



# NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND STATE CAPACITY CONFERENCE

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7-9 NOVEMBER 2022

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

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The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), in partnership with the Department of Public Services and Administration (DPSA), will be hosting the National Development Plan and State Capacity Conference on 7-9 November 2022 in Durban, at Howard College Campus, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

**The Conference is themed**

*"Reflections on State Capacity and Government Performance through the first ten-years of the National Development Plan".*

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## Background

Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, the South African government has considered building the capacity of the state, and government performance as a critical factor in consolidating South Africa's democracy. The government considered this a priority in the quest to address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Efforts in this regard, have led to the development and adoption of the National Development Plan (NDP) in September, 2012. Thus, chapter 13 of the NDP is particularly committed to building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Ten years on, the South African state has been challenged in several aspects. These include, the growing unemployment, poverty and inequality. There is an emerging discourse on whether South Africa is a failing state. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic tested South African state's capacity to be resilient, adaptive, and resilient to adverse factors to the state's development goal. These and other issues in the last ten years of the adoption of the NDP, and in particular, chapter 13, provide necessary indicators on South Africa's state capacity.

It is important to give a comprehensive review, reflection, and account of the first ten years of the NDP's quest to build and sustain a capable, ethical and developmental state. This Conference is set against unearthing and delineating progress in this regard. The main topics of this Conference are underpinned by the relationship between state capacity, government performance, institutions, civil society, and development. Broken down, the Conference's themes are on: state capacity, parliamentary oversight, accountability in state-owned enterprises, developmental and institutional role, performance of the government, industrialisation within a developmental state framework.

The first three elements are significant because the NDP identified them as important components towards building a capable developmental state. These areas have also been contentious over the past decade as evident in the state capture debacle and the auditor general reports on the state of government entities. The fourth element is important and relevant because developmental states are judged on their ability to deliver social and economic development through industrialisation and structural transformation. Cumulatively, these identified areas will determine whether South Africa prospers or stagnates like many other African states struggling to create resilient and capable institutions.

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## **Abstracts**

Abstracts focusing on the following themes are invited from interested academics, policymakers, doctoral students and researchers. The abstracts need to be submitted by 10 September 2022, and full papers need to be submitted by 1 November 2022. Selected papers from the Conference will be published in two book volumes. Abstracts should be limited to 300 words.

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## Themes and subthemes

### STATE CAPACITY

- Review of the status of state capacity and government performance over the ten period since the adoption of the NDP.
- Existing state capacity measurements and tools
- The regulatory capacity of the state
- The structure and nature of the state in South Africa and its impact on development
- The role of the parliament in improving state capacity

### THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

- Examine the state's capacity to respond to society's state of distress.
- How did the government respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications for building a capable state?
- What have been the successes and challenges at which the government led and managed the COVID-19 pandemic?
- In what ways has the bureaucracy adjusted its modus operandi "post" COVID-19?
- What are the key lessons in this regard for the current quest to build a productive government?
- Civil society during the COVID-19 pandemic
- What has been the utility of the National Assembly's oversight role in ensuring government performance since the adoption of the NDP

### GOVERNANCE: LESSONS FROM STATE CAPTURE COMMISSION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES

- Critical insights into the performance of the government as the audits go beyond financial auditing to linking financial management to performance outcomes
- What trends can be drawn from AGs report over the past ten years?
- State of ethics and integrity management in the public sector
- Consequences and accountability framework in the public sector
- A critical analysis of state capture in South Africa and beyond
  - State capture; what are its enablers; the status of prosecution on those implicated; and as a way forward – means to strengthen governance systems and procedures to curb acts of capture.
- What are the trends in political and administrative interface, and their impact on government performance?
- What has been the developmental performance of SOEs?
- Privatisation in South Africa and its impact on development
- Does privatisation improve the prospects of SOEs?
- Does parliamentary oversight work in South Africa? What are the main successes and challenges?

## **SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Determination of the quality of political and administrative leadership at the local government level in the last ten years of the NDP
- The impact of political system and leadership on government performance
- The role of local government in South Africa's developmental state ambition
- The role of state institutions in building a capable state
- The role of the bureaucracy in building a capable state
- Emerging governance models and challenges in South Africa
- Local government and civil society in South Africa

## **INDUSTRIALISATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

- What is the state of infrastructure development?
- What has been some of the successes and challenges of development finance institutions?
- What progress has the country made in its industrial development ambitions?
- What role have DFIs such as the IDC and DBSA played in the country's industrial development landscape?
- How have the various sectors of the economy performed in the last 10 years of the NDP?
- Taking advantage of the fourth industrial revolution to build a globally competitive state and economy

## **Submission**

Abstracts need to be submitted to the following link: <https://protect-za.mimecast.com/s/ZATFC-DREWBSX4qk2C5uwQc?domain=docs.google.com>

If you face any challenges, email your abstracts to [khambulei@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:khambulei@ukzn.ac.za)

Please note that all abstracts need to consist of the Title, Authors name, affiliations, contact details, a short abstract and keywords. All abstracts will undergo a double peer review process and outcomes will be notified by 15 September 2022. The same process will apply to papers selected for the two book volumes anticipated to emerge from this Conference. No conference registration fee is expected from conference participants.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUERIES, CONTACT: DR ISAAC KHAMBULE AT**  
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