



Quo Vadis South Africa?

The economic and political prospects beyond 29 May 2024...

K Sithole
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Illustration: KAREN MOOLMAN



TIME

The World's Most Unequal Country

Johannesburg, South Africa, suburbs Primrose, left, and Makaanse

The build-up

The anticipated

- Decline for the ANC precipitated by bleeding in KZN and GP, ushering in more co-governance issues
- Introduction of new players – ‘better’ resourced according to what we think we know
- MK Party’s disruptor role
- Consequential effects on existing governance arrangements

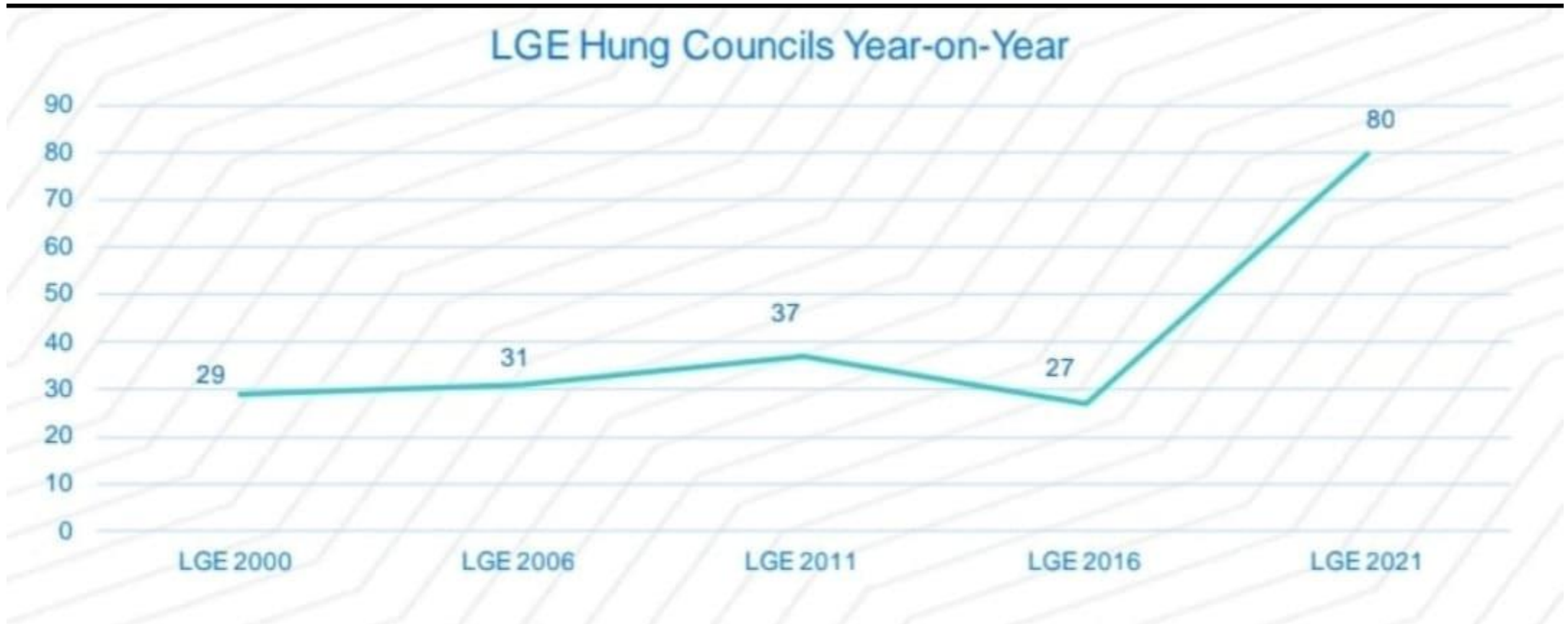
A turning point where nothing much turns?

- **What it isn't** – a 1994 moment...
- 1994 – currency of the ballot box undisputed – where was it lost?
- Service delivery protests – 2004 to today
- Vuwani – 2016 → #FeesMustFall – 2015 to today
- North-West ANC – 2018 → July Riots – 2021
- The migration across different forms of poverty...

What does the landscape look like?

- 1 National Assembly – 400 seats – [200:200]
- National Council of Provinces
- 9 Provincial Legislatures
- 257 Municipalities – fate indirectly linked to national fate
 - 205 Local Municipalities
 - 44 District Municipalities
 - 8 Metros

Does co-governance work?



The immediate aftermath

The actual reality

- The MK force swept across the landscape
- The steep, steep decline of the ANC
- The blowout of the new players and the red plateau
- The initial panic – what exactly happens when the bleeding is so steep
- The emerging permutations

A new union or fragile alliance?

The emergence of pragmatism

- Seeking consensus across the spectrum
- Creating an alchemy of the divergent
- Bridging ideological divides and historical scars to form a union
- Is it all too fragile to last?

A new government

Do we have any upsides?

- New dimensions of accountability
- Revival of stillborn but important interventions – the Gwarube Bill
- The policy stalemate vs the focus on executing on what exists
- The belated discovery of the Presidential Pen

A new government

Do we have any upsides?

Common consensus –

- The economy is broken
- Society is disillusioned
- Trust is waning
- Resources are strained
- Accountability is dead

A new government

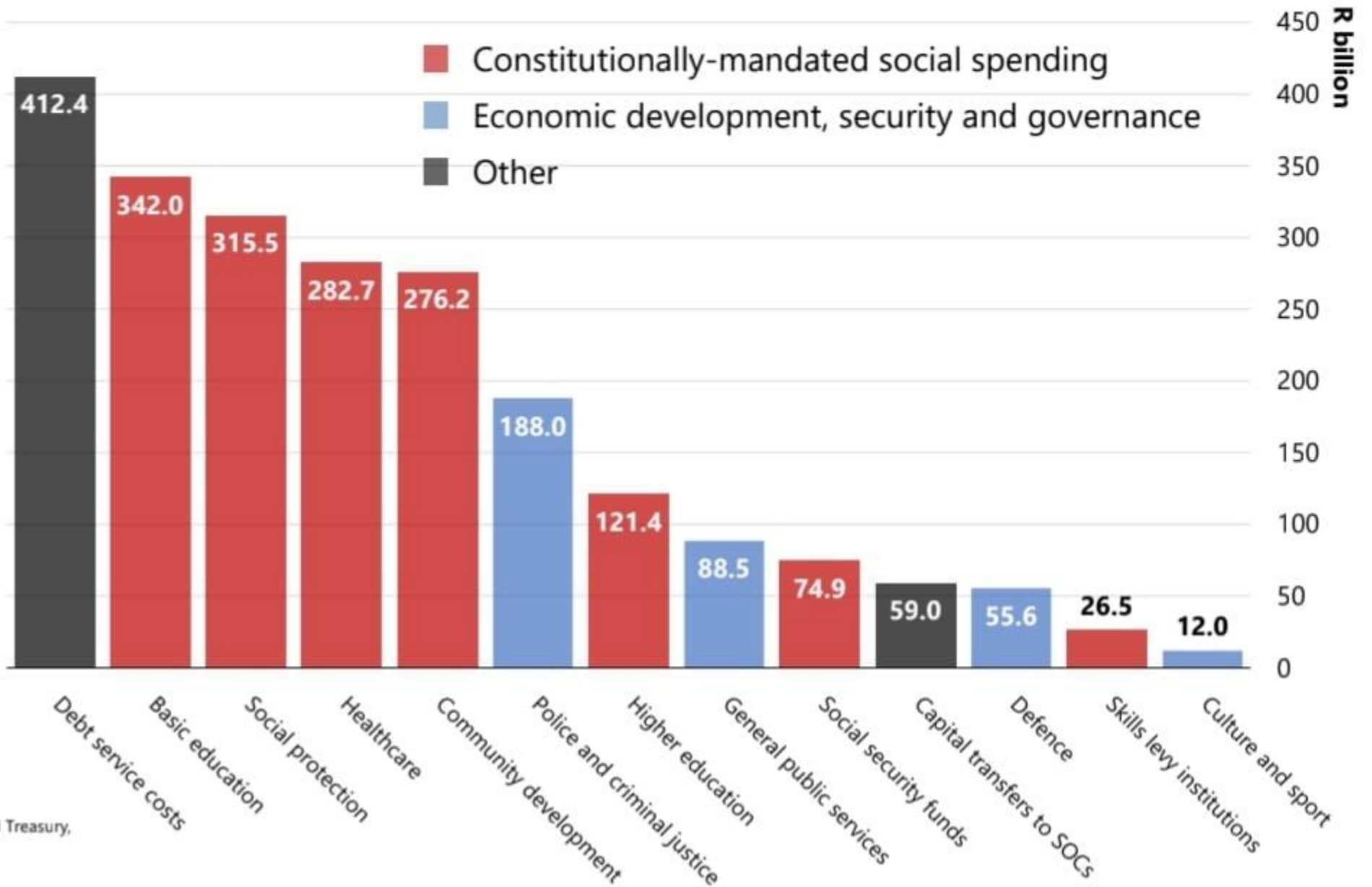
- **The binding ties** – all need to emerge with the ability to illustrate how they did better in their responsibilities of governance
- **The intractable deadlock** – all need to convince their constituencies that what defines them, will remain intact through it all
- **The national anxiety** – it could all be over too soon

Mending broken sociopolitical compact

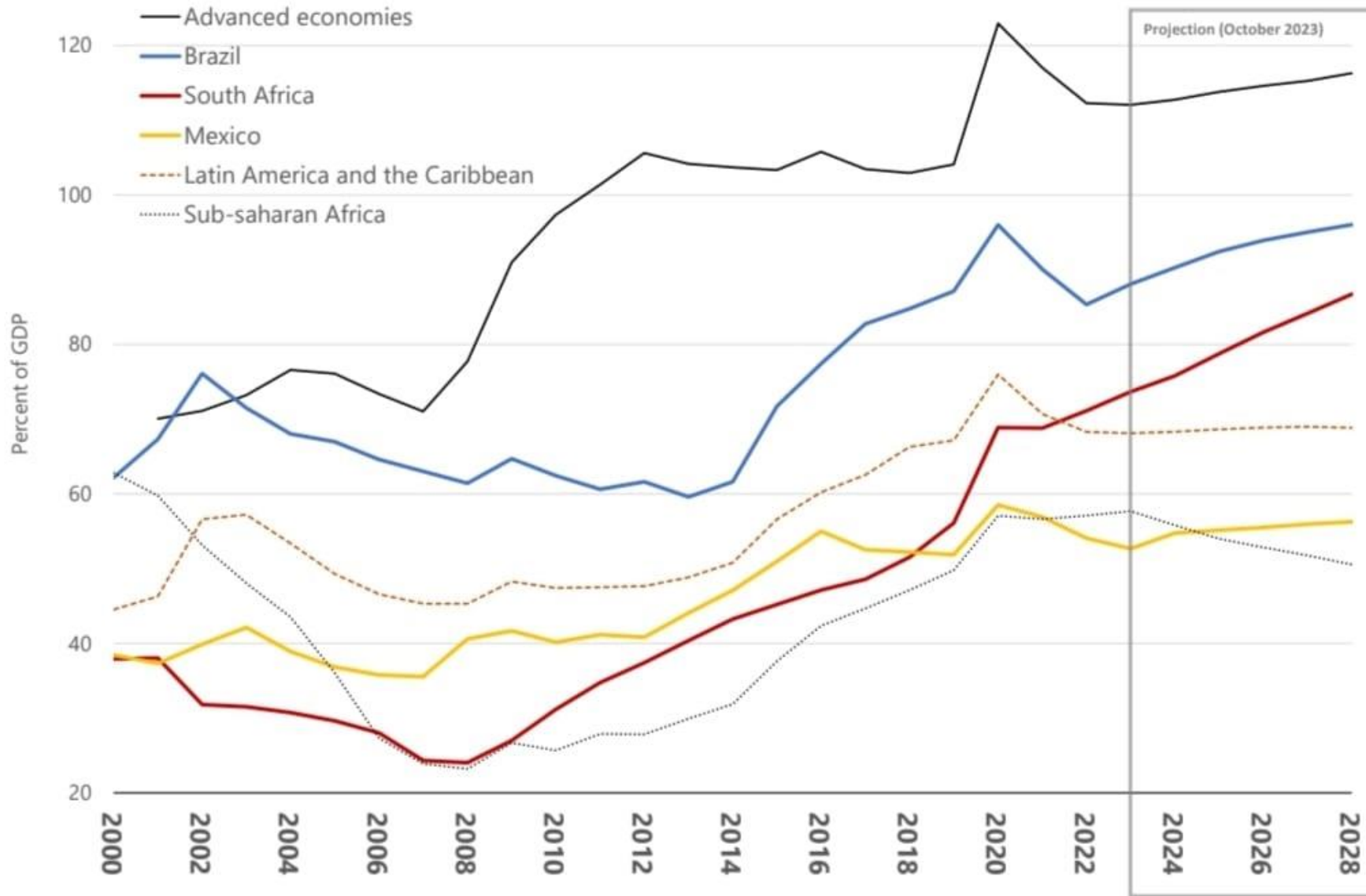
- Getting the social wage to be the **springboard** for economic autonomy
- Addressing the '**proximal crisis**' points – things that are evident and painful right now: **Energy, Education, Employment, Economy** → Equitable social outcomes
- Creating a pathway towards the ultimate turning point – fundamentally fixing a broken society

Economic

Average annual spending (2023-2026)



Debt-to-GDP ratio: 2000-2028



Source IMF (WEO October 2023)



Who can work together here?



Thanks for
Listening

