

107th Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust Dialogue:

Vision for 2030: Capturing our Imagination

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Chair: **Peta Wolpe**

Vivienne Taylor: Thank you very much, and thank you, Peta, for such a wonderful and warm introduction, Lionel Louw for inviting us as the Commission to be present here. I thank all of you for attending and coming to listen to what we have to say about our National Plan. I know there must be some levels of disappointment about the Minister (Trevor Manuel) not being here, but we will put a positive light on it and say that while he is attending to affairs of the nation, we are dealing with the nitty-gritty of how to move South Africa forward, with your participation of course. So we look forward to having a wonderful engagement with you this evening. As Peta has already informed you, the Commission started in 2010 with 25 part-time commissioners; and since then the Commission has been on a fast-track to look at some of the critical issues that are facing South Africa today. But what has been distinctive about the way we work, which I would like to emphasise this evening so that you have a clearer idea about how we came up with an end product like this: a 430 page draft vision and plan. This draft vision and plan gives expression to some of the key elements of our Constitution, and in giving expression to our Constitution in a very real way, it identifies some of the key values that are embedded in our Constitution and some of the principles that we need to uphold, not just as a government but also as all of South Africa.

So today Tasneem and I are going to speak to you as commissioners, not on behalf of the government but as commissioners and as the NPC representing the interests of all of South Africa. So some of the principles that the plan reinforces throughout the 15 chapters, is our principles of social solidarity and principles of non-racialism, non-sexism; the important feature that is part of our Constitution that South Africa belongs to all and that we as a country need to redress the ills of the past.

Now of course the Commission has both technical experts who are part of the Secretariat, as well as the 25 commissioners who also come with a range of expertise, both technical expertise as well

knowledge and experience in a range of areas: as we have heard, Tasneem has been working in the field of environment and climate change, and many other areas. But all of us together as the Commission have been engaged in what we would like to believe, and you can critique us on this, that we believe we have been engaged in a very rigorous process. We have canvassed a wide range of expertise within South Africa, we have commissioned research where we have gaps in our knowledge as the Commission, and we have distilled and filtered through a whole range of information. And what you see in our draft plan is not just technical information put together in a dry as dust way, but you would see, we hope, an attempt to look at how we could creatively shift the current way of thinking about how South Africa engages on the challenges that it is confronted with. So what we are focussing on within the plan is the need for all of us as South Africans to shift what we talk of as the paradigm, shift our paradigm of thinking, shift our thinking: start a new way of thinking, be bold enough to think and work differently and to address our challenges. And the plan addresses all of this in a, what we would like to believe is really an imaginative way.

But before I go into details of what we have in the plan, I would also like to say that in the plan we've taken into account the key drivers of change, what influences South Africa both in terms of globalisation, in terms of climate change, in terms of technology, South Africa's position in the world and South Africa's position in Africa. We've looked at some of the demographic trends in South Africa. We've looked at what we think South Africa would look like in 2030: What will our population look like? What would some of the issues around health care be? What would our burden of disease be if we follow a similar path that we are on at the moment? And what we do urge all of South Africans is to know these factors to think about how we can change and address the challenges. So what I am going to ask you to do now is to listen very carefully to a little insert by Minister Trevor Manuel. He can't be with us because of the reasons that Peta has already indicated, but I thought we would give you a virtual presentation from him and that's why we've been trying as much as possible to put this presentation up. So what you are going to look at now are the nine challenges that informed our diagnosis of what South Africa is experiencing. And you will then look at how the Commission has tried to address this in the plan. It's an eight-minute excerpt and you're going to hear Minister Trevor Manuel's voice [<http://urbanchooreography.net/2011/11/08/trevor-manuels-south-african-government-npc-goes-youtube/>]. So he sends extreme apologies for not being here; he had every intention of being here, but given the technology of the day, we'll use technology to make his voice heard and you can then ask me and Tasneem lots of questions. After the eight-minute excerpt I will give you a few minutes of input on the contents and then we'll open up for dialogue. Thank you very much. [viewing of exert].

You've heard Minister Trevor Manuel and he's captured in eight minutes, I think very well, some of the issues that confront us, as well as some of the recommendations and proposals that are contained in the plan. There are quite a few chapters in the plan and I'm not going to bore you with all the technical details. But what I would like to urge you following on from what Minister Manuel said, is to engage in a discussion with us, those of you who've read parts of the plan or who feel passionate about certain aspects of what is happening in South Africa today. If you feel that there are certain questions that we may not have paid enough attention to and that you would like to put before us as a Commission – please do so. Or you might have heard about something that we have put into the plan that you totally disagree with and you have an alternative to this aspect that we have on the plan – please raise it with us. The Commission is open to engaging with a wide range of views and a wide range of stakeholders. Over the last five months we have been consulting across the country and having consultations such as this with a number of different constituencies, from workers to politicians to NGOs to academic institutions and communities – and we have listened and heard views on all the aspects that are contained in the plan.

So what I am going to stress is that we're not going to go into much more detail; I did want to just show you what our emphasis in the plan is when we talk about a paradigm shift. We are actually talking about engaging with the conditions that people are experiencing, looking at what the opportunities are, the capabilities that are needed in every sphere of activity right from national government to all of society so that we can create more work, grow the economy, reduce poverty and raise living standards. And of course raising living standards goes with lowering the costs of living as well. So you would have heard Minister Manuel emphasising that to address the challenges we had to flip the problems around and focus on creating jobs and standing infrastructure, using our resources sustainably; transforming spaces, not just urban/rural spaces but also looking at housing and the gaps in housing. Issues around improving education, providing quality health care, building a capable state.

Now in our consultations with a wide range of people, there has been feedback from a number of constituencies on just this aspect of building a capable state. The question that has been asked of the Commission is: Are you detracting from what the country or government has been talking about as a developmental state? How does the issue of a capable state and a developmental state come together, if at all? And the Commission's response to this is that a developmental state must be a capable state, and that the two are not mutually exclusive. What we initially tried to focus on and emphasise within South Africa is that even within the characterisation of South Africa as a

developmental state, capabilities of the state and capabilities of all of South Africa is important; so that has to underpin how we approach our work.

There's a whole chapter in the plan allocated to corruption and accountability and that we feel is a really important aspect of the work in addressing not just issues of government but governance at large, because the government is not the sole player in terms of corruption. The emphasis in the plan on transformation and social cohesion and the need to bring all of South Africa behind this vision and this plan to unite South Africa is really key. And I think that within the Commission there's no disagreement on any of these aspects. I'm not going to focus on much more; I think that we can have some running as you ask questions. Tasneem, would you like to say anything? [indicates no]. There's extensive detail on how we address each of these aspects, so if you would like to ask questions, make comments, critiques, we will be listening and we will respond. Now Peta might want to explain the process that we go through.

Peta Wolpe: Thank you, Vivienne, thank. [applause]. What we'll do is take comments, questions. Please don't give a lecture, so that we can really engage in a debate or deal with certain questions. So if I take four or five hands and then you can respond. If we take four at a time. We've got about 45 minutes, so please keep succinct, okay.

From the floor: I'm an energy expert. I've written to the National Planning Commission several times. This is mostly rhetoric; I don't see any action. In order for our economy to grow, it needs three things: it needs resources, it needs population growth and it needs electricity. China is adding 1 gigawatt of electricity a week and 18 gigawatts of wind last year. The PV [photovoltaic] market is growing 35% per annum and it has been since 2000. South Africa's been left behind, an environment where we're being constrained dramatically by lack of electricity. And private people, people that I talk to, we could make electricity for 90 cents a kWh a day. And there's [indistinct] do that we can deregulate the environment, we can decentralise. But what I see the government doing is centralising and trying to do it within themselves instead of deregulating and decentralising. [indistinct] can we not borrow R 1 trillion or \$ 1 billion – that means each of those people would owe R 1 million. Each person in South Africa will owe R 2000 per month to repay that R 1 trillion. The R 1 trillion is not going to give us what we need. So I am asking you: how is the National Planning Commission responding to people like me making these kind of suggestions? And what is South Africa going to do about deregulating the electricity environment so that now it's a growth, because without doing that we are not going to grow. Thank you.

Peta Wolpe: Thanks. [applause].

From the floor: I think we can assume that we've got a good analysis and a good set of objectives and it's very good. And there's a problem being that our solutions generally for the government to budget for a solution. [indistinct], education is my least favourite example of that. What are the chances first that this plan will be accepted by government, and second, and this follows onto the last gentleman, what are the chances that it will be translated into something practical?

Peta Wolpe: Thanks. [applause].

From the floor: Thank you very much. First of all I'd like to thank the speakers for a very interesting presentation. Unfortunately looking at all this, extensively [only preens - sounds like]; it's not going to happen. President Mugabe 20 years ago also had a plan like this for Zimbabwe and look what's happened now [some chuckles from the floor]. What the problem is, we need to have laws and changes now to put into effect anything which will [indistinct]. And what is happening now with the fuel levy and the toll system, the government is taking too much money out of the system to enable anything to happen. The government has shown that it's got no concern for the people. When the price of fuel went up, instead of helping the people, they slapped an extra 28 cents off to the tax. And in addition, from the 1st of the month in Gauteng, people are going to have to pay 20 cents [indistinct] kilometre [indistinct]. This is going to cause massive inflation. Electricity has gone up; our labour laws are inflexible – unless we sort all these things out now, we're not going to come anywhere near this. So I'm asking, what's going to happen now. Thank you. [applause].

From the floor: I'm from the Women's Health Education Training or the WHEAT Trust. I've got two questions and I'll be very brief. The one is, I heard a mention of security – but what about the violence that we kind of [indistinct] against one another in our homes and against people that we know. The second question will be about active citizenship because to me the political platform is a very important vehicle for this. Does the plan touch upon the political landscape as well and also drawing those people that have become disengaged and disillusioned back into the political realm? Thank you.

From the floor: I'm from Women on Farms project. I want to say thank you, the clip is [indistinct]. There's a tension that's put up between worker rights and [indistinct], which the evidence from [indistinct]. So I'm concerned about how it's set up in there. The other concern is that obviously the majority of South Africans are not on Facebook or Twitter. I work in the farm worker sector; I know for a fact that not a single farm worker I have spoken to have heard about Vision 2030. So I just wanted to hear what was the plan to get this to grassroots level, because otherwise it becomes [like the IDPs - sounds like] where the intention is this dream of us all building a plan together and

implementing it, which is what the [indistinct] illustrates, but there's nothing in place to actually realise the vision. [applause].

Peta Wolpe: I think there's some quite challenging comments there, so over to the two of you.

Tasneem Essop: Then you very much and good evening everybody. That's exactly what we needed, a challenging engagement. As Vivienne said, and the Minister, in fact what we're wanting to do is hear from you. But I do want to say that hearing from you is both about challenging us but also providing some ideas in terms of solutions; so I'm hoping we'll get to that point as well this evening. The Commission, as Vivienne will probably also agree, we are 25 very different people; and lots of us have very strong views about different things. So there's no such thing as a one view on issues at this point in time. We have reached agreement on the broad direction of the plan and details of some of the content areas, but it's still very much up for grabs, and so I think both Vivienne and I will answer questions that will probably have nuanced differences in the way we would express our responses – so if we could touch on all of them it will be fine.

So I'll deal with the electricity question. I'm not sure if you've actually read the plan, the chapter 4 that deals with energy. And if you haven't then I suggest that that would be a good starting point because then I'd really like to hear off the back of having read the plan and that chapter particularly whether you still feel your submissions or your comments have not been accommodated, and if not, please, again, we have this time till the 11th of May to get submissions in and I'd really like to hear from you. I'm not sure where your comments have gone to in terms of who you directed it towards, but certainly we have looked at energy. I can particularly say from my viewpoint, I am not entirely happy with the energy chapter, certainly for reasons of my own area of concerns and of climate change – but we have looked at it and there are very proposal, in fact that takes you to a point of suggesting deregulating the sector, getting independents involved, getting an independent operator are some of the proposals – so please take a look at it and it would be useful to hear that your comments have not been accommodated. I'd like to see stronger emphasis of course on renewable energy in that plan; I'm sure, I'm hoping you would think so – I'd really like to encourage you to make those submissions.

From the floor: After we build [indistinct] we don't need any more [indistinct].

Tasneem Essop: Exactly, well, make those comments.

From the floor: [indistinct].

Tasneem Essop: Ja. I think it's important that there must be a thorough engagement around this particular area. It is a draft right now; there have been lots of submissions, especially from the energy sector, people have been contributing their thoughts on it. And I think you will see some changes in the next version. But, certainly, please look at it and make your comments now.

So there have been comments about, you know, this is all a dream. I mean, I certainly hope not. And so as the Minister indicated in the little excerpt that you saw, we do understand that we are trying to plan for 2030 – we are planning for 2030, it's not confined to the five-year election term-based plan that we currently have in government. And our task was to actually look beyond that. But we also very clearly know that to plan for 2030, there are things that need to be fixed now. And the plan deals with that quite substantially. For example, just simply the issue of corruption: if we don't deal with that issue now and we make a number of suggestions in the plan itself, then certainly what we're trying to achieve that we suggest we would like to see happening by 2030 and hopefully with the support for that kind of vision and plan that then we won't succeed. So certainly the plan looks at the future but it looks at what needs to happen now. Building a capable state is not building a capable state in 2030 but certainly to start building that capable state now – so throughout the plan you will find that the plan is for the long-term, but things need to happen now and there's already some clear proposals in a number of the chapters that deal with what happens in the now. There are also difficult issues that we would need to look at because government has to government's work; they make decisions for example about investing in infrastructure, which have long-term implications. So certainly what we've had to do at the Planning Commission is look at what those implications of existing policies and investment decisions would have in terms of its impact on the future and whether there's going to be a contradiction or it will be an obstacle to the kind of future we're saying we'd like to see in 2030. And so infrastructure [indistinct] is an area that we've been having lots of debates about – so certainly we've got to look at the future, but look at the now. We're not going to be implementing it now but we will certainly be making recommendations to government to address these key issues that require fixing now to get to that vision and plan in 2030.

So on the tension between workers' rights and -. This has been an area of – the Commission's duty and responsibility was to look at things robustly and frankly and honestly across the board, not just be critical of government, but across the board – what are the key issues that would in a way prevent our plan having movement in terms of the vision that we're looking at and future growth and development. And the plan does not position – you know, there's not an antagonism or a tension that we're creating between workers' rights and economic development. It sounds like that,

I'm not sure if you're basing it on the reading of the plan or on this little blurb. I mean, that would spring out at you; everybody reacts that way because certainly we make very strong points about the professionalism of teaching – and we do that specifically because we found in our diagnostic that this was the key challenge in our country, is the quality of especially black learners of [indistinct] really poor. So if you acknowledge that as a key challenge in this country and that we are going to have to address it, then the issue of teachers' responsibility, parents' responsibility, the general communities' responsibility, as well as the government's responsibility – are key. And so it might have appeared in a little eight-minute blurb that there's this tension between the two – but that's not the intention. The intention is to put very frankly on the table some of the analysis that we've done in the diagnostic part of preparing for the plan, clearly in that process lots of things came out in research and engagement. And we've also been engaging with trade unions, we've engaged with COSATU, we've engaged with the teachers' union, and they acknowledge that education is in a bad state of affairs and they would have to also play a role in this. So we're not trying to position with the rights against economic development at all; in fact, we've made a number of very creative suggestions and proposals around the labour market, etcetera, that requires a lot of debate as well. And, again, we've been engaging with the trade unions in that regard.

In terms of our consultation process and taking the plan up – you're absolutely right and we've acknowledged this as commissioners ourselves. I must say that – I don't know if you've all seen it but there are things on uTube and we do feel very proud as commissioners that we've done something so creative and techi [laughter from the floor], a wizard's kind of thing, we're reaching out. We even had this jam for 72 hours. You know, really, we've done really creative things to be quite honest – so we're a bit chuffed about that. But you're absolutely right. We obviously know that limitations of electronic forms of engagement. We do want to look at cellphone technology, for example, that has a far broader reach and so there are those things. But we have also gone not necessarily to farms but we've had across the country in all the provinces during the first phase of the diagnostics and then now with the plan, we've gone to all provinces and we've asked provincial government to set up wide consultation processes, inviting people – so we've met businesses, labour, all the constituencies. And I think it is difficult that we haven't gone out into the deepest rural areas, onto farms or have had meetings on farms. But this is the challenge I'd like to put out: on the Commission, we're 25 commissioners and one minister who's full-time and we're all part-time. We have full-time jobs and we've been doing this as part-time commissioners; we're not going to be able to reach everybody in the country. It would be very great to be able to say, well, can we form a partnership with you guys – help us, take this plan out. So let's not leave it up to the Commission to go take the plan out, but can organisations who are engaged with those constituencies and across

the board, all kinds of constituencies help us take the plan out – because this plan is not the Commission’s plan; the intention was that this plan is for all South Africans and South Africans must be engaged with it. So I’d be delighted if people took responsibility and co-ownership of this process as well with us and help us reach those that we’re not going to physically get to in this kind of short timeframe. And certainly there’s a need for us to pack that up; we’ve got a secretariat that [indistinct], the uTube, these kind of presentations – you know, we could certainly provide the resources to do that but physically it’s almost impossible to get to every corner, even though we had all the good intentions of doing that. So I hope that we can get volunteers to help us also take this plan to different constituencies that we’ve not reached. And Vivienne’s going to answer all the difficult questions. [laughter from the floor] [applause].

Vivienne Taylor: Just to come back to the first question on energy. In the plan, chapter 4, if you read especially under expanding infrastructure – there’s some very specific proposals on expanding on grid electrification to 95% of households by 2013; reducing carbon emissions in supply of electricity. And this [indistinct] the thing that you were focussing on in your comments. There is a specific proposal on the transfer of Eskom’s planning power procurement and purchasing functions to an independent systems operator. Now if you have other views on that or additional views, it would be really helpful to put them on the table and make very specific recommendations to the Commission. The other proposal that’s on the table for discussion is the evaluation of costs and benefits of a nuclear option in terms of electricity. And we do invite all of South Africa to engage with us on this. It’s not a given; nothing in the plan at this stage is a given – and if you want to make comments and informed inputs, it could really help us to look at what the trade-offs are, as commissioners. Because with every intervention or every proposal, there are positive and negative trade-offs, and we need to be aware of what those trade-offs are so that we can make those recommendations. So I want to reinforce what Tasneem has already said.

I’m not going to answer the other questions; I think Tasneem did an excellent job – except to say on the issue of violence against woman and [indistinct] households – it’s a critical issue – safety and building safe communities for woman households right across communities, it’s really important not just at a personal level but it’s very important in terms of the knock-on effects it has on growing the economy, on education, on health, and a whole range of other factors. So it’s really important for us to begin to talk about it, first of all identify where the sources of violence are coming from – and we tried to do that in the diagnostic document. We have made a few proposals. Those proposals might not be as wide enough covering all the different levels and types of violence. But once again, here’s an opportunity for civil society and other organisations to say you have not actually dealt with x, y

and z, and we would like to make an input on this. And I think that the Commission would really welcome such input, so I would urge you to do that. And when you are engaging with the Commission or with government or with other members of society on these issues, you are already building what we talk of as an active citizenry. An active citizenry does not mean, as Trevor Manuel said earlier in the little blurb, that people should be toyi-toying. It's doing precisely what we are urging you to do; to take part in restructuring, in redefining what needs to be done in South Africa today so that by 2030 we would have a better country. So I think that that would really help us take forward the plan.

The question on how seriously is this plan going to be taken, hit us all. Will it be implemented? Is it just going to be a pipe-dream? We were really worried as a Commission that we were putting a lot of effort, engaging very seriously on the issues, on diagnostic process, on putting forward proposals – and sometimes we were taking ourselves far too seriously as well – I wish you could have been the flies on the wall when we were debating, having heated debates amongst ourselves. But the surprising thing about this draft plan is that people across the country are engaging on it and they are giving us feedback. And some of the feedback has really been invaluable. But not only have people generally been engaging; government has already engaged with the plan and the final version of the plan with all the inputs come, all the stakeholders we've engaged with, will be submitted to Cabinet by the middle of May and the Cabinet will be engaging with this final plan in May and in June. The extent to which they accept the plan and adopt the recommendations in the plan is left up to them. But once again, civil society mobilisation on proposals that you feel are really worthwhile, that need to be supported, should go hand-in-hand with what the government is doing on the plan. So it's not just submitting the plan and waiting for government approval; it means that you as civil society need to be mobilising behind the plan or mobilising for additional inputs into the plan – so it's not only government's responsibility. I'll leave the rest. We've translated a popular version of the plan into 11 languages, so it can be used.

Peta Wolpe: Oh, gosh, now there's like 100 000 hands up. So we're going to take short comments or questions and ask the speakers to shorten their responses.

From the floor: Thank you. This notion of a capable state vis-a-vis the developmental state, one concrete recommendation that I have is, it should be both, we should have capable and a developmental state. A capable state is politically neutral and that's precisely what we don't want; we want an interventionist state. We want a state that understands that the market and the whole notion of commodifying all of the basic goods has not worked for us. If you're rich you can education, health, all of those things. But I think what we need to do is a state that really takes care of the poor,

and this notion of the generosity of the rich and the patience of the poor – I think it's an old slogan that we used to use but it is captured in this plan. I think for me the critical thing is how do you make it work, the implementation framework, I think a lot of us are saying this: we like the plan, we're good at describing the problems and providing talking to the solution. I think the thing is around what is the centre – is the centre holding? Do we have the framework, the implementation capacity? And how do we as citizens, partners, civil society, government, almost the social [indistinct] that's required – because what's happening now is everybody takes – trade unions takes, capital takes, everybody takes what they can and we are very selfish as South Africans. Um, okay, I'll leave it at that.

Peta Wolpe: Can I ask if maybe not repeat something that's already been said.

From the floor: I'm interested in the challenge of corruption. It's no secret that the country engulfed in a tsunami of crime, greed, corruption and incompetence. The question is, have any of the Commissioners brought it up with Minister Manuel? Because as long as we've got a state president who's been appointed with impunity, as long as we've got inappropriate affirmative action, there's always going to be more of the same. These two issues have to be addressed. Unless they're addressed and unless you sort that out, we're going to have more of the same and this is just going to be a pipe-dream [some applause].

From the floor: I'm a student at UCT. I'd like to know what is the sustainability of this plan. Should the policies of this country shift, what are the implications for the plan and for our Future Vision?

From the floor: I must say I was a little bit disappointed by the presentation and the fact that you are planning for such a huge amount of time – 2030 is a long way away. I would have expected even in a short time to see short-term planning. What are the consequences if this is not done? How can we predict in the short-term and how can we re-prioritise what we should be doing in the medium-term – and only then look at the long-term which is 2030. And it's just too generalised. [some applause].

From the floor: I would like to address the question of raising [indistinct] which is obviously critical for so much of what has to be done including repairing some of the social fabric and the division. But in addition to that, some of us who are here today heard Professor [indistinct] talking about climate change and development last night. And one of the issues that pointed out to very strongly was that we also have to lower the living standards of wealthy and privileged, not only in our country but throughout the world – and that needs a process of education and engagement all around.

From the floor: I looked at with great interest at one of the cogs in the wheel is the one of strong leadership. I'm just wondering what the understanding is of strong leadership because I can see a couple of strong leaders smiling at that concept. [some chuckles].

From the floor: I'm not good at bitching at moaning; I'm good at getting things done. I've got an educational initiative that can effectively reach more than half the population of South Africa. If anyone's keen, after this I'm going to chill out there and if you're keen and passionate about it, I'll get your number and email address – let's make things happen. [loud applause].

Peta Wolpe: I'm going to let the speakers respond. Can we try and be concise and we can take one more round.

Tasneem Essop: All I need to be concise is to say that I view every single comment as a comment and not a question. So we've taken onboard all of that, we've got detailed notes. I don't think there's anything, except maybe to the question posed by what you mean by strong leadership. So strong leadership, again, I think it's very important for us to be very clear as a Commission that when we talking that when we talk about leadership, we're not just talking about government leadership. We're talking about leadership across the board. And so like Mr Govender over there, he just provided leadership for us, and initiative – and that's an active citizen. So we see strong leadership as those who are providing leadership and guidance, having a strategic understanding of where to go wherever they find themselves and taking initiative, not waiting on others to do that. So that's across South Africa. But also we see that strong political leadership is necessary. So the kind of leadership that doesn't see themselves as just doing things for an election term, consider their futures in that, etcetera, etcetera. So it's both political and across the [indistinct] leadership that we're talking about. So I really do, people think that leadership is really finding itself in government, state leadership – and it's not – in our view it's across society that we would like to encourage active citizenship, that there's a strong leadership wherever you find yourself. That's the only question, everything else we'd consider comments and very valuable comments as well. Thanks.

Vivienne Taylor: I think I'd rather wait for a third round of questions; Tasneem's answered it and we will take all the comments onboard, including the issues around corruption and sustainability of the plan; the important points about the living standards and how we approach that. So those are comments and the point about there's no trade-off between a capable state and a developmental state.

Peta Wolpe: Thanks. Okay, we're going for another round. Thank you to people for keeping it quite tight so that we can get a broad range of comments that as both Tasneem and Vivienne, they're

going to take onboard. And you are free to email. Their email was up there and you can contact the Trust, Lionel and can [indistinct]. Okay.

From the floor: I'm a third-year student here at UCT. I take Public Policy in this very lecture theatre. It is very shocking for me to find out after 12 years of schooling that the very same system of schooling that I went through was nearly detrimental to me being here and was very detrimental to many of our fellow young people who are [not/now - unclear] in institutions of higher learning. OBE was a complete failure, yet nobody wants to admit this publicly and actually take [indistinct] and actually address it. The whole [indistinct] of the problems that currently exist in society is that in an already volatile environment during 1994 would introduce a system that was even more detrimental to particularly black youth. Institutions of higher learning continue to place a price on education; there is less access for black South Africans and black South Africans in the Constitutional context, meaning coloured, black, Indian. It continues to be upheld only for the privileged. And I speak this with very great confidence and I'd just like to know what our plans to do about this. And the whole partnership between the Department of Education and the Department of Labour is currently not working, it is not addressing anything. [loud applause].

From the floor: I haven't read the Commission's proposals, but I'd like to know the Commission's position on those aspects of labour legislation which effectively make it illegal for unemployed people to sell their labour [into the formal - sounds like] sector – specific reference to Section 32, which is setting minimum wage levels which quite clearly 47 million South Africans at the moment cannot justify being paid. That's a separate debate, why not, but the reality is that the law has taken away the right for those people to sell their labour at a lesser price into the formal sector and it gives the choice of essentially being destitute. That provision, Section 32, is in contravention of several provisions in the Bill of Rights – the freedom of association, the right to follow the trade or occupation of your choice, the right to human dignity, the right to fair labour practices, the right to equality, and several other ones. So I'd just like to know whether the Commission has actually looked into this, and if so, what they plan to do and what their recommendations are. [applause].

From the floor: Just two very quick questions actually related to the NPC. Maybe feeding from the previous question, the issue of labour in this country is a very topical one. In fact, a lot of people say if you answer the labour question in South Africa we've sort of gone half-way there in promoting development. So what is the NPC's position, what sort of position does it have, I think around addressing the issue of labour productivity? Because I've read the plan, key sections. You know, education is bandied about as being very important in getting people the skills, but it doesn't address the issue of productivity. Currently in this country the issue of productivity is a very big one

right now. And then, secondly, and this is a political question more than anything else but it is a consideration: it's all fine and well to have a Vision 2030, but you're already seeing a lot of tension right now politically with for example the ANC saying, and you raised this earlier on, the whole debate around the developmental state versus the capable state. But then how solid or how, what's the word, how -. If you have suddenly have a situation where the ANC decides in this next elective conference, it wants nationalisation of this and this and that – where does it leave the NPC then?

From the floor: I'm from the World Future Society. I think I want to use part of my brief moment in the sun to commend the commissioners, yourselves and the others, I think for 26 people this is an awesome piece of work for a task that spans around 50 million people's involvement. So I think well done on that. As a futurist, our interests in what's going on in the [indistinct] process is more the process; I think there's a lot of conversation about the substance. And my brief question is, where can we understand more of the process that the NPC is using to move through this exercise, which we see obviously [indistinct] is what we live and breathe – so there's a lot of monitoring that we feel we want to do of how this process is going. So I don't think it comes through in the documentation so much; we haven't really had our responses to what our submissions which are on that basis – and I just wanted to put that into the discussion as well, thanks.

From the floor: I'm from [indistinct] Foundation. My interest is mostly on the unity in our country between black and white communities and also social cohesion and working as one, which is almost one thing. There are communities who are busy working even right now to bridge the divide between black and white. There's great work that's been done in Worcester by the Restitution Foundation in this regard. How is the NPC willing to work with these such examples in order to push the same agenda that they have to unite communities around the same goals of job creation and creating a united South Africa? How can we use what we have already to push what we're hoping to achieve?

From the floor: [indistinct] attorneys. Since corruption is one of the things that we really need to address, I was wondering if the Commission has a view on the adequacy of the amendments to the South African Police Services Act, which is in response to the [indistinct] judgement, and if they have, what is it?

From the floor: [indistinct] world environment NGO. Two point: [indistinct] and corruption. In the afternoon I fetch my kids from school and a few others came around and we sat around the table and discussed and I told them where I'm going this evening – and we talk about differences [indistinct] and so on: rich and poor, [indistinct]. So the one boy says the poor are stealing from the

rich. And [indistinct] Minister [indistinct] asked us to think different. So I thought, not, the rich are stealing from the poor. And just two examples to that: We're subsidising industries which are not performing and which are using up our electricity like aluminium smelters, with electricity costs below costs, and other tax subsidies. Then another example that we're just stealing from the poor like mine workers working down 200 metres below the surface, going home with R 3000 – R 4000 a month and the top management goes home with hundred thousands or millions rands a month or a year. So [indistinct] talking about minimum wage – perhaps we should discuss from the other way – why not putting a level on the top, [loud applause] a maximum wage [indistinct] – the other way around. And [indistinct] corruption – party financing; make party financing transparent and stop party financing for business. [applause].

Peta Wolpe: Thank you and I know there are people wanting to speak but we are running out of time, so I am sorry. But could you respond please?

Vivienne Taylor: Thank you. I'm going to try and respond to groups of your questions and comments. Whatever I miss out on, I'm sure Tasneem will pick up on. But thank you very much for comments, questions and critique – I think it's been invaluable. The depth of the questions has also been really very good. I want to first talk about the labour legislation Section 32. The Commission is indeed engaging with that and we are reviewing a significant amount of – well, we commissioned a lot of research and we are looking at the implications of the labour legislation both in terms of growing the economy, in terms of employment creation and a whole range of other issues. We haven't arrived at a definitive position as yet, but there are some proposals on the table and they are in the plan. So if you read the section on creating work and growing the economy – you'll find sections there on what we are considering at the moment. It would be useful to get your inputs in. Labour issues are really key and how we engage with labour issues and labour productivity; and worker productivity across the board is an issue. The Commission, all I can say at the moment and to err on the side of being succinct and you'll have to forgive me for talking in short-hand, because we have to look at what the incentives are provided for both workers as well as for business, as well as the regulatory regimes that are in existence. And there has to be a balance between the incentives that are provided both to create businesses as well as to create work and to promote worker productivity, as well as the regulations that are in place. And the balancing act is really important, especially when we are coming from a situation of having to re-dress past imbalances. And as one of the last speakers said, when we have such gross inequality in the wage structure – so that's something that the Commission is very mindful of and is trying to look at very carefully. But it is indeed a fine balancing act.

The issue about politics where will this plan be if there's a shift in the political regime – I think that happens in every country. The plan cannot speak to party political agendas. The plan has to address issues that affect all of South Africa and that speak to the public good and that take the public interest at heart. So essentially what we are trying to do in the plan is to acknowledge that there's always dominant voices, dominant values and dominant thinking – but we want to ensure that our research, our analysis and our proposals speak to broader society and live beyond the short-termism of political elections. So that's all we can hope for.

The one other thing that's important for you to know about the process is that the Commission is a quasi-independent Commission. I say quasi-independent because the chair is a minister; but all the commissioners are ostensibly independent and we are an advisory body. We are not an interventionist body. We are not going to go out there and implement to plan.

[END]