

LIST: DA shares its input on the Budget Speech 21 February

The Democratic Alliance says the country cannot afford the nuclear deal and the NHI and to making savings the cabinet and the executive should be reduced.

The Democratic Alliance shared its input on the country's budget ahead of Minister of Finance, Malusi Gigaba who will table the 2018/2019 financial plan in parliament today.

Some of these inputs include:

1. Rejecting the nuclear deal and
2. Not going ahead with the NHI

Some of the suggestions made by the party to boost investor and consumer confidence and ultimately private sector investment are:

1. Withdrawing current version of the Mining Charter and the mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Amendment Bill
2. The privatisation of state-owned enterprises such as SAA and Eskom as well as
3. Reducing the size of the Cabinet and the executive and
4. The country withdrawing from the New Development Bank
5. Introducing a "wage freeze", for the period of one year, across the public service.

"[This will] including salary freezes for public service office bearers, which would save an estimated R547 million in 2018/19; performance bonuses in general government, which would save an estimated R2.2 billion in 2018/19; salaries of all employees in local government, which could save an estimated R4.4 billion in 2018/19; an salaries of all employees in general government, which could save an estimated R54.9 billion in 2018/19."

DA leader Mmusi Maimane said the organisation is of the view that an increase in tax will not positively benefit the country.

He said the party used the following guiding principles look at this year's budget, firstly, which initiatives will be implemented to grow the economy, which cuts is the government going to introduce to free up financial revenue so that government can deliver on other objectives and how will the poor be shielded from the worst effects of the budget, be it inflation or inadequate adjustments on welfare.

Maimane said the party suspects there will be no sudden increase in welfare spending, for example, child grants.

Maimane further stated that Minister Gigaba will have to take bold decisions with this year's budget.

Maimane said the budget to be tabled is not only for the upcoming fiscal year but should also give clear indicators of what to expect for the mid-term expenditure framework.

He said for the country's economy to grow the focus should be on infrastructure build.

He added that South African cities must be in the forefront of economic growth.

"They are the ones who deal with the regulatory burden and ensure that infrastructure that is built there can derive appropriate benefits for the citizens," Maimane said.

Furthermore, the opposition wants to know which programmes will be implemented to bring young people into the workspace.

"And that's an exemption from the minimum wage, but furthermore, how do we introduce programmes where young people can spend a year learning a skill and this we must begin to indicate and signal over a mid-term period," he said.

In his Sona debate, Maimane suggested a year of civil service to give young people on the job experience.

Maimane said these focus points are fundamental for creating a macroeconomic climate that produces growth, introduces labour absorption and builds infrastructure so that in the long run the country's economy is sustainable.

"We believe the constraints for 2018 are on the back of a six-pack of challenges. These six pack challenges are a broken budget process, weak economic growth, a budget blowout, state capture, zombie state-owned enterprises and long-term fiscal risks," he said.