would see the restoration of dignity to our people. Within our Constitution we enshrined rights that*

*would see our people receiving basic and many other services aimed at bettering the lives of South Africans.*

*As a people we embarked on creating a life where our kids can get education; a life where most of our people will get employment, be able to open businesses without fear. A major right also is that of our people being able to live at a place of their choice.*

*We are here today to raise the profile of the delivery we are making with regard to the promises we made since we took over government in 1994. The launch of this bulk water project is just but one of the many achievements of our government in the last 20 years.*

*This beautiful project we are proudly launching here today will add to the many others around the country aimed at creating a better life for all South Africans. This we do as we ensure that our mandate of providing clean drinking water to all is realised.*

*The Department of Water Affairs (DWA) has provided support to Dihlabeng Local Municipality (DLM) through the implementation of the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) Programme. This project is now complete, operational, thus we are here to launch it today.*

*The Department of Water Affairs (DWA) is the custodian of water resources in the country as guided by legislative mandates. The DWA also renders support to local government through its Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG), the purpose of which programme is to supplement the financing for the development of the regional bulk water infrastructure and regional water treatment works as well as regional waste water treatment works.*

*Working together with Dihlabeng Local Municipality (DLM), the DWA has recently completed the bulk water scheme from the Saulspoor Water Treatment Works, via the newly built Morelig pump station, a 17km pipeline in the westerly direction to the new Meyerskop pressure break tank, whereby water is fed by gravity through a 30km pipeline along the N5 highway to Paul Roux.*

*Here where we are today, at Paul Roux, a new 48 hour reserve reservoir has also been built. I was overjoyed this morning to visit the reservoir, cutting the ribbon and unveiling the plaque, together with my Cabinet colleagues and the Premier.*

*Ministers and Premier, as a result of this new scheme, Paul Roux and its settlements will no longer be dependent on ground water which was found to be high in manganese and iron, thus posing health risks to the inhabitants. The scheme will also allow for future developments.*

*I am glad that today we are here as well as the Water and Sanitation Troika, with the primary objective of together working towards the total eradication of the loathed and unhealthy bucket system in the country. The Ministers that spoke before me have already correctly spoke to this objective and ideal. Yes, we are here as a sign of active Co-operative Governance together with our provincial and local government colleagues.*

*It is proper and important to raise and emphasise the fact that the Departments of Water Affairs, Human Settlements, and Corporate Governance and Traditional Affairs have entered into an agreement with Bloem Water to be an Implementing Agent for the Free State Water and Sanitation Programme, with the aim of ensuring the rapid eradication of buckets sanitation system in the province. This is meant to emphasise the points already made by Ministers September and Tsenoli on our collective responsibility.*

*The Paul Roux Bulk Water Supply Scheme (BWS) is implemented to ensure a sustainable and long term solution for the water supply problems that had been experienced in the Paul Roux / Fateng-tse-Ntsho region. The supply problems are due to the fact that the boreholes which were used were not sustainable and also contaminated with Manganese.*

*The scheme comprises with number of components which include; construction of a 2M<sup>l</sup> reservoir at Paul Roux, a 300k<sup>l</sup> pressure break tank at Meyerskop and a pump station at Morelig reservoir, construction of rising main from Morelig pump station to Meyerskop pressure break tank and construction of gravity main from Meyerskop to Paul Roux reservoir. The cost of this project is R 70 291 088.*

*The second phase of the project includes the construction of a bulk water supply pipeline to Rosendal and another one from Bethlehem to Fouriesburg.*

*Before the total completion of the project water was already being provided to Paul Roux and Fateng-tse-Ntsho from 28 August 2013. We are proud of the fact that this scheme will also ensure that the town of Paul Roux and its settlements, which used to experience iron and manganese above the SANS 241 standards as I indicated earlier, has found the necessary relief. The water quality in this area now complies with the prescribed standards. The scheme is now able to meet the demands of the community in line with the RDP standards. I am proud to announce that water supply in Paul Roux is no longer a problem.*

*The purpose of the project is to ultimately supply 2 Ml/day of potable water to a population of 9 002 people in approximately 2 828 households, allowing for an increase in the average consumption per capita from 99 l/c/d to 148 l/c/d over a 30 year time horizon.*

*In 2010, the DWA Free State Regional office completed an investment framework for water and sanitation services which identifies and quantifies the water and sanitation project interventions required. The required investment and the interventions required is estimated at around R9,6 billion.*

*The Dihlabeng local municipality participates in the Blue and Green Drop verification systems. The municipal score for this Water Service Authority increased from a 4.90% in 2010, to 30.76% in 2011 and an impressive 68.59% in 2012.*

*Paul Roux currently receives water from Bethlehem Water Treatment Works. The plant is registered and approved as class B with a design capacity of 40 000 cm<sup>3</sup>/d. The system is currently on 99.0% and 99, 9% compliance for microbiological and chemical parameters respectively.*

*It is pleasing that the municipality is actively monitoring the quality of water and data is submitted to DWA on a monthly frequency for all the water treatment works within*

*Dihlabeng LM. DWA together with the commitment of the municipalities are working towards the improvement of the requirements for Blue Drop.*

*Extensive support was rendered through several supporting programmes from 2010-2013 to the WSA's within the FS Province to improve the Blue and Green Drop compliance.*

*On-going and progressive work on operation and maintenance (O&M) plans in the municipalities of Kopanong, Metsimaholo, Dihlabeng, Mangaung and Maluti-A-Phofung are being carried out. These O&M plans assist and address gaps within the municipality so that improvement and efficiency in operation and maintenance of the infrastructure can be realized.*

*I want to make a special appeal to our communities to be jealous of their infrastructure and to protect it from vandals and from those few individuals who are not interested in seeing any progress. Those are the first people to incite you to engage in protests that destroy the very infrastructure aimed at improving lives. We need to be careful who we listen to and who we believe.*

*I want to condemn the actions of those who mislead members of the community and encourage them to destroy basic infrastructure and blockade roads simply for the reason of wanting to blackmail and undermine the work that government has already done.*

*We will equally not tolerate individuals who misuse the right to protest by misleading our communities while they push their own agendas.*

*Let me also emphasize that there is visible delivery in most areas in the country. Government has demonstrably outlined its long term plans to supply water on a long term basis to all our people. This is a fact that members of the communities are aware of, and government will make sure to provide adequate support to municipalities across the country to ensure that operation and maintenance of this infrastructure is at its optimum.*

*We are indeed on the right path and working tirelessly in crafting innovative and creative ways of providing water to un-served areas and communities. We believe in carrying out the mandate of our department as effectively and efficiently as possible.*

*Part of our ideal as we push on with our mandate, we hope and believe that this bulk water scheme will also create a conducive environment allowing economic development projects in the area.*

*In the words of President Jacob Zuma in the foreword of our ruling party manifesto document (The ANC Manifesto), we are now entering the second phase of democracy in which we will implement radical socio-economic transformation to meaningfully address poverty, unemployment and inequality.*

*This manifesto ladies and gentlemen is aimed at successfully continuing the good story of the last 20 years.*

*In the next five years, we will build on the progress made in implementing our 2009 Manifesto priorities:*

- Creation of more jobs, decent work and sustainable livelihoods for inclusive growth*
- Rural development, land reform and food security*
- Education*
- Health*
- Fighting crime and corruption*

*Ladies and gentlemen, in three weeks' time we will again be going through the process of choosing a government to lead us for the next five years. I urge all of you to go out in your numbers and vote for your favourite party in the upcoming May 7 elections. Your vote remains your secret.*

*The Good story Continues. From our perspective as the sector leader for water access, what we are about is **“Celebrating 20 Years of Water Delivery for Social and Economic Development”** even as we know that **“Water is Life, Respect It, Conserve It, Enjoy It”**.*

**I thank you.**