



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING,
DR B.E. NZIMANDE,**

**AT THE SOD TURNING CEREMONY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ANENE
BOOYSEN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, NELSON MANDELA
COMMUNITY HALL, BREDASDROP, 13 MARCH 2014**

Programme Director

The Executive Mayor of Agulhas Municipality, His Excellency Richard Mitchell

Municipal Counsellors

Chief Executive Officer of the Construction Education and Training Authority,

Ms Sonja Pilusa

The Booysen family

Community of Bredasdorp

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Goeie more

I am delighted to be part of this sod-turning ceremony marking the construction of the Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre.

Tragedy struck in the early hours of the morning on February 2, 2013 in this community, with the death of a young, innocent and intelligent young woman, Anene Booysen. Anene, only 17 years old at the time of her death, had so much to live for but unfortunately her life was cut short by an evil force. Our thanks are due to our hard working and diligent police force for acting swiftly, bringing the perpetrator of this heinous crime, who took away Anene's life, to book. As we speak the perpetrator of this dreadful crime is languishing in prison. As government we continue to say: "down with violence against women and children!"

Anene's brutal killing must not be allowed to be a permanent source of pain. Hope must in the end triumph. This is demonstrated by our gathering here today, to remember, in a meaningful and rewarding way, the life of Anene Booysen, one of us. A mere fourteen months after her death, the Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA) the funder of the project, in partnership with the Boland Technical Vocational Education and Training College, Cape Agulhas Municipality and my department, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and with the community of Bredasdorp, have remembered this young woman, Anene Booysen by embarking on the establishment of the Skills Development Centre in her name. Indeed this marks an era of hope, opportunity and renewal for this community.

The building of the Skills Development Centre is the fulfilment of a promise I made less than a year ago, on April 20, 2013, when I visited this community to launch the CETA Skills Development Project in memory of Anene Booysen. During the launch we called upon the Bredasdorp community and those from the surrounding areas to look forward to a day which will bring brightness to our lives, far from the darkness of the horrific events of the 2nd of February 2013. As government we have kept our word and we are here today, to the disappointment of the prophets of doom, to ensure the success of the Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre.

This Skills Centre will go a long way in providing a means to the youth of Bredasdorp and neighbouring areas to get access to education and training. The Freedom Charter, drafted in Kliptown in 1955 by progressive organisations such as the African National Congress, Was a beacon in the struggle against apartheid, much as today's National Skills Development Strategy III is a roadmap in our struggle against poverty and inequality. Education is a central part in this effort, especially because it, amongst other things, addresses the needs of our youth.

We have committed R10 million to this project. This has been made possible by one of our SETAs, the Construction Education and Training Authority, as mentioned earlier. This commitment is in keeping with my Department's deliberate strategy to channel skills development resources to rural communities like this one. Rural communities, especially rural youth, were completely neglected under apartheid, resulting in the high level of underdevelopment, poverty, lack of skills and, very sadly, the scourge of crime. But even today, despite the many advances made rural youth and working class communities are still

subjected to some of the worst forms of exploitation, as demonstrated in places like de Doorns.

I have been privileged to see the architectural plans of the envisaged building. I must say that it is a state-of-the-art design, befitting of a skills centre of a community like Bredasdorp, previously starved of proper education during apartheid. We want to assure you that this project will succeed and I am happy to announce that the construction plans for the Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre have been approved and that a contractor is about to be appointed to commence work. This new Skills Centre will bring excellent educational facilities to a community that has real need of them.

The project which has brought us together here today is testimony to the fact that as government we are serious about skilling marginalised communities like this one of Bredasdorp. My Department is developing a skills centre strategy focused on “expanding skills development provision through a skills centre model rooted in communities”; as well as through Community Colleges. Our approach is all about access, quality, relevance, collaboration and partnerships with others.

When we defeated apartheid and took power in 1994, as government we made a commitment to improve the quality of education through, for instance, the delivery of adequate infrastructure. This is a mammoth task indeed but we have lived up to expectations. As we all know, the apartheid system created many disparities. It was a system premised on excluding the majority of the country’s citizens from economic development and education. The 1994 democratic dispensation has really brought about significant changes that are breaking this stubborn legacy. The building of the Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre is but one example amongst many. This initiative also represents your own steps towards breaking the back of the cruel apartheid legacy and helping your community take a sustainable developmental path that will see the young people of Bredasdorp acquire valuable skills for the betterment of their lives. “Together we can do more” and move our country to the next level.

In addition to the envisaged skills development centre in this community, the DHET has made R2.7 million available for 75 Apprentices, R1.8 million for 50 Learnerships, R875 000 for 250 individuals in Recognition of Prior Learning programmes, R1.5 million for 300 short

skills programme opportunities, and R1 million to train municipal staff in various interventions.

In addition, 200 learners from this community of Bredasdorp have been recruited by CETA to do their practical training during the construction of the Skills Centre as part of their learning, leading to certified qualifications with country-wide recognition. This approach is in line with my Department's slogan of "turning every workplace into a training space".

In the first quarter of 2013 over 3.5 million young people, between the ages of 15 and 24, were not in employment, education or training and many adults also now find themselves in a similar predicament. The Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre will go a long way in this area to alleviate the problem, improving the employability of community members. This skills centre will have to find areas of synergy with universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET), the future Community Colleges and other skills centres in the process of being established by the Construction Seta in areas such as Springbok in the Northern Cape, Ingwavuma in KwaZulu- Natal and Venda in Limpopo.

I say this against the background of the launch in Pretoria on the 16th of January of our White Paper on Post-School Education and Training. The White Paper is explicit about the future of post-school education in this country. It promotes vocational training and seeks to improve alignment between institutions within the post school sector in an effort to improve learner mobility. In other words the system must provide paths for articulation between different qualifications: there should be no dead ends for students, there should always be a way for someone from, for example, Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre, to improve their qualifications without undue repetition or hindrances. Therefore let us not underestimate the kind of education to be acquired from skills centres such as the one in Bredasdorp, be it vocational or classroom learning.

Vocational education is the cornerstone of our post-school education. For instance, in my budget speech last year, I indicated that our top priority as a department is to expand and improve the quality of the TVET colleges. Our message to South Africans is that TVET Colleges should be institutions of choice. This message is starting to bear fruit as scores of our young people have heeded the call, registering with TVET colleges in search of study opportunities.

For the 2012 academic year we set a target of 550 000 student enrolments. Instead, we achieved a total of 657 690, an increase of 54% when compared to the preceding 2011 academic year. Over the 2013 Medium Term Expenditure Framework period, we allocated R17.4 billion to ensure that TVET college enrolments continue on this trajectory. This includes investment in TVET college infrastructure in order to turn college campuses into learning, Information Communication and Technology, sports, entertainment and business incubation centres.

Currently, post-school education and training institutions are unevenly distributed across the country, with rural areas being particularly poorly served. In order to correct this spatial imbalance, the President announced in 2012 the allocation of R2.5 billion for infrastructure expansion and refurbishment of rural college campuses.

Flowing from that Presidential commitment, as Minister of Higher Education and Training I made a commitment to establishing 12 new campuses. I am now pleased to report that construction of these campuses is expected to start in this year with the first student intake at the beginning of the 2015 academic year. We have to progressively invest in building more satellite TVET college campuses for marginalised communities like this one to reap the fruits of this large investment in the post-school sector.

In conclusion: to the community of Bredasdorp, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share this wonderful occasion with you. As government and as the DHET, we remain committed to delivering services to our people on the ground - in the spirit of *Batho Pele* - the People First – *Die Mense Eers*. The Anene Booysen Skills Development Centre should be the pride of this community and a fountain of knowledge for generations to come.

My sincere gratitude to the Chief Executive Officer of the Construction SETA, Ms Sonja Pilusa and her staff, Team DHET, public entities, the municipality of Bredasdorp and all other stakeholders concerned for putting their shoulders to the wheel in realizing this dream in the name of our daughter, Anene.

Lastly to the Booysen family I say: as government we are with you, and will always be with you. Before he was hanged by the apartheid police on April 6, 1979, Solomon Mahlangu, a brave young *Umkhonto we Sizwe* cadre, spoke these last words to his mother. He said, “tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the struggle, my blood will nourish

the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom.” To draw parallels with the life of Anene, my word to the Booyesen family and to all of you gathered here today, is that Anene has not died in vain. The envisaged Skills Centre, named after her, will benefit the entire community of Bredasdorp and beyond. In our hearts and souls she will remain our beautiful young Anene - *onse kind.*

Baie Dankie