



GOVERNMENT DIALOGUE

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

by President Jacob Zuma

All eyes on President Zuma's State of the Nation

The first State of the Nation Address of a democratic South Africa was delivered by founding President Nelson Mandela on May 24 1994, ending with the words "Let us all get down to work".

Nearly 20 years later, on Thursday February 13 2014, the eyes of the nation will be focused once again on the State of the Nation Address – delivered this time by President Jacob Zuma whose term of office since 2009 is drawing to a close. The theme for this year's Address, "Working Together We Have Done More", reflects government's pride and confidence in what it has done since 2009 to change lives in South Africa.

President Zuma is expected to reflect on his administration's record of

delivery since 2009 – a record that builds on the work done since 1994, as anticipated by Madiba, to create a non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous South Africa.

President Zuma will most likely pay tribute as well to Madiba, whose release from prison 24 years ago, on February 11, was marked this week.

The 2014 State of the Nation Address is an important calendar item in the year in which South Africa is celebrating 20 Years of Freedom and in which South Africans will return to the polls on May 7.

Over the next few weeks, our attention will shift to 27 April 1994 – a day that formally signalled South Africans' triumph over apartheid.

The celebration this year of 20 Years of Freedom means different things to different people. For many it is an opportunity to celebrate the South African story while for others it will be a time to analyse what this means in terms of our achievements as a country.

Without a doubt, South Africa is a much better place than what it was in 1994. As a country and as government, we should be proud of the increased access to basic services for our people, and of a united nation. But our work is not done yet. Inequality, poverty and unemployment still remain and we cannot rest until the lives of all South Africans have been improved.



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Over the past five years, government has focused its implementation and the attention of the nation on the five priorities of employment, education, health, the fight against crime and corruption, and rural development and land reform.

One of former President Mandela's passions was education and access to decent education. The best way to honour Madiba is by continuously improving our education system.

The yearly increase in learner enrolments and Matric pass rates is an indication that those who are involved in education are working hard to change the face of our education system.

This year, two new universities will be opened in the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga respectively, and 12 Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges (formerly called Further Education and Training colleges) will be opened in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

However, much more still needs to be done to ensure that we produce skilled individuals who can grow the South African economy.

On Thursday, 13 February President Jacob Zuma will deliver his sixth State of the Nation Address (SoNA). Since 1994, the SoNA has become a celebration of our nation, a time for us to collectively take stock of how far we have come and an opportunity for public participation in the State's ceremonial activities.

It is an election year and as such there will be another SoNA after the national and provincial elections. On 7 May, the day of the elections, we must all go out in our numbers to exercise our democratic right that was fought for by countless individuals.

As public servants, we have a duty to encourage those around us, particularly the youth, to cast their vote and show their appreciation for the freedom and democracy that we enjoy today. Our responsibility as public servants to work even harder to improve the lives of all South Africans in our respective areas still remains. We must work together to implement Vision 2030, as contained in the National Development Plan.

This year, let us all become active citizens and vigorously participate in solutions that will take our country forward.



13 February 2014 at 19:00

Broadcast live on television and radio.

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Working together we have done more!