

His Honourable Minister Sicelo Shiceka Ministry of  
Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
Government of the Republic Of South Africa

**His Honourable Minister Sicelo Shiceka  
Ministry of Cooperative Governance and  
Traditional Affairs Government of the  
Republic Of South Africa**

---



**DEPARTMENT OF CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Private Bag X804, Pretoria, 0001 Tel: (012) 334 0600, Fax: (012) 334 0603**

**Cnr Hamilton and Proes Street, Arcadia, Pretoria**

---

**Keynote Address by the Honourable Minister Sicelo Shiceka to the  
2010 Biennial Conference of the Local Authority Action for  
Southern Africa – Bristol. U.K**

## INTRODUCTION

---

**Madam Chairperson, the Rt Honourable  
Aileen Colleran, Chairperson of LAACTSA**

**HE Mr Christopher Davis Lord Mayor of the  
hosting City of Bristol;**

**HE Snr Antonio Gumende, High Commissioner  
of our neighbour Mozambique, location of  
Beira -the sister City to Bristol;**

**The Esteemed Sarah Hamlet, of GLADE  
(Global and Development Education)**

**The Esteemed Laura Shore, Deputy Head of Luckwell Primary School  
(representing the school highly involved with twinning partnerships-  
which we value)**

**The Esteemed Libby Ferguson from the Local Government Alliance for  
International Development - UK**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

I bring to you warm greetings from the land of Nelson Mandela, our first president in the democratic South Africa.

I am most honoured to be here.

I was asked to address you about the three-fold role and challenges of **local government, local democracy** and **local delivery** in South Africa.



**HE MINISTER S.SHICEKA: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND  
TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

As well, I am bid to also talk with you, distinguished guests, about the role of international solidarity in support of local government in our region, Southern Africa.

Before I do so, I have a confession to make about the theme of this august occasion.

The theme: "***Southern Africa and Britain: local government, local democracy and local partnerships***" is one for which I carry an immense passion.

I find it both appropriate and exciting within the context of current government business in South Africa.

Madam Chairperson

I am excited also because the theme coincides ***ncamashe!*** with our present business back home.

Our government is presently seized with a vigorous effort to

- fortify ***local government*** to enhance its capabilities to better apply and bring into reality our call for a better life for all of our people;
- to deepen ***local democracy***, for the benefit of our citizens so that they optimally enjoy the fruit of democracy, and lastly though not least;
- to actively engage the citizens into ***local partnerships*** so that, as their tool, government can become the instrument through which they can meaningfully determine and own the course of their daily lives.

While we are passionate about this as I said, it is more the case in respect of the rest of our region, Southern Africa.

Madam Chairperson and distinguished guests

As I share with you our experience, I must from the onset declare that we do not own the patent of wisdom on the subject under discussion.

Indeed, Madam Chairperson, I share our experience only to invite views that can improve upon our efforts.

I recognise and pay homage to my regional counterparts; acknowledging that we are each of us autonomous, independent states.

Fated to have a shared history of artificial impoverishment, our region shares a common set of historical problems. I choose not to go into that history, as I believe that you are all familiar with it

Now, as leaders in our region, we also share a mutual imperative to respond progressively to the challenges that confront us – even as we appreciate the support we have been privileged to enjoy from the “**Local Authority Action for Southern Africa**”, this noble organisation I am today honoured to address.

We must also applaud the Bristol Council in this regard, and its continued support – through the twinning with Beira municipality, a city in Mozambique – a neighbour with whom we enjoy a warm relationship, as my colleague and friend HE Snr Antonio Gumende, I’m sure will attest.

More particularly, I would be amiss if I did not express our appreciation for the support we have enjoyed from the “**Local Authority Action for Southern Africa**” **itself**, during our strife-ridden past and beyond, since the past fifteen years of our nascent democracy.

## **Local Government - the South African Experience.**

Informed by a vision which, as I confessed earlier, coincides with this occasion’s theme, our government designed a pathway to transforming local government to become

**“AN INTEGRATED, RESPONSIVE AND HIGHLY EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY FOR OUR PEOPLE”.**

### **HOW WE DEVELOPED THE STRATEGY**

The strategy was designed following an intense engagement starting right at the grassroot level of the local municipal sphere, where:

- **We conducted provincial assessment of 283 municipalities (representing just under 4000 wards) across all 9 provinces;**
- **This enabled us to compile a comprehensive report on the objective state of local government;**
- **Next, we designed the Local Government Turnaround Strategy, driven by the mantra “local government is everyone’s business”**
- **This was followed by the legislative, process with cabinet adopting both the State of Local Government Report (SLGR) and The Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS)**
  - *Triggering a **10 Point Plan** and a **performance measurement system***
  - ***An Implementation Plan for the Municipality Turnaround Strategy (MTAS) and Guidelines for the implementation phases from 2010 to 2011.***

- Then followed the devolution process, with recommendations on priority interventions, but requiring that each of the 283 municipalities develop its own Turnaround strategy.

## **OUR CURRENT STATUS**

One may ask, madam chairperson, why this turnaround strategy?

What happened after the successful change from the inequities of apartheid and a world acclaimed first class constitution.

We have indeed been through all of the above, madam Chairperson.

Yet in the fifteen years since, we did see significant victories. This does not blind us to the weaknesses we are experiencing. To do so would be to court calamity!

Our local sphere of government is seriously dysfunctional. It is for this reason that we characterise it as distressed, madam chairperson.

To explain this phenomenon, makes me invoke the loquacious Mr Winston Churchill in a not dissimilar context, when he said "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

## **WHAT ARE OUR CURRENT CHALLENGES?**

From the objective analysis arising out of the assessment process, we identified the following challenges:

Our government was fraught with **systematic dissonance**; this is a function of the two-tier system of representation, a limited or often non-existent municipal revenue base, ward and municipal demarcation faults, etc.

**Inappropriate legislation** is out of kilter with objective municipal conditions; often legislation proved over- or under-regulated in respect of municipalities, rendering their application adverse to flexible service delivery and developmental aspirations;

We often have to contend with **inter- and intra-political conflicts** in the political arena, making for polarised debilitating relations, to the much preferred more sanguine approach to leadership matters;

**Ineffective accountability systems**, also impact adversely on performance management systems, with poor community participation mechanisms and lack of proper oversight at governance level;

**Capacity and skills deficit** in state officials at municipal level, especially in the remote rural and small towns;

A weak, fragmented and often **incapacitating state of intergovernmental support** structure, further contributes to the problems of service delivery in municipalities;

**A poorly designed Intergovernmental Fiscal Regime**, with limited impact on its poverty alleviation objectives, and the unintended consequence that it results in deepening grant dependency by citizens, undermining self-sufficiency aspirations of municipalities;

### **WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?**

We have identified the following key Turn-Around Interventions:

- **Institutionalise party and inter-party good practice in the political discourse**
- **Develop tailor-made TAS's in Municipalities**
- **Mobilise communities into ward & street committees across all 283 municipalities**
- **Mobilise and deploy State Owned Enterprise resources towards community building, fostering sound relationships**
- **Enhance oversight responsibilities for provinces**
- **Harmonise intergovernmental relations across the three spheres**

### **HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO IT**

Guided by the objectives and framework described earlier, we have designed a structured process-map that may be described thus:

**A national command centre (the National Coordinating Unit), at national level consisting of a**

#### **RAPID RESPONSE TEAM;**

with a swift lead time to intervene, check, and correct any deviation from plans;

#### **A Support Capability;**

dealing essentially with the sleek administration of the systems, the logistics of a fine-tuned machine to ensure effective management of the centre; it is also suggests a very strong communication and intelligence capability that will ensure optimum support for the unit;

#### **A Provincial Implementation Unit:**

Consisting of experts responsible for the technical work identified. Guided by the outputs in the 10 Point Plan, resources will be deployed to transform the local sphere of government, with the outputs measured according to the performance matrices devised for the purpose.

**A Work Team:**

That consists of all service providers and technical personnel (e.g. citizens, engineers, investors, financial, human resources, etc) will be part resource capacity available to the Units at the different spheres, ready to be deployed where needed.

**TIMELINE LGTAS - ACTION PLAN**

With the above arrangements, the implementation plan looks like this:

No	Task or event	Responsibility	Timeline
1	<b>Government considers and approves plan</b>	Cabinet	Done
2	<b>Develop and customise Municipal TAS's</b>	All 283 municipalities	Jan – March 2010
3	<b>Government Depts. &amp; SOE's include plans in Municipal IDP's</b>	All state departments and SOE's	Jan – March 2010
4	<b>Finalise individual municipality TAS's</b>	All Municipalities	End March 2010
5	<b>Launch &amp; Implement Good Citizenship campaign centred on governance values</b>	COGTA National	March – April
6	<b>Municipal IDP's are adopted</b>	All municipalities	June 2010
7	<b>Establish monitoring structures at all levels of government</b>	Wards, municipalities, districts, provinces, national	June 2010
8	<b>Implement municipal TAS's</b>	All municipalities – with backing from provincial	

	<b>(revised &amp; budgeted)</b>	and national government	July 2010 & beyond
<b>9</b>	<b>Regular progress reports submitted by municipalities</b>	All municipalities	Monthly
<b>10</b>	<b>Report back on IDP programs &amp; projects to all stakeholders (communities, wards, state departments, etc)</b>	All wards	August - Sept 2010
<b>11</b>	<b>Cabinet &amp; Provincial Executive Councils gets quarterly reports on 10 Point Plan</b>	COGTA	quarterly

#### **SOME EXPLICATORY NOTES**

- ✓ **As a rule, the LGTAS and 10 Point Plan are standard agenda items on all structures of Inter-Governmental Relations meetings;**
- ✓ **IDP's stands for Integrated Development Plan, and is a mandatory requirement for municipal plans, requiring a strong Local Economic Development (LED) component in the activities of the municipality.**
- ✓ **10 Point Plan – On 03 June 2009, the incoming President, Mr J. Zuma made an urgent call for the speedy implementation of the 10 Priorities of the Medium Term Strategic Framework. As with the rest of the other state departments, this involves COGTA in work that it has to do. The LGTAS addresses that directive in part, leading us to the following priorities:**
  - a. Speed up growth, transform economy, create decent work and sustainable livelihoods**
  - b. Massive programs to build economic and social infrastructure**
  - c. Comprehensive rural development strategy linked to land and agrarian reform an food security**
  - d. Strengthen the skills and human resource base**
  - e. Improve the health profile of all South Africans**
  - f. Intensify the fight against crime and corruption**
  - g. Build cohesive, caring and sustainable communities**
  - h. Pursuing African Advancement and enhance international cooperation**

- i. **Sustainable Resource Management and use**
- j. **Building a developmental state, strengthen democratic institutions and improve public services**

## **HOW DOES IT COME TOGETHER**

### ***Local democracy:***

Through the process of IDP approval, where members of the public will be required to make inputs that determine the customisation aspect of the different localities, measures will be in place – including **legislatively enforced** measures – to ensure that public engagement from ward level, upwards, does occur.

The alienation experienced by citizens, the distance they feel from their leaders – a function of capacity problems, sheer laziness and incompetence in most instances – will be addressed through government legislation that ensures accountability and the recall of non-performing municipalities.

Without a healthy awareness of their rights, indifference often sets in - and we talk then of poor voter turn-outs – and citizens disengage. They then find time for all manner of mischief – crime, addictive substance abuse, etc. Then general social decay sets in next!

An awareness campaign to correct these aberrations will enhance our chances to ensure non-performing councils are held to account by the citizenry.

The community mobilisation, steered from COGTA, is a very critical part of these processes, and will be driven through all wards ( in number 3385) each averaging about X number of people.

### ***Local partnerships:***

The integration of state owned enterprises, state departments and the private sector (the latter through direct calls of involvement in the effort), with the envisaged activities, will be conducted in terms of the requirements in some of the interventions of the LGTAS – especially in regard to governance and fiduciary probity – and will create a buzz of activity, stimulating employment and business opportunities.

Together with the hype of awareness created from the preceding mass-based mobilisation campaign, the public involvement at grassroot-level in the IDP and LED **(both policies are under review in the present government – the aim being to**

**improve them in many key areas to better achieve the developmental goals intended at their initiation)** process and other ad-hoc opportunities that may arise due to the changes mooted above.

The ground will be fertile for substantive partnerships to take root.

At a spatial level, a demarcation process is under review. It is informed by the vast disparities within and between local communities.

We have a much skewed demographic dispersal of our people in South Africa. About 80% live in areas of abject poverty, with scant resource, if any.

A weak or non-existent tax-base, leading to the continued under development, threatens our precious democracy.

Often, we hear cries of "***We can't eat democracy. So, of what use is it ?!***" Misery and dejection is their daily life.

The "wretched of the earth" - as Franz Fanon would put it.

## ***Local Delivery***

### ***Madam Chairperson***

In recent times, we have had a spate of protests that have been characterised as service delivery protests. Indeed, we have a huge service delivery backlog that we have begun to address.

Earlier, I listed the areas that largely contribute to the distress our municipalities face due to a faltering of our service delivery standards.

We are currently in the early stages of the accelerated service delivery program that also involves supporting the vulnerable.

Some of the focus areas, of which I will cite a few, include

the area of **municipal infrastructure and basic services**. Using the IDP's as a basis, we are developing a **coordinated model** that will speed up service delivery.

We are also **coordinating the various infrastructure grants** for each of the municipalities.

we will complete the **rollout of the infrastructure plans**, part of our key intervention strategies, the year 2012 being our milestone

the **national investigation** on service delivery status, backlog and progress - currently underway - has 2011 as our milestone.

There is also the concurrent process of **developing a framework to ensure the monitoring - and enforceability regime of performance measure mechanisms earlier alluded to - of service delivery** by Ward Committees, Community Development Workers and the Institutions of Traditional Leaders.

In terms of the currently very inefficient Planning Practices for the MIG, we are working to establish a framework that is more effective for the management of municipal grants to the indigent; this is coupled to an audit of selected MIG-funded projects;

We are reviewing the different roles of the economic sector and State Owned Enterprise players in order to identify potential benefits that can be leveraged with the Local Economic Development plans of the municipalities.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, all the above issues have a timeline and a specific operations plan, including all the normal detail about resources, performance measure, risk minimising precautions, etc.

I can assure you that government is determined that all that we have said to-day must and will happen.

Of Course, Madam Chairperson,

We are indeed also looking at the World Cup we are hosting to help make a difference in the lives of our people.

Kick-Off, as you know, is just a few weeks away.

And yes! Ladies and Gentlemen, we are ready!

In terms of our service delivery obligations here, we are all actively involved with every aspect of planning for the event: we are ensuring that the host Cities and Provinces.

Government is also supporting the provinces and cities to create conditions for sustainability and long term legacy projects. We want to ensure that the benefits from this rare event can be enjoyed also by future generations.

Madam Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen

I was also called upon say something about support possibilities for our region around developmental matters.

In this regard, I would propose that the theme of this event to be considered as one within which support is sorely needed.

The context of such support may locate within the issues I have covered under the subjects of the theme: *Local Democracy, Local Partnerships and Local Delivery*.

Many opportunities abound in these stubborn challenges.

Whereas it may apply to our country - in that we have shared our developmental plans with you to-day – we would take the attitude that the thinking around this matter be broadened to include those in need around our the rest of our region Southern Africa.

While themed as it is, obviously our own LGTAS would not necessarily be applicable across the Region, given our unique circumstances as autonomous states. However, we would not be averse to the idea of our framework being used as a case study.

The modalities of the support may then be determined on these premises. All parties may then contribute, enrich customise as fit the program of assistance that may be desired.

**In regard to our LGTAS, Madam Chairperson, we are resolved to succeed and invoke the words of Mr Winston Churchill for inspiration, when he said - and I paraphrase:**

**“Only as high as we reach can we grow, only as far as we seek can we go, only as deep as we look can we see, only as much as we dream can we be.”**

**I Thank You!**