

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **BUDGET VOTE SPEECH 2013/14**

MEC for the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mosebenzi Zwane, tabled his budget for the 2013\14 financial year with a theme “Jwale ke nako ya kotulo” meaning, it is a season of harvest. Men and women in uniform from the department of Police, Roads and Transport started the day with a drill march leading the two MEC’S to the stadium with excited locals enjoying the spectacle. The joint budget speeches were held in Ventersburg on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

The 2013/14 budget speech gave expression of the policy statement and how it will change our economic landscape of the Free State. Confirmation of the statistics released by the Stats SA announced that formal and informal non-agriculture employment in the Free State has risen by an encouraging 1 000 and 7 000 jobs respectively in the third quarter in 2012.

Dressed in his traditional Zulu attire, MEC Zwane assured the acting speaker of parliament of the work in progress at DETEA. The work in progress includes the following: Establishment of 4 buy-back centers, Establishment of 5 waste recycling centers on landfill sites in the Free State and Support to Free State Business. All these projects will be launched before the end of 2013.

On the tourism front the MEC indicated the two innovation programmes that the Department has, being the “Kasie and Stokvel” tourism. As far as Kasies Tourism is concerned the MEC stated that the department will identify popular hangout places in the different townships of the Free State that the tour operators can include in their tour packages. Stokvel tourism on the other hand will target saving groups like social clubs, burial societies, schools and churches to visit tourism attractions in the province and incentives will be provided for this purpose.

In the year ahead the MEC said that the department will prioritize on improving communication with its stakeholders particularly in the business community and the restructuring and repositioning of the department in order to render better and faster assistance to SMMEs also, the facilitating mutually beneficial relationships between micro and macro enterprises through targeted enterprise development programmes. MEC Zwane gave the community of Ventersburg his word that 2013 is time for harvest, as is the theme for this year’s budget vote. His predecessor, Mamiki Qabathe has already laid the foundation with projects in place and in the pipeline as we speak.