



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

MAKING YOUR FUTURE WORK BETTER
-Learning from
Madiba

2018
FEBRUARY

2018 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

What is the State of the Nation Address?

It is an annual address to the nation by the President of the Republic of South Africa as the Head of State, which focuses on the current political and socio-economic state of the nation.

When is the State of the Nation Address happening?

The State of the Nation Address (or SONA) will be delivered to a joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament (National Assembly and National Council of Provinces).

The State of the Nation Address will be broadcast live from 5pm on SABC radio stations, SABC TV, DStv Channel 408, eNCA and ANN7.

What is the theme for the 2018 State of the Nation Address?

The 2018 theme is *Making Your Future Work Better – Learning from Madiba*.

What happens during the State of the Nation Address?

- The President sets out government's key policy objectives and deliverables for the year ahead
- It highlights the country's achievements and challenges experienced over the past year and maps the year ahead
- SONA covers wide-ranging political, economic and social matters and considers the general state of South Africa
- It deliberates on South Africa's domestic affairs as well as its continental and international relations
- The full address is recorded in the Minutes of Proceedings.

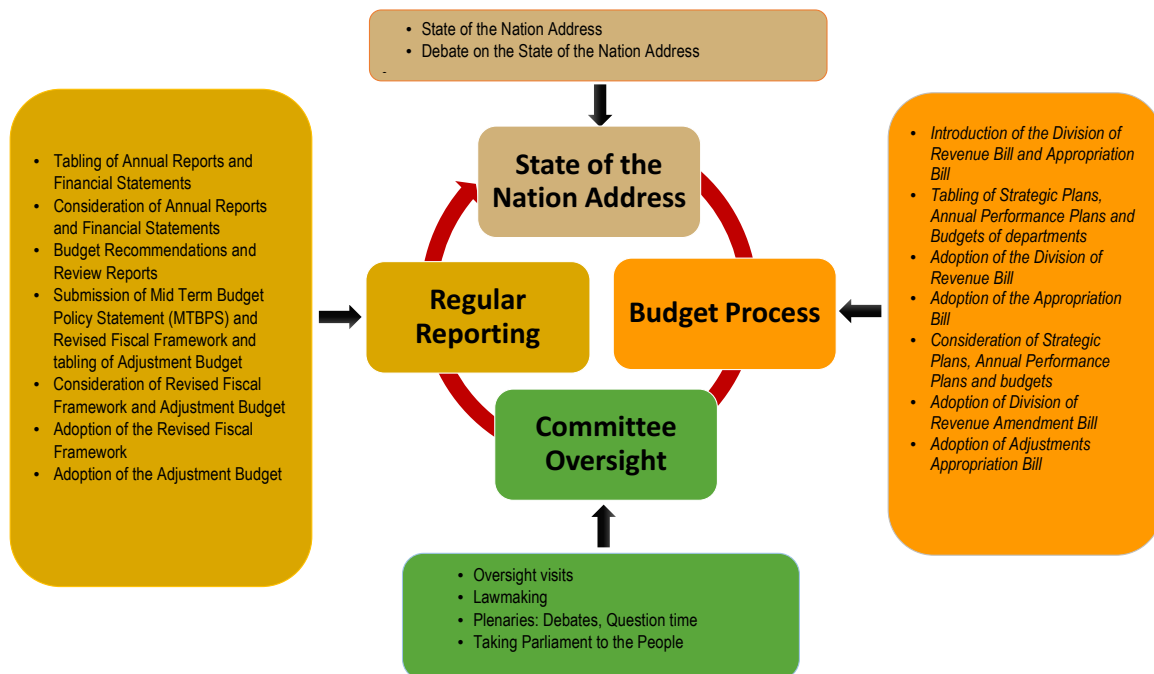
What happens after the State of the Nation Address?

Political parties have an opportunity to debate, comment and raise questions on matters addressed in the President's speech during a debate on the President's State of the Nation Address. This debate happens about a week after the address and forms part of the oversight function Parliament performs over the Executive in holding the President accountable for government's performance and plans for the year ahead. The debate usually takes place over two days in a joint sitting. The President also has an opportunity to reply to the debate.

The cyclical link between the State of the Nation Address, the Budget and the Oversight function of Parliament

- The State of the Nation Address outlines government's priorities for the year.
- The Minister of Finance allocates the Budget in line with the priorities outlined in the State of Nation Address including regular reporting.

- Parliament conducts oversight over the Executive to ensure that government delivers on the priorities set out in the State of the Nation Address and checks that allocated funds are spent accordingly.
- Premiers deliver a State of the Province Address in their respective provinces, a week after the State of the Nation Address.



The State of the Nation Address, the Budget, Oversight and You

The State of the Nation Address and the Budget is relevant to all South African citizens. It addresses the needs and priorities of our nation and the spending of money for and on behalf of our nation – the people of South Africa.

- The public can participate in the State of the Nation Address as invited guests of Parliament as part of the Civil Guard of Honour, Junior Guard of Honour or Eminent persons. Eminent persons are nominated by the Speaker of each Provincial Legislature and are nominated on the basis of their contribution to society
- If you are an educator, you may be interested in the priorities set by government for Basic and Higher Education and the percentage of the budget allocated for educational needs
- If you are unemployed, you may want to know how government intends to prioritise job creation, support young entrepreneurs and small business initiatives.
- If you are a learner, you may be focused on government's immediate and long-term plans to make education more accessible to all learners
- If you are a pensioner, or if you have a disability you may be concerned with how much money has been set aside for social grants
- If you are a worker, you will be checking if your taxes are going to be increased or decreased

The theme, *Making Your Future Work Better – Learning from Madiba*, speaks to taking individual and collective responsibility for shaping the future and learning from the legacy of former President Nelson Mandela who was a fierce proponent of human rights. Citizens also have the responsibility to hold government accountable for their deliverables through the elected representatives in Parliament.

FAST FACTS

- The State of the Nation Address is divided into three parts. The first is the important public participation role in the ceremony when the Civil Guard of Honour welcomes the President and his guests as they walk along the red carpet. This is followed by a state ceremonial, which includes a 21-gun salute and the South African Air Force flypast and finally the official address by the President.
- Members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) line the route that the President takes to Parliament.
- The Military Guard of Honour participates in the ceremony and the military band plays South Africa's national anthem.
- An Imbongi, a composer of traditional poems or song in praise of a chief or figurehead praises the President as he enters the National Assembly. The participation of the Imbongi celebrates the role that poetry and story-telling plays in traditional African culture. Imbongi's are rotated for each State of the Nation Address in recognition of the 11 official languages in South Africa.
- In a general election year, two State of the Nation Addresses are delivered.
- The State of the Nation Address is one of the rare occasions where the three arms of State, namely the Executive represented by the President, Deputy President and Ministers; the Judiciary, represented by the country's Chief Justice and the Judge Presidents; and the Legislature, represented by the Members of Parliament gather in one place.
- The provinces are represented by the premiers and provincial speakers.
- Local spheres of government are also represented at the State of the Nation Address.

For further information,

Please contact Parliament via telephone at 021 403 2911 or

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