



women, youth &  
persons with disabilities

Department:  
Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Private Bag x 931, Pretoria, 0001, 36 Hamilton Street, Arcadia, Pretoria

Tel: 012 359 0071/2, Fax: 012 323 5954

---

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR MINISTER  
IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MME MAITE NKOANE-  
MASHABANE**

**05 MARCH 2021**

**NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY (NYP) 2030 LAUNCH**

Programme Directors;

Hon. Deputy Minister in the Presidency, Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize;

UNFPA Country Director. Ms Beatrice Mutale;

UNICEF Representatives;

Distinguished Guests Representing the AU Commission, Her  
Excellency Sarah Anyang- Argbor;

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, The Rt Hon Patricia  
Scotland QC;

Executive Director at the NYDA, Ms Palesa Notsi;

President of the SA Youth Council, Mr Thembinkosi Josopu;

The Youth Portfolio Chairperson of the Black Business Council,  
Mr Thobela Maponya;

Members of the National Youth Policy Technical Reference  
Team;

Representatives of Civil Society Organisations;  
Young People of our country;  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour to have all of you join us today, as we launch the National Youth Policy 2020-2030. I wish to acknowledge the presence of our Distinguished Guests and partners from the United Nations Populations Fund Agency, AU Commission, SADC Secretariat, and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Your attendance today demonstrates the commitment of multilateral organisations to working with us to achieve the development and empowerment of our youth.

In his State of Nation Address earlier this year, His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa said that, *“the year ahead must be a time for change, for. It must be a year in which we rise”*.

Ladies and Gentlemen

These profound words are aptly captured in today’s occasion of launching our third National Youth Policy, for the period 2020 to 2030. As we mark this year as a year for change, progress and, rebirth, in line with the theme of our recently approved National

Youth Policy, we continue to rise in marking this as **“A decade of accelerating positive youth development outcomes.”**

We are reminded of translating into tangible actions, the promising direction contained in this policy document of promoting positive youth development outcomes.

That promise, represents change the youth of South Africa have been yearning for years, to rid themselves from poverty, unemployment and inequality.

It also represents progress made in dealing with the many persistent challenges which our youth continue to face on daily basis, ranging from slow poor quality education; slow and staggering pace of economic transformation and job creation.

These challenges were made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic; social ills such as Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, and many others.

Finally, the promise of the ‘*rebirth*’ represents our country’s youth development institutions and a battalion of patriotic youth, all ready to build a cohesive and progressive nation with their sweat of hard work.

Distinguished Guests,

We can attain all these promises, if we can understand the urgency with which empowerment of our youth ought to be accelerated.

We must endeavour to address the risk factors which hinders development of our youth, while nurturing protective factors which will increase their positive outcomes, which acknowledges that our youth are:

- Competent;
- Have ability to work collaboratively for the greater good;
- Respect and affirmatively respond to differences among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and traditions;
- Are able to act in ways that best ensure current and future physical health for self and others;
- Are resilient and can respond to and cope with positive and adverse situations;
- Use critical-thinking and creativity in problem-solving;
- Are willing to gain functional skills necessary for employment; and
- Are aware of their progress in life and have expectations of continued progress in the future.

This is the same message we heard when we criss-crossed the length and breadth of the country, talking to young people during the nearly year-long consultations.

Our youth said, *“equip us with quality education, skills and second chance opportunities to fight poverty, unemployment and inequalities that continue to strip us off our dignity.”*

It is a hopeful message, which remind all of us to be of service to our youth by, attending to issues that continue to rob them of their potential to make meaningful contribution in co-creating a prosperous South Africa and better world.

This message of hope must inspire us, in the midst of the horrendous youth unemployment statistics that were released almost a week ago by Statistics South Africa.

We have heard the extent of the damage made by the Covid-19 pandemic on our economy, as youth unemployment stood at 52%. These numbers should not depress us into inaction.

They should strengthen our resolve to accelerate implementation of economic reconstruction and recovery plan through mass employment programmes, as provided for within the second pillar of the National Youth Policy.

We will not spare any effort in ensuring that all the necessary measures are in place to advance empowerment of our youth.

Therefore, as a department, we stand prepared to ensure development of regulatory frameworks, tools and plans to monitor and evaluate implementation of the National Youth Policy. These are significant resources, to ensure that we fully account in all that we do.

Programme Directors;

Today, I would like to reiterate that – we have heard the voices of our youth during the consultations and public participation, hence we ensured that this policy captures their aspirations and interests.

As we launch it, we recommit to play our part in addressing the issues that face our youth. As government, we are ready to walk with you to deliver the vision contained in this document and also to deliver on the vision of our National Development Plan of eliminating poverty, unemployment, and reducing inequality by 2030.

We are mindful that we cannot reach these goals alone. Therefore, our government calls on civil society, private sector,

development partners at national and international levels, to come on board to assist in making our dream a reality.

*They say, “if I tell you my dream, you might forget it. If I act on my dream, perhaps you will remember it, but if I involve you, it becomes your dream too.”*

My expectation, from all of you is that, with this tool in our hands, let us strive for nothing, but positive change and gains for all young people. This includes, a young man; a young woman; and youth with disabilities.

Our role must be to ensure that a young girl move out of the kitchen to be decision maker in the Board Room; a young man stop wandering in the streets of a township into gainful employment as a successful entrepreneur; and our youth with disabilities need to instil hope to their able bodied counterparts.

Collectively, we can do this if like Mme Makgomo Charlotte Maxeke, we can cherish the values of creating a better future for our people with dedication, commitment, sacrifice, loyalty, respect, selflessness and patriotism.

Let me conclude with words from one of our premiere icons, the late former President Nelson Mandela: *“It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another”*. We dare not fail our youth, let’s make South Africa’s National Youth Policy 2030, work and change the lives of our youth in a significant way!

I Thank you!