

SA has 2.1m housing backlog: Sexwale

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South Africa has 12.5 million people who need shelter owing to the housing backlog, says Human Settlements Minister Tokyo Sexwale.

"We have the backlog of plus 2.1 million housing units which translates into approximately 12.5 million people," Sexwale said on Thursday.

He was speaking on the first day of the two-day human settlements youth summit at Durban's Olive Convention Centre.

Sexwale said three million housing units had been given to mainly poor South Africans since 1994.

Human Settlements Vision 2030, said Sexwale, was aimed at creating integrated community settlements encompassing facilities and amenities such as schools and hospitals.

Proper human settlements were ones that had places of worship, sporting facilities and, most importantly, commercial and industrial areas within reasonable distances from residential areas.

The 2030 vision was about providing affordable and good quality shelter.

"In essence we say where we stay should also be where we can play, where we can pray, and so on."

There were many uncertainties lying ahead in the future of young people, such as the steadily increasing instability of the global economy.

"Although our country avoided a direct hit from the devastating effects of the last global economic recession, all indications are that the next one may not pass us," he said.

Sexwale said for the human settlements vision to be successful the department needed to plan for future adults.

"To succeed, the Human Settlements Vision 2030 must be essentially for and by the youth. It is about their future homes, apartments, bachelor's flats, and so on," said Sexwale.