



CABINET STATEMENT

TO : ALL MEDIA
EMBARGO : IMMEDIATE

**STATEMENT BY KWAZULU-NATAL PREMIER DR ZWELI MKHIZE IN THE
PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**

Pietermaritzburg, 12 June 2013: GOVERNMENT WISHES MADIBA A SPEEDY RECOVERY

On behalf of our Government and the people of KwaZulu-Natal, we join billions across the globe in wishing our beloved Madiba a speedy recovery. Since his admission to hospital over the weekend, he remains in our prayers and we continue to wish him all the best.

While we appreciate the advancement in his age and the condition of his health, we pray that he remains with us for many more years to come. Madiba is deeply loved as father of our Rainbow Nation. We would understand why millions in our nation appear unwilling to let him go now or in the future because his very presence among us inspires all humanity to work harder to fulfill his noble ideals of a better South Africa and indeed, a better world.

In this regard, we thank President Jacob Zuma and his Office for keeping the nation updated on Madiba's progress. We draw comfort in the knowledge that he is in very good hands and that the medical personnel at his disposal is the very best the country has to offer.

**Sithi lulama Madiba, Shophitsho.
Yem... Yem... Velabembhensala... Ngqolo msila...
Lulama Mthembu !!!!**

INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION BRIEFS KZN CABINET

The Independent Electoral Commission, led by chairperson Advocate Pansy Tlakula, today briefed the KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet on preparations and state of readiness for the national and provincial elections next year. This was the first such engagement since the new Commission was constituted in November 2011.

The term of office for the current National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures expires on 21 April 2014 and elections must be held within 90 days of the expiry of that term or the dissolution of the National Assembly or Provincial Legislature.

There are 136 political parties registered for the national elections. Of the 85 registered municipally, only 4 are KwaZulu-Natal-based.

Among the challenges identified by the IEC is closing the voter registration gap and enrolling more youth. Only 75% of the eligible voters have registered to exercise this right in KwaZulu-Natal. The Commission has also identified the issue of demarcation disputes in some parts of the country as well as tensions and protests within certain communities.

The diminishing participation by observers and the "bussing" of voters during elections was also discussed during the meeting.



Cabinet briefed the Commission on provincial initiatives to ensure the smooth running of elections, including setting up a task team to tackle political conflicts in KwaZulu-Natal.

On behalf the Government I wish to congratulate Advocate Tlakula and her team for the professionalism and efficiency of the Commission in conducting elections.

The credibility of the leadership depends on the credibility of the process that leads to their election. The IEC is held in very high esteem not only in Africa but globally as an institution that can be trusted to deliver free and fair elections. The fact that the Commission is invited across the world to assist to run elections is proof that ours is a credible process. We congratulate the chairperson and the team for their outstanding work and the long service they have rendered to the country.

For our part, we are available to assist. We are, however, concerned about attacks on the IEC alleging irregularities. We would urge those raising such issues to approach the courts with evidence to back their claims to deal with those matters.

We have also noted the report from the IEC regarding incidents of suspected bussing of voters during by-elections. We condemn this practice and call on all political parties to dissuade their members from such practice.

We commend party leaders serving in the multi-party committee who have contributed to the resolution of local tensions. KwaZulu-Natal has seen resurgence in past few years, but we need to work hard to see that this trend does not resurface in the next elections. The number of murders in Estcourt remains of great concern and together with the police, the political leadership is striving to ensure that we have peaceful, free and fair elections in that area as well.

The IEC welcomed the opportunity to engage with the Cabinet and particularly appreciated measures by the Government to facilitate the smooth running of the elections.

CABINET APPROVES McCORD'S HOSPITAL TAKE-OVER

The KwaZulu-Natal Government has approved the take-over of McCord's Hospital in Durban by the Department of Health once due diligence is completed in the next few months.

Having reached agreement with the board of the hospital and Provincial Treasury, the Department is considering two options. The final decision will be informed by the due diligence process to be completed by the end of September.

We are allowing sufficient time for the completions of the due diligence exercise in order to prevent retrenchments and ensure that the delivery of health care to patients is not compromised in any way. McCord's Hospital has had a long history of service to our people and as Government we are pleased that we have found each other with the interested parties. Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo will brief the media further on this development.

KWAZULU-NATAL TO HOLD RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

In the State of the Province Address this year, I announced that a Rural Development Summit would be held this year. The Summit will provide the impetus for a long-term Provincial Rural Development Implementation Plan through the participation of the private and public sector, business, labour, the traditional authorities as well as the participation of rural communities.

The thoroughness of the details and preparations made it impossible to convene the stakeholders earlier. Cabinet has approved the hosting of the Summit at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban on July 18 and 19.



FIGHT AGAINST CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Umsinga

We welcome the arrest of suspects who were involved in the massacre of seven Mkhize family members at their home in the early hours of the morning of the 9th March 2013 at Muden in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands.

The work of law enforcement agencies must be commended by all the people of KwaZulu-Natal. We call upon police to remain steadfast in their resolve to rid this province of any form of violence. We cannot afford an image of a province wherein killings becomes the order of the day.

We reiterate our firm stand that such a state of affairs is viewed as intolerable, and that we as government will do everything in our power to ensure that such destructive behaviour is nipped in the bud.

Name and Shame campaign announced by Minister Jeff Radebe

Cabinet commends the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Mr Jeff Radebe on an initiative to name and shame government officials convicted of fraud and corruption.

Our government has taken a firm stand to uproot and fight corruption wherever it may rear its ugly head. It is for this reason that the provincial government will explore the possibility of replicating this initiative in this province in order to defeat this pandemic.

This we do to conserve resources as fraud and corruption have a potential to cause such massive drain of resources that it poses a risk to undermine service delivery and cause our democracy to flounder. Fighting corruption is about the restoration of the fibre of our society.

YOUTH MONTH CELEBRATIONS

Madam Speaker, since the advent of democracy in 1994, June in South Africa has been designated and recognised as Youth Month. This event being held during Youth Month thus carries an added and special significance for our young democracy.

KwaZulu-Natal Province was selected by the South African Maritime Authority to host the Maritime Career Expo and Jobs Summit which ends today.

The provincial government has identified the Maritime Industry as having the potential to turn the KZN into the logistics gateway into Africa and the rest of the world.

Importantly, the global shortage in seafarers presents an opportunity for KZN to becoming a labour supply nation to the global shipping transport industry, thereby creating jobs particularly for the youth in rural and township areas.

Our objective as government is to empower young people, by granting them an opportunity to become a part of the Maritime sector. I will be delivering the closing address at this conference this afternoon.

As we celebrate the month of June, KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government will unveil the revised Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy during a two day Youth Economic Summit scheduled to start tomorrow at the ICC, in Durban. In order to create more youth entrepreneurs in the province we are exploring more interventions as government such as a dedicated fund for the promotion of youth enterprise development. The new revised Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy proposes that the youth economic empowerment fund should have the following four broad functions:



- Seed Capital
- Collateral support
- Business Development services such as constant coaching, business plan, regulatory compliance and business etiquette among others.
- Bursary for Youth Leadership and Entrepreneurship development
- Fund Innovation exchange programmes

The Sitting of the Youth Parliament starts on the 14th to the 15th June in Belgrade Sports Ground in Pongola Municipality as it has been announced. Under theme: "Working together with the Youth towards advancing social economic freedom", members of the Provincial Executive Council are expected to attend and make presentations highlighting departmental programmes focusing on youth development across the province.

President Jacob Zuma will deliver a keynote address at the National Youth Day Commemoration on 16 June 2013 under the theme, "Working Together for Youth Development and a Drug Free South Africa". The President will be accompanied by Minister of Arts and Culture Paul Mashatile and Minister in the Presidency Collins Chabane. Members of this House are invited to attend this important event.

President is also expected to lay the wreath at a place where youth who were killed in Nquthu.

I thank you

Enquiries:

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