



## water affairs

---

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SPEECH BY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MRS EDNA MOLEWA, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE PILANESBERG BULK WATER SUPPLY SCHEME, NTSWANA LE METSING VILLAGE, MOSES KOTANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

**DATE 23 APRIL 2014**

*Programme Director,*

*Honourable Premier of the North West, Mme Thandi Modise*

*MEC's and members of the North West Legislature here present*

*Mayor of Moses Kotane*

*Executive Mayor of Bojanala Platinum District*

*All Mayors Present here*

*Our Traditional Leaders*

*Councillors, CEO's of Water Boards and Mines*

*All government officials here present*

*Members of the media*

*Ladies and gentlemen*

*It gives me great pleasure to be here today for the launch of the Pilanesberg Bulk Water Supply Scheme. It is indeed a great day for the people of Ntswana le Metsing and the communities present here to be gathered in this manner to celebrate the end of hardships you have experienced for some time in terms of access to water. This project is certainly going to change your lives and open new doors for you in all areas of your live. Life in this area is, indeed, not going to be the same again.*

*During the North West Service Delivery Summit in July last year, I acknowledged that the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality has the highest water backlog in the province requiring R404,8 million. Ngaka Modiri Molema is second with a backlog worth R273.8 million. Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality requires R39.77 million to address its backlog, while for Dr Kenneth Kaunda we need R16.48 million. In other words, we require over R734 million to deal with water backlog in this Province alone. I also said then, as others have also indicated, that the track record of our government during the past 20 years of our democracy shows that no amount of backlog will make us fail our people. We are determined, as we have already demonstrated, to address the backlog and to cater for the new water needs of our people.*

*As you may be aware, it was in recognition of this challenge that the Department of Water Affairs spearheaded the establishment of a special grant, the Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant. This Grant targets communities without any safe drinking water at all, like those that will*

*benefit from the project we are launching today. Although the intention of this grant is to provide interim services to the affected communities whilst they are waiting for services that are in line with our RDP standards, it is also designed to address the challenge we face, the challenge of ageing infrastructure. We have allocated an amount of R6,2 billion over the MTEF, with the focus falling on the 23 District Municipalities identified by our President through Cabinet. A total of R122 million has been allocated for the North West Province over the MTEF period.*

*Ladies and gentlemen, sustainable water is a collaborative undertaking between government and all our people and I am very pleased that both our government and its people are added in this equation. The project we are launching today highlights the necessity for government, private sector and the general public to come together to provide and sustain equitable water supply to all. I consider it highly significant that the impetus for this project embraces this principle of working together and has responded to our call for collaboration in this manner. A partnership approach is vital to the achievement of universal access to water and, in this regard, I want to reiterate my sense of gratitude to all those who are partnering with us to ensure that the water we are transferring here reaches its target consumers and is sustained for many years to come. This is the reason we have come here today as leadership from all three spheres of government, the traditional leadership, private sector – the mines – and representatives from the water sector in general.*

*When I visited the Pilanesberg Bulk Water Supply Scheme this morning, I realised and am convinced that indeed this is one of the Bulk Water projects that we should celebrate. It fits well into our theme of*

***“Celebrating 20 Years of Water Delivery for Social and Economic Development”*** that we have adopted to mark our contribution to democracy as a Department and as a sector. It has all the ingredients of a working democracy and a government geared towards the wellbeing of its people. It shows the understanding of the social and economic needs of its beneficiary communities. Apart from addressing household water supply, it is structured to boost the local economy by supplying the growing mining industry with the highly needed water.

*This project is financed through our flagship programme of Regional Bulk Water Infrastructure Grant and it comprises of a number of components. These include raw water supply system, the upgrade and extension of the Vaalkop Water Treatment Plant and the bulk treated water supply system. Since August 2012 when the project was started, the mining activities and population growth in Bojanala Platinum District have increased the demand on bulk potable water supply for industrial and domestic use, hence the project was refined to a bigger project that it is today. This is one indication of our determination to ensure that economic growth in this district is not stymied or derailed, as well as ensuring that there is no unhealthy competition for water between industries that bring jobs to us and our poor communities.*

*The beneficiaries of this project, therefore, range from households, businesses and large industries such as mines. Of the additional 25,550 million m<sup>3</sup>/a, (70 Mℓ/d), we are going to allocate 36.2 Mℓ/d to the mining fraternity and reserve the balance of 33.8 Mℓ/d for the municipal areas. A total of 57 villages will benefit from this project in the municipalities of Moses Kotane, Rustenburg and Thabazimbi. In other words, the North West and Limpopo provinces stand to benefit from the water coming from this project. This will ensure a more sustainable supply of water for*

domestic use, thus reducing the dependence of villages solely on sometimes scarce water from boreholes. This is what we mean by **“Celebrating 20 Years of Water Delivery for Social and Economic Development”**.

*In the long term, this project must make huge impact to the population of **758,864** living in the 184,008 households in the Rustenburg, Moses Kotane and Thabazimbi Municipalities. I’m told that 13 452 job opportunities have been created thus far and we are determined to increase this number. I am also informed that four more mines will be developed. This will increase job opportunities for people in the area, contribute towards the economic growth of the area, and contribute towards meeting the national economic targets set by government.*

*In this regard, I want to thank all our partners in this project who have demonstrated beyond reproach that water is everyone’s business. I would like to send my sincere gratitude to the four – Boynton, Platmin, Maseve and Wesizwe - new platinum mines which are partners in the implementation of the Pilanesberg Bulk Water Supply Scheme. I’m sure that if the mines were not involved in this bulk water supply scheme, water for urban and domestic use would be very expensive. Due to their involvement, the incremental cost for other users will be more affordable. That has lessened financial hardships for our people. We appreciate the mines for pumping at least R190 million to date for activities such as the feasibility study, design of all infrastructure components of the scheme, 30 km of 750 mm diameter steel pipeline between Padda and Tuschenkomst and the 35 Mℓ reservoir at Tuschenkomst.*

*I also want to thank the implementing agent of this project, Magalies Water, which provides bulk potable water for industrial and domestic use from its Vaalkop Water Treatment Works to the towns of Rustenburg, Mogwase, Thabazimbi, Northam, and a number of large platinum mines in the Boshhoek, Rustenburg and Northam areas. The same water board also supplies a number of rural and peri-urban villages, situated in the areas of jurisdiction of the Moses Kotane, Thabazimbi and Rustenburg Local Municipalities with potable water from the Vaalkop Water Treatment Works.*

*As we celebrate this launch today we must also remember that our rights to this infrastructure come with our collective responsibility as the community to protect and preserve it so that it can serve us better and for longer.*

*We have made great strides to restore the dignity of our people since the demise of apartheid two decades ago. As you may remember, only 59% of the population had access to water when the new democratic order came into being. The bulk of the remaining 41% was obviously in the less developed and mainly rural and black domains.*

*We have since ensured that the issue of access to water is recognised in and amongst ourselves as a human right. This therefore necessitated its inclusion as a recognised basic human right in our final Constitution as presented to our Parliament in 1996.*

*We have moved in a positive direction since then bringing us to 95,2% of our population now being able to access this resource. We have challenged ourselves that we shall not rest until even that last 4,8% of our people are able to access water; it is everyone's right and is in our collective national interest. We are also aware that at least 10% of our existing infrastructure in experiencing a number of challenges and we are attending to that problem with all our partners and it will soon be a thing of the past.*

*Indeed we celebrate this launch under our banner that also celebrates our twentieth democratic anniversary thus: **“Celebrating Twenty Years of Water Delivery for Social and Economic Development”**.*

*Bagaetsho, we will continue to make sure that the promised level and quality of services to you are always of the highest possible standard. Please take care of the infrastructure given to you. Be vigilant to water illegal connections. Report pipe leakages, burst pipes, dams and river pollution.*

*I thank you.*