



**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF ENERGY, HONOURABLE MR  
JEFF RADEBE, MP AT THE HAND OVER OF CERTIFICATES OF  
APPRECIATION TO SOLAR WATER HEATER PROGRAMME  
TRAINEES AND WALKABOUT TO INSTALLED HOUSES IN  
WALMER,**

**NELSON MANDELA BAY METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY, AT  
WALMER MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE ON 16 APRIL 2019**

Programme Director

Honourable Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mongameli Bobani

Honourable Members of the Mayoral Committee

Honourable Ward Councillor amongst us, Cllr. Ayanda Tyokwana

Principals of the Schools in Walmer and Rosedale

Members of the Community

Senior Government Officials and Executives in SOEs

Distinguished Guests, and

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon to you all.

It is a great pleasure for me to address you at this event of the handing over the Certificates of Appreciation to the Solar Water Heater Installation Training Assistants and walkabout in the area of Walmer. We are gathered here today proudly anticipating our nations celebration of 25 years of democracy in our country in a few days. Of course, in the same breath we appreciate the great achievements in our service delivery commitments and set targets, as we look forward to the dawn of the 6<sup>th</sup> administration due to be ushered in on 25 May 2019, following the elections due on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May. The chosen date of 25 May for the inauguration of the President of the 6<sup>th</sup> administration holds further significance as this is the day on which the continent celebrates Africa Day. As a keen and active member state of the African Union, I am sure we all appreciate the significance of our nation having the opportunity to celebrate our great achievement of yet another successful election campaign on this auspicious day. Africa Day as we now know it was decided on by the founding Organisation of African Unity (OAU) conference attended by 32 leaders of African nations when they met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1963. Today the leaders of our continent continue to work closely together towards the betterment of all citizens of our various countries.

Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, a lot has been done and achieved to improve the lives of citizens in our corner of the continent

- with regards energy access in particular. Today, the competitiveness of renewable energy power generation options is indeed increasingly evident to all. Yet the hard work continues, as government, industry and investors plan the stage of the energy transformation which involves proactive discussions to create new policies, regulations, market structures and industry strategies, particularly to support the stable integration of the highest possible shares of power generation from various renewable energy sources (i.e. solar and wind.) This integration of Renewable Energy into the current power generation model, is also a positive step in view of the demands placed on governments to make the required strides in reducing carbon emissions in the light of the climate change challenges that face humanity globally.

To date, the Solar Water Heater Pilot project in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality has indeed shown that the revised Solar Water Heater Implementation Model, as noted by Cabinet in 2015, is feasible in addressing all the concerns and challenges identified in the phase 1 roll out especially with the right engagement of all key stakeholders. Strengthening stakeholder engagement saw the implementation of the project fostering strong community connection with its leaders and building long-term, lasting, mutual relationships that led to positive project outcomes.

Distinguished guests, I hope you heard His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa during the recent national human rights day when he said access to energy is a basic human right and an urgent priority for government. The President called for the restoration of energy supply

through an affordable model. The installation of solar water geysers in citizens' homes makes this programme fit for purpose especially for this affordable model. The National Development Plan pronounces 5 million solar geysers installed in the residential areas with a potential to create 11 million jobs by 2030, and to make this a success we have to work together. There should be no insurmountable challenges that lead to citizens not being able to access hot water on a daily basis.

Basic services such as universal access to clean water and sustainable electricity provision have been at the forefront of government programmes for citizens as required by the Constitution of the Republic. As we celebrate the achievements made, a lot still needs to be done to get the country to the global position it deserves. Challenges such as electricity load shedding, slow economic growth and youth unemployment still persist. As the saying goes, 'the future of the country lies in its youth,' and as such investments on skills development for the youth is of paramount importance. A holistic approach is crucial. Strategic energy policy that envisages the deployment of the large shares of various renewable energy sources must be based on profound understanding of the impacts, positive and negative, on the existing power system.

Accordingly, the government through the Department of Energy revised the contracting model for the National Solar Water Heater Programme in 2015 and structured it to assist in efforts to alleviate the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Under the revised model (i) local companies have been given an opportunity to manufacture the systems as per the local content threshold of 70% on

tanks, and 70% on collectors. Thereby developing local skills, the local economy and creating much needed employment. (ii) Indigent households will get installed Solar Water Heater Baseline Systems which will result in reduced electricity consumption from the national grid and cost saving while accessing hot water. (iii) Locals within the beneficiary municipalities will be trained and skilled on the installation of Solar Water Heater Baseline Systems adding to the sustainability of the programme on maintenance and operations (O&M). We had to bear the after effects of imported products from the phase 1 roll out that could not withstand the local climatic conditions hence local manufacturing is the way to go.

In implementing the Solar Water Heater model, the Department procured 87 206 Solar Water Heater Baseline Systems from 12 different suppliers located across five (5) provinces. Of the 20 participating municipalities, I would like to commend the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality for allowing us to test the feasibility of the revised contracting model which is already bearing fruit and affirming the future of this programme on several fronts. It is important to indicate that in addition to Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, three (3) of the 20 municipalities are in the Eastern Cape Province. That is, Makana, Elundini and Ndlambe. In partnership with the Department of Labour, GIZ as the strategic and technical partner through the South Africa-German Energy Programme (SAGEN) and the Municipality, the pilot project was such a success. Since installation of the 200 solar geysers was completed in June 2018, to date the Department has not received a single

complaint. This demonstrates the quality of the work done and the kind of leadership provided by the municipality to forge a good and long lasting relationship with all key stakeholders.

Honourable Executive Mayor, we remain grateful for the cooperation and active involvement of the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, who in 2016 made it possible by approving implementation of the pilot project and identified Walmer and Rosedale as the two areas to be piloted. About 180 solar geysers were installed in Walmer and 20 in Rosedale.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in the spirit of working together, we couldn't have done it without the involvement of a myriad of key stakeholders. Among them are the Office of the Premier, Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, SALGA, Department of Labour, Department of Water Affairs and the Expanded Public Works Programme who provided the required inputs as per their respective mandates. We appreciate all stakeholders, including Ward committees and community members for warmly welcoming the initiative in their areas and homes.

We are proud to have integrated the local community's in the pilot project by providing Solar Water Heater accredited training and practical job experience to 20 individuals - in particular youth, seven (7) of whom are females. We are confident that the skills developed and experience acquired will benefit them in various ways for a lifetime. Through the lessons learned, this great work from the pilot project will now inform the national roll out in the 19 municipalities and beyond.

Honourable Executive Mayor, as a token of my appreciation on behalf of the Department of Energy and our support for the work of the feeding schemes at the schools in Walmer and Rosedale, **I would like to donate a solar water geyser to each of the following schools in Walmer: John Masiza Primary School; Walmer Primary School; and Walmer High School. While in Rosedale the two schools which also receive the solar geysers are Seagull School and Siyaphambili Pre-School.**

**Distinguished guests, it was also brought to my attention that there is child headed family in this area of Walmer that Ms Ntombosisa Mbanga (20 years) has written to us requesting support. She is living with her cousins, Ncumisa Langa (23 years), Onele Mazomba (18 years) Yamkela Mazomba (16 years) and Lulanke Langa (6 months), from whom I would also donate a solar water heater geyser to assist them in their hot water needs. My office will also try to reach out to the Minister of Social Development, Minister Suzan Shabangu and Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Naledi Pandor to assist in the best possible way. The Department jointly with the Central Energy Fund will facilitate the installation of these geysers after this event. All the principals should liaise with Ms Mokgadi Modise in the Department for installation details.**

It is important to indicate that while we classify solar water heaters as renewable energy, it also cuts across energy efficiency. Yet it is also clear that energy efficiency's potential remains untapped. As a result, there is a huge potential for this programme in bringing many

significant economic and environmental benefits in particular reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and assist the country to contribute significantly to the target of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

As such, we are gathered here today to also honor the installation trainee assistants and thank those who contributed towards skills development. Our special gratitude goes to GIZ, our strategic and technical partner in SAGEN enabling the support to the programme in this municipality. In line with the objectives of the pilot project, the solar geysers will continuously be monitored for performance for a period of two years from installation, including maintenance which is coupled with the supply agreement between the Department of Energy and the manufacturers. The evidence based results remains critical for policy development and improving implementation.

I will also be taking the opportunity to take a walkabout in Walmer to see for myself some of the systems installed in households and most importantly interact with beneficiaries among other members of the community.

In closing ladies and gentlemen, allow me to use this opportunity to remind all of us that while we have made great strides in increasing access to electricity in the last 25 years, electricity still remains an expensive and scarce household resource for many in our communities. So it is important that we should all use electricity with care, sparingly, and efficiently. Remember to switch off appliances when they are not in use. If you are still using a standard non-Solar geyser, switch it off during the day and only switch it on in time to

provide hot water for the family. When you make tea - only boil enough water for that cup of tea. If you can, invest in energy efficient appliances like Fridges, Irons and Kettles. During 2018 my department launched the Standards and Labelling campaign for appliances, so look out for the energy efficiency label when you buy a new appliance, and try to buy the most energy efficient one. It will save you money in the long run by using less power!

Given our current energy availability challenges, it is also important for all of us to make our contribution to the effort to reduce consumption in order to reduce demand on the national grid, and avoid load shedding. Above all, I also urge all of us to make sure that we pay for the electricity that we consume. If you qualify for the Free Basic Electricity, make sure that you contact your ward counsellor and municipality to find out how to register to receive this benefit.

**I thank you.**

**Enkosi – Ndiyabulela.**

**Ke a leboga.**