

**Speech by Premier of KwaZulu Natal Honourable TW Mchunu  
during Prayer Month event held at the  
Ugu Sports and Leisure Centre on  
06July 2018**

**Thank You Programme Director;  
Members of Provincial Executive Council;  
AbaBishobhi nabaFundisi;  
AbaHoli bamabandla ehlukenene;  
Amabandla Onke Ngothi Lwawo;  
Amakholwa Onke;  
Honourable Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;  
Good Morning!  
Sanibonani!**

I wish to start by thanking you for this opportunity to address this very important occasion in the programme of our Provincial Prayer Month 2018.

We stand here humbled by the journey we have taken over the past month, when as the Provincial Executive Council we took the decision to hold a Provincial Prayer Month.

It started in earnest in February 2018 when the Premier addressed the Inter-Faith Prayer Day in the Umvoti Municipality. This event was held under the theme of “**Partnership between Government and faith communities on Moral Regeneration**”.

On this important day, we committed to a series of engagement with religious leaders of all faiths and denominations which would include a breakfast and symposiums with the religious community.

Since the 07<sup>th</sup> of June 2018, when we met with the religious leaders in Umhlanga, we have travelled the length and breadth of our province praying for peace under the slogan and hashtag **#Sekwanele. Stop the Violence**. One of the highlights of these events was the Prayer hosted by Isilo SamaBandla in Ulundi on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 which demonstrated the overwhelming support of the idea of Prayer Month across the entire province.

Programme Director, when we declared the Prayer, we said MECs had to conduct their own Prayer Programmes which would ensure we covered the entire province and most of the sectors in our society.

We also decided that every government programme would also become part of the Provincial Prayer Month. So every government event including our Operation Sukuma Sakhe events over the past month have included an element of the Provincial Prayer Month.

We also asked citizens of the Province to join in the Prayer either in churches, synagogues, mosques, tabernacles, temples, halls, tents, marquees, in schools and in homes.

As government we have met with religious leaders and followers of all denominations. This includes members of the Christian Faith, Muslims, Jews, the Shembe Church, Rasta Faith, African Tradition all of whom have told us in no uncertain terms that they are part of this campaign.

We have interfaced with business, taxi operators, truck drivers and people living with albinism in a bid to help resolve the issues that have in their totality contributed to the social ills and instability in our province.

We have addressed men, women and young people and each time we have repeated our prayer of **#Sekwanele Stop the Violence**.

Within our financial resources we have waged a media campaign to make our people part of and aware of this Provincial Prayer Month.

## **The reasons for the Prayer**

**Programme Director**, Today we stand at the end of this very successful programme, yet it bears going back a bit to appreciate the challenges that brought us here in the first place.

In his Budget Speech earlier this year, our Transport Community Safety and Liaison MEC Mxolisi Kaunda told the Legislature that over the past four years violent crime had increased in KwaZulu-Natal.

Specifically, according to the latest statistics, murder had increased by 2.2%. Nationally, Inanda was even identified as the number one policing area nationally in reported murders. Number One in Murder nationally!

Specifically, Inanda was in 2017 the worst among ten precincts when it came to murder, followed by Umlaza, Plessislaer, KwaMashiu, Ntuzuma, Mariannahill and Chatsworth in the top ten.

With regard to sexual offences, in 2017 there were 348 cases reported in Inanda relating to sexual offences. This was followed by Umlazi at under 300. Even the two lowest among the ten Esikhaleni and Madadeni together accounted for 275 sexual offence cases.

Interestingly, the perpetrators and victims of these crimes were found to be mostly males between the ages of 18 and 40 years. Furthermore, like in the rest of the country, these murders occurred in the majority of cases, over weekends. The category of robbery with aggravated circumstances was also reported to be up over the past four years.

**Programme Director**, tied to these murders is often the phenomenon of the illegal firearm. MEC Kaunda also told the Legislature that police had recovered some 18 638 illegal firearms over the past four years in KwaZulu Natal.

According to the latest police statistics, in the period 2016/2017, stock theft had increased by 4%, with some 6697 stolen cows, 3209 goats, 1000 sheep, 99 horses, 31 pigs and 2 donkeys recovered.

**Programme Director**, these latest statistics also showed that commercial crime had increased by 8.9% in 2016/2017, this after having remained fairly stable over the last five years. As you are aware, commercial crime includes fraud, corruption, collusion, tax evasion and cyber-crimes.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** I have no doubt that the picture I have painted above, may be familiar to you. This is the situation here in KwaZulu Natal. Frankly however, it is so in the rest of the country. Safety in our communities is being threatened by our own children, brothers and husbands who have turned hired assassins who murder politicians and civil servants by the dead of night.

The recent killing of four councillors in separate incidents in Zululand, Ugu and Umgungundlovu is just one such example of the social ills we find in our province. In our assessment we identified the killing of women by their partners, the victimisation of vulnerable groups in our society including people living with disability, people living with Albinism, the elderly and children as among these ills.

For its part, Organised Business has also in our engagements raised the following issues:

- The blockading of the N3 Mooi River Toll Gate and the burning of trucks which disrupted smooth flow of traffic;
- Violence and damage to public property at Moses Mabhida Stadium during the Chiefs Free State Stars game;
- Attacks on private citizens in public places including academic institutions and places of worship;
- Blockading of the Durban Port by so-called Business Forums wanting a slice of the Transnet Port business;
- Construction site invasions, extortions and rising tension in townships between local and refugee traders;

### **Understanding these developments**

**Programme Director,** in our reading of these developments it is clear that crime is possibly the greatest existential threat to peaceful coexistence in KwaZulu Natal. In the main, the most significant aspect of these social ills is that they involve an element of crime.

In context many of the challenges we have identified emanate from cities and urban precincts. Even they may manifest in rural areas, they are mainly imported from the cities. For this reason, these urban centres are critical in our understanding of the social ills currently besetting the our province.

One could also argue that the rise in gun violence in our cities and villages might be a local trend, but it is worth also considering the international dimension of our domestic or provincial social ills. An attack on foreign nationals for instance, has international reach, with further impact on tourism and international investments into the province.

The combination of drugs and illegal guns, both of which are linked to illicit international trade, is deadly. In this instance, someone with a diminished sense of judgement and shame, wields control over the deadliest weapon ever placed in the hands of one person.

In this regard, in its 2017 State of Urban Safety Report, the University of Cape Town identifies crime hotspots which must be included in any crime prevention strategy as we address the cause of our social ills.

These are:

- **Absence of a 'capable guardian'**: A person (or persons) whose presence and behaviour could deter possible offenders from perpetrating a crime;
- **Motivated offenders**: Persons who, for a variety of reasons including gang initiation, are looking to perpetrate a crime. This typically relates to theft and robbery, but also to rape and sexual assault;
- **Suitable target**: A person who is at significant risk of becoming a victim of crime, particularly theft and robbery, but also rape and sexual assault. Examples include individuals who live or walk alone, particularly women and elderly;
- **Crime facilitators**: Resources that are fundamental to enabling the criminal actions of the motivated offenders. These typically include weapons, such as firearms and knives, but may also include the transportation mode used by the motivated offenders to access and exit the place of the crime;
- **Absence of 'intimate handlers'**: Persons who could exercise control over the actions of a motivated offender. Such persons include spouses and intimate partners, relatives and friends;

- **Pro-crime spatial characteristics:** Places that are generally neglected (unkempt, overgrown and with large amounts of litter), containing inadequate or broken street lighting, derelict buildings and weak neighbourhood cohesion, and are more prone to criminal offending persons, as well as individuals who are intoxicated or unobservant of their surroundings.

It has become clear that there is widespread rape of women, sexual abuse of children and the elderly.

It has become clear that every community, all over the province today has a problem with Whoonga.

It has become clear to us the victims of Whoonga are in the cities and even in the rural areas. These young people are often found breaking into homes, robbing community members and even committing murder.

Many in our communities are no longer free to move at night in fear of being attacked for their possessions and the real threat of losing one's life.

There is fear from possible attacks in your home, in the street, being raped, hijacked or killed for your possessions including money. These are the social ills of our time.

It is these generally worrying developments, plus a series of violent incidents, that have gripped our province in recent time and which drove us to prayer.

We knew then as we do now, that arrests, imprisonment alone will not solve our problems forever.

As government we have indicated very strongly before that is our duty to deal with these ills through the might of the law. Where we find that laws are being broken, we are on the side of the law. We will do everything to uphold it.

In this regard, as you are aware, in 2016 the Premier established the Moerane Commission of Inquiry to probe the factors around the political assassinations in KwaZulu Natal. The Commission has submitted its final report to The Premier.

The process now requires submitting the Commission report to the Legislature for processing by the relevant portfolio committees and thereafter releasing it to the public.

We are very keen to have the report released very soon for the public to comment, and for the province to debate the options available to us.

We have also shared the report with our Provincial Executive Council and we will be submitting it to President Cyril Ramaphosa and the Inter-Ministerial Committee as the earliest convenience.

As we approach the end of this period, we would like to extend this approach to the rest of our programmes. It is correct that as we have started, we must never stop praying. We must become even stronger in prayer and not lose our momentum.

We already have platforms such as Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) the war-room based platform that affords Civil Society, including Faith Communities, opportunity to participate in the rebuilding of our province. We will continue propagating this gospel.

Together we can cater for the spiritual, physical and societal needs of our communities and achieve our quest for the self-actualization of individuals and the creation of an equitable and just environment for peace and prosperity.

No doubt, our Prayer sessions will ultimately lead to a province in which there is food for all, housing and health for all. We must ensure there must be safety and security for all!

## **PROVINCIAL MONTH OF PRAYER**

KwaZulu Natal will become a peaceful and “**a prosperous Province, with a healthy, secure and skilled population, living in dignity and harmony, and acting as a gateway to Africa and the World**”.

On behalf of the government and people of KwaZulu Natal, I wish to end by saying that we expect you in your millions to join us as we say **#Sekwanele Stop the Violence!!**

**END**