

Minister, provincial, municipal leaders told to fix infrastructure problems

President Jacob Zuma has told Ministers, Premiers and Mayors, who are part of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC), that they must jointly develop a problem-solving culture and fix infrastructure problems facing South Africa.



President Jacob Zuma has called on leaders in national, provincial and municipal government to ensure that infrastructure projects are implemented and completed rapidly to improve the quality of life for South Africans.
Image: GCS

He was addressing the first sitting of the PICC under the new administration.

The commission was established to forge partnerships among government departments across all spheres of government, to ensure that infrastructure investment is rolled out without unnecessary delays.

"We established [the commission] to ensure that the delivery in providing infrastructure does not suffer as departments or spheres of government protect turf, or follow mindless rules that result in long delays.

"The PICC must be action oriented, flexible and focused. It must address matters with speed. Its culture must foster partnerships and solve problems and must attend to regulatory matters where necessary, so that we can make decisions and ensure actual delivery," he said.

The commission, which Zuma chairs, is a high-level government team comprising Ministers, Premiers and metropolitan council Mayors, set up in 2012.

PICC responsible for 150 infrastructure projects

The projects under the PICC - headed by different departments - cover more than 150 specific infrastructure initiatives in rail, road, ports, dams, irrigation systems, sanitation and electricity.

Zuma said ever since the commission was established, it has been criticised for under-spending in the past. However, it was beginning to change this with improved actual spending across all three spheres of government.

Zuma said that there were concerns over limited construction activity even though the commission monitors construction every quarter across hundreds of projects.

"We must make sure that dams are built, new schools are occupied by learners and railway carriages are manufactured and used for public transport systems.

"But we recognise that much more needs to be done to generate more energy, develop better logistics and transport systems, ensure that water and sanitation reach all communities and expand information and communication technologies including broadband, to strengthen South Africa's economy.

"And of course, investment in health, education and rural infrastructure are all critical to the welfare and prosperity of our people," Zuma added.

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