**REPORT BY THE PREMIER OF KWAZULU-NATAL NOMUSA DUBE-NCUBE ON THE 100 DAYS REFLECTIONS.**

**Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen of the media;**

**Fellow citizens of KwaZulu-Natal;**

Thank you for making time to come to this briefing aimed at reflecting on the 100 Days since we have been in Office, as the first female Premier of KwaZulu-Natal in 28 years of democracy. We present this report under the theme of **“Restoring Hope for a Better KwaZulu-Natal”.** This is what we have endeavoured to do since August 2022, following a number of sad episodes in the province

We wish to thank the African National Congress and the people of KwaZulu-Natal for bestowing upon us the daunting but great honour to lead the recovery and development of our province at this stage in history.

The sixth administration put in place priorities to build a Capable, Ethical and Developmental State that will drive economic revival and translate into job creation and elimination of poverty, unemployment and inequality. This was captured in the priorities and became a programme of action of this administration. Eight months into the term of our government the attention was diverted to managing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since we have been in office we have had to remodel our plans and mobilise the entire government machinery towards collective implementation and renewal of efforts to stimulate economic growth, build back better and accelerate service delivery provision.

Our goal is always to build a strong and prosperous KwaZulu-Natal.

I am pleased to report that with my collective of MEC’s in the Executive Council, we have been hard at work on behalf of our citizens.

**LEAPFROGGING KZN TO 4IR – BUILDING A SMART PROVINCE**

Since assuming office we have aggressively embarked on the journey to catapult the province of KwaZulu-Natal as one of the technology hubs of the country by awakening the sleeping giant which is the digital economy. We have noticed that our province has not been moving at the required pace in terms of implementing the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as the new frontier of economic growth and the pillar on which industries of the future will be built. Our view remains that if we let this Fourth Industrial Revolution miss us like it happened with the other economic revolutions, we risk putting the future of our next generation into bleakness. This is a reality we can no longer postpone for it will have dire consequences for our development prospects.

We have since prioritised the implementation of the Smart Province Programme as part of accelerating the digital revolution in KwaZulu-Natal.

Our starting point has been to modernise and digitise services within government. We want to ensure that those services that can be accessed online or those who want to do so can be enabled through either their smart phones or computers. We have a challenge of records management which is still done manually in government. Part of the reasons cited for our high medico legal bills among other issues relates to the records systems and the syndicate takes advantage of this loophole and siphon money from government through frivolous litigation.

We have recently opened a digital lab in Pietermaritzburg which we are using to train young people in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics. The programme will be rolled-out to all districts in the province. We are currently training 20 young people and recruiting 75 more for laptop and cell-phone repair. We are now rolling out bootcamps in all districts where were are fast-tracking skills and technology development in the Fourth Industrial Revolution space among young people. The first bootcamp has benefitted 450 young people. Our view is that 4IR must contribute as an important economic stream to the provincial economy. For this to be a reality we need to invest in advanced IT systems and Infrastructure as a province and we need to generate skill accommodating our youth in rural and urban areas. KwaZulu-Natal cannot only be known for Tourists and Agriculture. If we are to deal with the township economy and rural economy revitalisation we believe our digitisation and Fourth Industrial Revolution programmes must lead the way.

**BUILDING BACK BETTER**

Last week we updated you on the progress with our building back better programme which is focused on helping flood victims. The update we wish to give today is that the mass care shelters have reduced from 61 to 58 (remember we come from 135 mass care shelters). We remain on schedule to get people out of mass care shelters by mid-December 2022. All land parcels that we are preparing for permanent development have increased from 8 to 13. We are currently finalising statutory approvals in order to finalise permanent development. So in a nutshell we will not be keeping people in the Temporary Emergency Accommodations perpetually as we are looking to rehouse people permanently in the three story walk-ups buildings. The N2 towards Amanzimtoti which has frustrated many people will be opened this December. The South Durban Basin which bore most impact during the floods is almost close to recovery. This means that we are making visible progress daily.

The retail sector which also suffered severe destruction is almost close to full recovery. Major retail shops that were affected have opened although we still have some challenges. These include major factories and township malls. The rest of the progress in this regard is reflected on our last week’s report.

**ECONOMIC RECOVERY – INVESTMENT ATTRACTION**

In our very first week in office, we supported the reopening of the Toyota Manufacturing plant in Prospecton which was ravaged by the floods of April 2022, where the mud was approximately 1,8m deep over the entire 87-hectare site, causing extensive damage to electrical, mechanical and IT equipment. Toyota South Africa had to order just over 100,000 new equipment parts to replace the damaged ones, while around 4,300 flood-damaged vehicles had to be crushed. The plant started ramping up production and regained full production in September.

We also welcomed the R7,7 billion upgrade and expansion project aimed at increasing the capacity and global competitiveness of the Sappi Saiccor Mill. The project expansion was completed and Sappi Limited and Sappi Southern Africa was officially launched by President of the Republic of South Africa His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa. This project has increased the mill’s production of dissolving pulp. Sappi’s operations in South Africa employs 3,929 people with its forestry plantations employing 871 people on a permanent basis and 8,300 contractors. The company is one of the biggest container exporters, with approximately 75,000 TEUs per annum or 205 TEU containers per day out of Durban Port under normal circumstances with its global logistics offices located in Durban.

Another investment was by the Metair Group’s Hesto Harnesses, which manufactures wiring harnesses for the automotive industry from their new factory situated next to their existing operation in Stanger was also launched by the President. Hesto is the largest employer in the Stanger/Ilembe region with a total number of 4500 of employees.

Heston Harnesses investment amounted to over R750m investment. This investment is part of the Ford T6 vehicle launch which is part of Ford’s Global Program, with South Africa being a key manufacturing. For Hesto Harnesses this means creating approximately 3300 new jobs in KwaDukuza in the Hesto factory alone, in addition to the current 2300 employees. This brings the combined workforce of Hesto harnesses, currently the largest employer in KwaDukuza to over 5000 employees including current employees, with over 70% of women representation.

We also launched the Oceans Umhlanga mixed development project in Umhlanga. The development boasts the Radisson Blu Hotel, a world-class shopping mall and luxury apartments. The Radisson Blu five-star luxury hotel has 270 rooms. This was a Greenfield development which directly taps into the valuable business tourism market.

Oceans Umhlanga broader investment of R4,2 billion has transformed the up-market area of Umhlanga in order to provide additional products for the hospitality sector.

**PROJECTS ON THE PIPELINE IN THE 100 DAYS OF OFFICE**

**Sino Africa Gas**

The projects entail manufacturing of food grade carbon dioxide for the beverages sector. The project  will be in Newcastle at the Karbochem chemical complex. This is a R56 million rand investment and will contribute a potential of 50 jobs. A grant fund amount of R21 million has been approved by the DTIC, with a further R36million funding approved by the NEF toward project implementation.

**CMT Global**

Project entails textile and apparel manufacturing at Ezakheni and is valued at R390 million creating 1650 jobs. The company is the largest vertically integrated textile manufacturing plant. They produce for Foschini, Woolworths, Total Sports, Markham, Sport Scene and The Fix. The project is currently at construction phase.

**Estcourt Intermodal Terminal**

The project entails development of a logistics park and an intermodal terminal at the old Masonite/ Evowood  site in Estcourt. This project is recognized as one of the official Transnet back of port facilities across the country and is valued at R1.2billion with a potential of 1000 jobs to be created.

**Zululami Coastal Residential Estate**

This is a coastal residential estate development by the Rowles Property Group in Ballito. The first phase of the project is worth R390 million creating 400 jobs.

**Duzi Forestry- Plywood**

Duzi Forest Engineers is the plywood and veneer manufacturing company. This project valued at R104 million at Ngome, AbaQulusi Local Municipality. Funding applications have been forward to various financial institutions.

**Watercrest Medical Centre of Excellence**

This is a medical Centre of Excellence hospital which will comprise of 407 beds servicing acute, Sub-acute, Day care and Psychiatric wards to be located in Hillcrest. This is a R1.5 billion investment with estimated 1000 jobs. The project has already achieved rezoning, Environmental Impact Assessment approval, hospital license and private funding has been secured.

**BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION**

**Exemplar Retail**

Exemplar Retail are the owner and manager of various township and rural retail space in South Africa with a portfolio of 23 retail centres in South Africa including the Greater Edendale Mall in Pietermaritzburg which was destroyed during the July 2021 civil unrest. TIKZN has worked with the owner in rebuilding of the Greater Edendale Mall. The rebuilding costs are estimated at R200 million which three phases to be effected. Phase 1 is focused on the Health Care Section which opened on the 24th of August 2022. Phase 2 involves the retail and financial services session and is scheduled to open on the 25th of November 2022. Phase three will open in March 2023 and involves the retail and clothing section.

**LHL Engineering**

This is a R80 million company expansion. The company is relocation to bigger and better premises in Glen Anil.

**SET-BACKS**

**Denny’s Mushrooms**

TIKZN is working with the company after a fire broke out in their Shongweni farm on the 9th of September which left 319 staff members without jobs. We are working to ensure that the company comes back stronger once the farm in Shongweni has been rebuilt, pending the outcome of the investigation.

**Tongaat Hulett**

The company announced in October that is has begun voluntary business rescue proceedings. 750 000 jobs across the company supply chain in the SADC region could be affected if the company is not stabilised. Tongaat Hulett has released more than R6 billion in addressing its debt crisis, including equity capital injections from strategic partners and also sale of its operations in Africa. However, this has not been able to take the company out of its debt crisis, hence the reason for the voluntary business rescue.

**SMME’S, TOWNSHIP AND RURAL ECONOMY REVITALISATION**

We are unlocking the township SMMEs in the automotive sector to provide a wide range of services such as fleet service and maintenance, panel beating, spray painting, automotive mechanical workshops for different types of vehicles in all tiers of government within the fleet management value chain. IThala Development SOC is playing a leading role in this area. The primary focus is on reskilling young people, be it unemployed graduates or those who have been retrenched or lost their jobs in both informal and formal economies. We want them to be re-absorbed in industries such as the automotive sector. Some of the unemployed graduates we believe that the automotive sector is an area where jobs will be created to absorb thousands of unemployed youth but also people who lost their jobs as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We want rural and township-based youth, who are trained as artisans and mechanics, to work in the automotive industry.

**JOB PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMME FOR UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES**

A robust partnership between the Office of the Premier Youth Development Chief Directorate and the National Department: Department of Employment and Labour (DOEL) on the implementation of Job Preparedness Programme to capacitate unemployed graduates in the province has commenced. We are providing Youth Mobile Offices that are visiting all Districts to provide accessible points of information regarding labour market opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, NSFAS, CAO, EPWP, YEPP, SA Youth Mobi, NYDA products, and graduate recruitment schemes. These are criss-crossing various parts of the province.

**EXPOSING YOUTH TO THE AVIATION SECTOR**

We are pleased to announce that the Office of the Premier is rolling out a programme aimed at job creation, skills development and supporting young people in the aviation sector. The office has been funding a total of 7 pilots between January and October 2022. The aviation sector offers rewarding possible careers as Pilots, Cabin Attendants, Air Traffic Controller, Aeronautical Engineer, Aircraft Mechanic, Airport Planner, Airport Security Manager, Airfield Operations Specialist, Airline Operations Agent and Airport Manager among others. We are encouraged that aviation training institutions such as the Fuze Aviation Academy has entered into a partnership with the Provincial Government through the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs. We are also pleased to learn that upon exit some of the students being trained through the Aviation Academy will be able to work with the Department of Transport and Health in identifying road accident monitoring and data collection especially during peak seasons and major events throughout the country. As drone pilots they will provide real time capture of accident scenes and take pictures first-hand before any interference can happen to conceal crucial information and evidence.

**SERVICE DELIVERY INTERVENTIONS – RESPONDING TO WATER HOTSPOTS**

**Recruitment of Retired Engineers**

We have paid significant attention to the number one service deliver challenge facing the people of KwaZulu-Natal – Water. To this end we have identified a number of retired engineers who will assist us with skills and experience in responding to these challenges. We will deploy these engineers to infrastructure and water hotspots. The problem is highly pronounce in Ugu, uMzinyathi uThukela and uMkhanyakude District. We have as part of the response established water war rooms in all districts. These war rooms are doing work daily identifying quick solutions packaging permanent solutions.

The province has developed a Water Master Plan which is our immediate response to this challenge. The Master plan covers long and short term solution. What we have observed is that we need focus on the implementation of the short term and realisable intervention. Clearly the pace in some of these areas is concerning. Some of the inefficiencies are not science but are human will and error. These include not responding timeously to burst pipes, leaking sewer, tree felling and grass cutting. As we move forward the issue of the performance of the state especially monitoring and evaluation requires tightening.

**WATER IMPROVEMENT IN UGU**

The war room in uGu District has made some improvements and is implementing a raft of measures to bring stability in the provision of water services in this district. These include:

Refurbishment of the mechanical and electrical components of the St Helen’s Rock. This project has made a significant impact in the improved provision of water services to the greater Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality community. The areas that have benefitted from this project are from Hibberdene to Ramsgate including the rural areas of Boboyi, Murchison, Gamalakhe and the surroundings.

The Umzimkhulu Dam level has steadily increased after the implementation of the project, over the past few weeks the dam was sitting at 94%.

The second project was the refurbishment of the Umtamvuna mechanical, electrical, and civil components project which was implemented to minimise short to medium water supply disruptions to all supply areas under Umtamvuna System. An amount of R6 400 000 was received through the COGTA Massification Grant for this project. This project has been completed. We are still far from satisfied but there is progress.

**FIGHTING CRIME AND BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES**

Within the 100 days, working with the police under the leadership of MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Sipho Hlomuka and Provincial Police Commissioner. Lieutenant-General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi, we have mobilised community safety structures such as KZN Community Crime Prevention Association, Community Police Forum Board and Community Police Forum Youth Desk. Since August 2022 successes has been recorded in the following areas.

**NGUDWINI MULTI-MILLION RAND DRUG BUST:**

Machinery and drugs worth millions of rands were confiscated following a raid by the Organised Crime Investigation and Narcotics Unit. Swift action by the police led to the discovery of this drug laboratory. We will continue to ensure that such operations take place frequently since drugs are one of the key drivers of crime.

**RECOVERY OF ILLEGAL FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION**

In the past 90 days, police have just discovered at least 97 illegal firearms and 2000 ammunition. In one incident which occurred in eMpangeni, police were on a shoot-out with criminals. Subsequently, the homeowner aged 45 and a security guard aged 36 died at the scene following the brazen shoot-out**.** We cannot allow criminals to take over our streets willy-nilly. The rule of law must always be exercised. No criminal act is going to go unpunished. The state is duty bound to protect its people and we assure our citizens that we are equal to the task.

**BUILDING A CAPABLE AND ETHICAL PUBLIC SERVICE**

The lessons of the first 100 days have taught us about the crucial needs of improving the efficiency of the public services; strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation Units and making our processes more accountable. The skills audit has been an important revelation on the capacity of the state to meet the priorities of government and translate them into visible actions on the ground. Following the completion of the Skills Audit exercise for the municipalities and for all senior management within the Provincial Administration, we are now in the process of implementing the recommendations that came out of that processes. Part of the interventions is also to ensure that people are well placed to address the issue of mismatch between the skills and the actual positions that people occupy.

One of the areas we are also intensifying is around consequence management. Following the approval of the Consequence Management Framework, the Office of the Premier is now leading efforts to ensure implementation by all government departments.

**PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

We have held many consultations and engagements with stakeholders, we have listened to the people wherever they are. We have met Women Organisations, Religious Sector, Business, Community Organisations and other sectors of society. We remain humbled by the support and commitment to partnership for the benefit of the Province. With this 100 day report we want to send an early signal that KwaZulu-Natal is ready to heighten the tempo, get things back on track to grow KwaZulu-Natal Together.

**CONCLUSION**

We have begun laying the foundation to usher in the era of change, renewal and sense of urgency in everything we do. We aim to implement our service delivery programme of action much faster, with greater focus, determination and impact.

We commit to remain accountable and we will do our best to inspire hope and restore the confidence of our citizens.

I thank you very much.