



Premier Senzo Mchunu and Martin O'Malley, outgoing Governor of the State of Maryland in the United States have signed a Cooperation Arrangement under the "sister twinning programme" aimed at strengthening relations between the two parties. Governor O'Malley has been a key driver of this twinning arrangement, which is the last he has signed before leaving office. In his speech, he thanked Premier Mchunu for his zeal in forging this partnership and for ensuring that it is formalised through this agreement. "I thank you Premier for ensuring that I leave the Office of Governor having concluded this agreement. It is a partnership that has mutually beneficial areas of cooperation. I hope both parties will seize on the opportunities offered by this agreement to deepen trade. The basic and universal value of judging the success of any government, is the opportunities it creates for its people to earn their livelihood." Said O'Malley

In his response, Mchunu expressed his deep appreciation to the people of Maryland in general and Governor O'Malley in particular, for their warmth towards the people of KZN. He noted the contrast in which this agreement has been concluded in that Governor O'Malley is outgoing and he (Mchunu) is in the first year of his term. He also thanked O'Malley for his service to the people of his State particularly improvements he made in education, research and economic empowerment.

"I am here not only to sign this agreement, but to affirm the commitment of my administration in its implementation as another platform to expand opportunities for trade and investment between ourselves. We are a province immersed with tourism opportunities and numerous opportunities in the maritime sector as we upscale our focus in that economy. I have no doubt that we can expand our economic relations and learn from each other through well designed exchange programmes. All we need to do is to put required energy and strategic thinking to how we seize opportunities within various sectors of the economy that we have identified in this agreement." Said Mchunu

This agreement is specifically aimed at strengthening economic, trade and investment, scientific, cultural and human relations between the two. The two states will as the agreement gets implemented, joint develop practical programmes in tourism promotion, agriculture development and agribusiness, education and training exchange programmes with a focus on research and development, port collaboration and maritime exchange programmes, and exchange of heritage and cultural preservation programmes.

Premier Mchunu had bilateral meeting with Governor O'Malley on areas of mutual interest for the two parties. He thereafter led his delegation to Special Sitzings of Senate and the Assembly as guests of the governor and the Committee on Twinning.

Ends.

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Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government

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