MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS ADDRESS AT THE HANDOVER OF THE COMPLETED PROJECT AT THE SIVIWE SCHOOL OF SKILLS, GUGULETHU, CAPE TOWN 19TH FEBRUARY 2019

Principal and Staff of Siviwe Skills Schools

Learners, Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to preside at the handover of the renovations project at Siviwe Skills School. This project was driven by the South African Navy after extensive engagement with my office about the identification of a legacy project, and taking advantage that this be done during the occasion of Armed Forces Week, which we are observing this week culminating in Armed Forces Day tomorrow. This legacy project is one of many that we have launched in many parts of the country and we have in the recent period twinned this with Armed Forces Week, such as
we did last year in the same week when Armed Forces Week was held in Kimberly, Northern Cape.

Siviwe School of Skills started off from the ashes of Siviwe Primary School which was established in 1963 and closed in 2006. When it reopened in 2007, it was now as the School of Skills, serving the communities of Gugulethu, Nyanga, Phillipi, Mfuleni and Langa with the particular focus on fifty percent General Education and fifty per cent on Vocational Skills. These are combined for a period of four years – from Year One to Year Four and does not use grades like in the traditional schools. Year One focuses on isiXhosa Levels 1, 2, 3; English Levels 1, 2, 3; Mathematics; Life Skills; Creative Arts. From Year Two, Three and Four then the learners choose an area of specialty for defined pathways. The school is recognized as an institution of learning by the Department of Basic Education. To become rounded citizens, there are also sporting codes undertaken by the school, these ranging from soccer; athletics; rugby; cricket; netball; drama; chess; dance and indigenous games.

Learners are assessed by an educational psychologist upon entry and must be from ages fourteen to maximum eighteen. The vocational skills offered range from welding and metal work; woodwork; bricklaying; sewing/needle work; beauty cosmetology (hairdressing); hospitality and office administration, to mention just some of the highlights of the programmes offered. The educators are committed in developing the learners to become better citizens, with the ultimate goal being to expose them in industrial world where practical skills will be imparted during learning.
It was identified as a project to undertake the following scope of work...repairs and refurbishment to the outside of all the buildings and infrastructure; repairs and refurbishment to the inside of all buildings and infrastructure; repairs and refurbishment to the courtyard and surrounding open areas and gardens; the preparation and establishment of a multi-purpose sports ground.

The actual repairs to the exterior of buildings and infrastructure entailed the complete painting of the outside of all buildings; the fixing, welding and painting of all burglar bars; fixing and painting all window sills; painting and refurbishment of all roof trusses; repair of outside lights, including security lights and gates; repairs to brick paving and creating water channels to prevent the area from being water logged during the rainy season; repairs to roofs and roof gutters; repairs and replacement of air conditioning; preparation and refurbishment of the headquarters entrance area; repairs, replacement and refurbishment of the headquarters entrance area; building of an entire covered area between the two workshops for learners to undertake practical lessons without having to be restricted by weather conditions.

Regarding the interior of buildings and infrastructure, the following was done: repairs, refurbishment and painting of all classroom walls; repairs and replacement of all lights and electrical fittings (including the addition of new wall plugs being installed); repairs and refurbishment of all interior doors and frames; repairs and maintenance of all door handles and locking mechanisms; repairs and refurbishment of all chart and writing boards; fitment of light projector; the establishment of a simulated shop environment was erected with shelving and a shop counter; fitting a geyser and its enclosures in accordance with the
Occupational Health and Safety standards regulations; fitting new tiles and wash basin, including those specifically meant for the hair salon training requirements; repairs to all cupboards drawers in the office and classroom areas; completion of the ceiling in the conference room.

On landscaping the amount of work executed included the establishment and creation of the vegetable garden; cutting the entire school’s terrain – grass and shrubs and removal of the rubble both inside the school property in and around the pavement areas of the school; repairs to concrete walkways and filling holes; cleaning the gardening areas; preparation of the soccer field for the grass laying; establishing a natural irrigation system through digging a ten metre borehole to establish a natural irrigation system; installation of Jo-Jo tanks and pressure pumps to ensure constant water supply. Beautification of the entire school area. The remaining work will be finalized by the end of this month of February 2019, including the sports field. The entire project was undertaken with lightning speed and completed in fifteen days by members of the South African Navy from both Simon’s Town and Youngsfield as well as the Regional Works formation.

As we hand over this project, it must be seen as a shining example of “opening the doors of culture and learning” as enshrined in the Freedom Charter and the right to education as enshrined in our country’s constitution. I am confident that these learners will grow to become better citizens upon completion of their studies, and must also see the armed forces as a career of choice, especially after having seen the men and women from the South African Navy and the Regional Works formation. Some of the learners who completed their education at Siviwe School of Skills have gone on to colleges to pursue further what they learned from here.
I thank you.