



**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS DIPUO PETERS,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE 2016 OCTOBER  
TRANSPORT MONTH IN MMOROGONG VILLAGE, MOSES KOTANE  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY NORTH WEST.**

**Date:** Saturday, October 01, 2016

Programme Director,  
Deputy Minister of Transport, Me Sindisiwe Chikunga;  
Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Transport  
Members of the Executive Councils  
Members of the Provincial Legislatures  
Your Worship the Mayors and Members of the Mayoral Committees  
Distinguished representatives of local government  
Director-General of the Department of Transport  
Provincial Heads of the Departments of Transport  
Representatives of the State Owned Companies and agencies  
Members of the South African Police and Traffic Police  
Members of the media  
Ladies and gentlemen

I am pleased to address you today on the occasion of the launch of the 2016 October Transport Month programme.

The full programme of the October Transport Month will be made available on the websites of the Department of Transport, Provincial Departments of Transport, municipalities and State Owned Companies and agencies. I encourage all stakeholders, including members of the media and the public, to follow the programme, and participate in the scheduled activities across the country.

Programme Director,

This occasion gives us an opportunity to reflect on the current state of transport in our country as we continue to pursue many endeavours to ensure that all South Africans have access to decent, quality and affordable transport infrastructure and services.

We also meet here at the end of the month marking our annual Heritage Month which was celebrated under the theme 'Celebrating our Human Treasures by Asserting our African Identity'.

Equally for us in the transport fraternity, in September we also celebrate the World Maritime Month. The theme for this year "Shipping: indispensable to the world".

While there is nothing wrong with reviewing the journey we have travelled up to now, we must do this mindful of the challenges that lie ahead of us.

A resilient and fast growing economy is at the heart of our radical economic transformation agenda and our National Development Plan (NDP) and transport remains at the heart of our development, because transport is the heartbeat of the economy.

Government is investing in the transport sector as part of the country's Nine-Point Plan to stimulate development and create jobs. Our public transport investments are part of building and operating an integrated public transport network across the country.

The country's transport investment will help grow the economy and address the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. Our investments in transport are positioning the country as an attractive investment destination.

When the economy grows fast it delivers jobs. Workers earn wages and businesses make profits.

The tax base expands and allows government to increase the social wage and provide public transport, education, health, social grants, housing and free basic services faster and in a more sustainable manner.

Our economy has been facing difficulties since the financial crisis in 2008 and as a country we embarked on an aggressive infrastructure development programme to stimulate growth.

Our reality right now is that global growth still remains muted. Financial markets have become volatile and currencies of emerging markets have become weak and they fluctuate widely.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Department of Transport occupies a peculiar role that cuts across almost every aspect of people's daily lives. People need transport and roads to go to work, businesses, church, parties, holidays, shops and to socialize.

As the Department of Transport we have an humongous task of ensuring that the infrastructure is maintained, upgraded and built in addition to providing a safe, reliable, affordable and convenient transport.

During the Transport Month, the Department of Transport, provincial transport departments, State Owned Companies and agencies, as well as the private sector and other critical stakeholders seek to highlight the advances we have made while, at the same time, remain focused on the challenges before us.

The transport portfolio does not exist in isolation, but as an integral part of the economic and social fabric of our country. It is for this reason that our programmes and interventions should also seek to meet or stimulate the attainment of other national policy goals such as:

- Job creation and poverty eradication;
- Redress apartheid spatial development;
- Local economic development and regional integration;
- Safety of all users of the different modes of transport; and
- Skills development.

The vision of the Department of Transport which entails making transport the heartbeat of the economy and social development should always find expression in the attainment of these national goals. These outputs and outcomes should foreground all government's programmes or projects, without exception.

The theme of this year's Transport Month is "Together we move South Africa Forward." Our programme this year will showcase transport infrastructure projects, promote the use of public transport and advance the country's road safety initiatives.

This theme is significant to all stakeholders as the quest for safe and reliable transport is not only confined to government to all South Africans, be they individuals, public or corporates. It also cut across the entire value chain of the industry, which includes road, rail, maritime and aviation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Congestions on our roads and road accidents necessitate that we place major emphasis on land transport.

Human factor attributed as the most contributory factor of these crashes. Most of these crashes are characterised by speeding, overtaking in the face of oncoming traffic, hit and run and driving under the influence of alcohol and not wearing seat belts.

This is not acceptable, and decisive interventions are been implemented to deal with this scourge.

As we always declared that road safety is everyone's responsibility, whether you are a vehicle driver, passenger and pedestrian, our law enforcement officers are directed always to be on high alert, to be visible and to patrol all known hazardous areas

Today, I reaffirmed that the government of South Africa, through our law enforcement agencies, will continue to ensure that we get-ride of bad elements on our roads who continue unabated to cause unnecessary pain to families and hurt the South African economy because the majority of people who get involved in the majority of these crashes are young people, who are bread winners in their families and who are still economically active.

We are at the final stages to complete our National Road Safety Strategy, which clearly articulate our road safety plan and those of our stakeholders to fight this scourge of road fatalities. We have engaged in this struggle together with many stakeholders including faith based organisations, road freight associations, the taxi industry, artists and others to inculcate a culture of road safety awareness. The intention of the Road Safety Strategy is to highlight the main factors which are often the root cause of carnages in our roads.

On the legislative side, our intention to introduce AARTO is to address this situation by encouraging responsible driving habits and adherence to traffic laws amongst the motoring public.

The Department of Transport, through all its road entities, led by the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), in collaboration with the South African Police Services (SAPS) are determined to reduce this unacceptably high number of crashes and deaths on our roads and All our provinces have put in place plans to ensure that we achieve a 50% reduction in fatalities and crashes based on last year's figures.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Road Accident Fund (RAF) reaffirmed its commitment to being the country's social security safety net that covers and consols those tragically maimed on South African roads. RAF continues to deliver services to many, many road users in a tough operating climate, where legalistic hurdles have not hindered operational achievements.

The fund remains a beacon of hope to the distressed and destitute victims and families of those affected by death and injury on our roads. Claims expenditure grew to R32.3 billion and over 8,414 funeral claims were paid by the RAF in the past financial year and this serves as a candid reminder of how necessary it is for all of us to reduce the frequency, severity and impact of crashes in South Africa.

The excellent performance of RAF justifies our call for the implementation of the no-fault need-based scheme, the Road Accident Benefit Scheme (RABS). This performance is indicative of our belief that we can do without a middlemen when rendering services and support to victims of car crashes who need help, now and into the future.

Having said this, work being done in the aviation industry is commendable. Airports Company South Africa's network of airports are all becoming vital centres and catalysts for economic growth, as well as access hubs for the rest of the world. They are being transformed into multi-faceted, world-class, global gateways for travel, trade and commerce. As a result, business opportunities abound, particularly in property, retail and advertising.

Our applied concept of the 'aerotropolis', whereby a range of manufacturing, logistics and commercial facilities, complemented by hotels, retail outlets, entertainment complexes and offices are clustered around our airport will accelerate the core role of our airports, particularly for the King Shaka International Airport and its associated

Dube Trade Port and the drive for an aerotropolis surrounding O.R. Tambo International, which is directed by Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

This will ensure that our airports further adds towards their aeronautical income derived from regulated tariffs as well as for their non-aeronautical revenue which includes ACSA's expansion of its international operations.

At the same time, a lot of work is being done in the maritime industry to change and improve things in that industry. Under Operation Phakisa, led by the South African Maritime Service Agency (SAMSA), there is a national drive to resuscitate the SA Ship register and results are starting to come through. Consequently, a group of local and international investors have combined to operate South African flagged ships. Currently there are three ships that has registered on the South Africa register (Cape Orchid, Cape Enterprise and Oliphant).

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University working together with SAMSA took a lead in the establishment of the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI).

SAMSA in partnership with Department of Higher Education and Training implemented a National Cadetship Programme which was funded by SAMSA and some elements of it were funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF). The programme has been a resounding success and had addressed the entire backlog that was as a result of the lack of berth. One hundred and twenty four (124) cadets were placed on eighteen (18) partner vessels of which the highest, fifty (50) were aboard Seaspan ships.

His Excellency President Jacob Zuma, in his State of the Nation Address in February 2012, announced a massive infrastructure programme with transport as one of the key drivers of the economy. Amongst others, the infrastructure programme is foregrounded in the following principles:

- Improving infrastructure links with rural and poor provinces;
- Scaling up investment in infrastructure across the country;
- Balancing the development of new infrastructure with the maintenance of the existing one and;
- Addressing capacity challenges and improving coordination and integration.

As part of the infrastructure programme, a significant amount of financial resources have been allocated to the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) to acquire new rolling stock over a ten year period. As you may be aware, the current rolling stock is more than fifty years old, and it is no longer viable to meet current and future social and economic realities of a changing South Africa. The acquisition of the new rolling stock will also include the upgrade of the current rail infrastructure, including stations in our main cities and towns.

The Moloto Road is notoriously known as the road of death and we are going to transform it into a road of hope. As you might know, this road is known for crashes, bus accidents, injuries and death. It is used by almost 150 000 commuters daily. It has not been upgraded for many years. According to statistics, between January

2012 and May 2014, there were 489 crashes on Moloto Road that resulted in 158 deaths and 594 serious injuries.

However all this will soon change because we will modernise the road which will be a part of the Moloto Road Development Corridor which will also include an investment in passenger rail to offer commuters a safer, faster and more accessible connection between Mpumalanga and Gauteng.

PRASA and China Communication Construction Company Limited have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to explore areas of possible cooperation on the planning and implementation of the Moloto Rail Corridor Initiative. The refurbishment of the road will take five years to complete and will amount to about R4.5bn. Five thousand five hundred (5500) jobs will be created.

In the short term, immediate measures will also be undertaken to improve safety and reliability of our trains. This massive investment in the rail infrastructure is also expected to reduce congestions on our roads and the cost of road maintenance.

In the Eastern Cape Works and Wild Coast Project, SANRAL has completed road infrastructure of about R1,4bn by the close of the 2014/16 financial year. SANRAL is now busy appointing service providers for the construction of two new mega-bridges that will bring communities closer to each other, as well as other urban centres such as Mthatha. The mega-bridges are part of the N2 Wild Coast Toll Road project that will include nine major bridges, three interchange bridges and new roads.

There is currently work taking place in the N3 route, which is the busiest road freight corridor in South Africa. The work is estimated to cost about R8,3 billion and the upgrading of the N3 is important as one of government's strategic integrated projects linking the Port of Durban with Gauteng is to succeed.

In the N1 north, is the SANRAL building a ring road around the town of Musina that will cost about R700 million. The reason for this road is that traffic volumes have rapidly increased in recent years causing severe congestion for road users and major safety concerns for the small town of Musina. These high traffic volumes have caused conflict with local traffic movement and complaints from local residents, business and communities about safety, access to business premises and lack of parking. This ring road will also significantly reduce traffic pressure on the border town.

The Department and the affected State Owned Companies will contribute to pursue these initiatives as part of the Presidential Infrastructure Co-ordination Commission (PICC) which is hard at work to ensure that we move with the necessary speed. The PICC framework gives us a blueprint of transport projects over the next few years in the spheres of roads, rail and public transport infrastructure development and services.

Programme Director,

Like arteries carrying life-giving oxygen, the national roads network which spans the length and breadth of South Africa is the lifeblood of our economy.

Almost all sectors of our economy use roads to transport goods across the country. A significant amount of goods are transported by road and this will continue to increase until we make necessary interventions, more pressure will be exerted on the current road infrastructure and will lead to further congestion, and consequently the cost of goods and services.

The length of national roads falling under the authority of SANRAL has trebled in 18 years. On 1 April 1998, SANRAL managed 6 622 kilometres of national roads. As at 1 September 2016, the roads agency is responsible for 21 946 kilometres of national roads which needs to be maintained from time to time.

Through the S'hamba Sonke Programme government is working to maintaining the provincial road networks. Successful roads projects completed over the quarter include 155 392 m<sup>2</sup> of pothole patching completed; 767 kilometres of roads have been re-sealed with 10 355 kilometres of roads re-gravelled; and 76 350 kilometres have been bladed. The S'hamba Sonke Programme while giving new life to South Africa's roads and improving access to socio- economic facilities is also providing job opportunities to rural communities. An amount of R31.4 bn has been allocated for maintenance of secondary network - Rehabilitate roads, re-seal surfaced roads, maintenance, patch blacktops; and blading and re-gravelling of gravel roads. About 126 594 jobs have been created thus far.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of the accelerated rollout of Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks (IRPTN), currently 4 cities (Johannesburg, Tshwane, George and Cape Town) are operating carrying 130 000 passenger trips. An additional 5 cities are expected to commence services in 2017 - Polokwane, Mbombela, eThekweni and Ekurhuleni will spend a combined R2 bn from September 2016 onwards to begin operations of brand new networks from July 2017.

Nelson Mandela Bay developed a turnaround plan for the Libhongo Lethu network to operate from April 2017. Additional 500 operating jobs will be created when the new 5 cities start services in 2017. Approximately 500 old vehicles will be removed and up to R200m in compensation will be paid to former SMMEs who are affected.

The Polokwane Municipality, as one of the 13 cities identified to implement the IRPTN, has been involved in public participation processes in pursuit of finding a suitable name for their public transport system. The Municipality engaged with different stakeholders, residents and ratepayers through various platforms to get the community to participate in nominating names and ultimately voting for their favourite system name. Finally, the name Leeto la Polokwane was preferred by the people of Polokwane.

It is envisaged that government's approach to the taxi industry and public transport in general will include encouraging the banks and others in the financial industry to invest and support the growth of the industry.

The taxi industry is a big money spinning industry that we cannot overlook. It is used by 68% of the population and plus R40billion per annum is generated by the taxi industry. The Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP), which aims to replace old

taxis with new and safety compliant vehicles is still ongoing and the department remains committed to its original goals and objectives.

The Taxi Recapitalisation Programme Review which is evaluating the programme's sustainability, affordability has been finalised. The department is currently undergoing a consultation process on its recommendations with provinces and the taxi industry. The report will then be presented to Cabinet by December 2016. The inclusion of the mini-bus taxis in the subsidy scheme will foreground government's approach to the post recapitalisation programme. Government is committed to make this a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Government we have listened to citizens' concerns in the implementation of the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project which has boosted the Gauteng local and thus the national economy and improved the lives of all road users in the region.

The new e-toll dispensation was concluded after comprehensive consultation through the advisory panel that met with communities, stakeholders, interest groups and experts, and only after it was attended to at the highest level of government through the intergovernmental committee led by the Deputy President.

As part of our broader consultation, it was recommended that elements of the system should be reviewed to address the negative impacts. The panel further recommended a hybrid funding model which includes the e-toll system with reduced tariffs and contributions by national and provincial government.

In conclusion, I wish to encourage all stakeholders and the public to participate in the activities of the October Transport Month. Let us use this opportunity to look back as we plan ahead.

I wish to thank the Department Transport, SOEs and agencies, as well as the provincial departments of transport for making it possible for us to develop this programme. Special thanks to the Deputy Minister of Transport and the MECs for your continued support and assistance.

**ENDS**