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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL NATAL

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## STATEMENT ON THE KZN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2014.

**TO : ALL MEDIA**  
**EMBARGO : IMMEDIATE**

### 1. Government Wide Programmes

#### 1.1 Presidential Imbizo

The KwaZulu-Natal Executive Council expressed its appreciation on the initiative by President Jacob Zuma to hold the Presidential *Imbizo* in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal on 30 September 2014. The KZN Executive Council is of the view that this *Imbizo* was a success and enabled the people of uMgungundlovu to interact with Ministers during visits to various homes and communities. KZN Executive Council further expressed its appreciation to members of the public who attended the *Imbizo*, thereby engaging with the executive on issues of interest on their livelihoods. This contributes immensely in strengthening our governance processes through active citizen engagement.

KZN Executive Council further noted some of reported logistical challenges experienced during the event. In this regard, the executive resolved that a detailed analysis must be done to assess the impact achieved through *Izimbizo* and any interventions required in the future for efficient and effective organisation or mobilisation of stakeholders. This will also take into account issues relating to effective coordination across departments for efficient planning.

#### 1.2 Launch of the Dube Trade Port Industrial Development Zone

The KZN Executive Council further expressed its appreciation to President Jacob Zuma and the Minister of Trade and Industry for the successful launch of the Dube Trade Port Industrial Development Zone. The launch was held at the Dube City on 7 October 2014 and represents true success of state led infrastructure development as enabler for industrialisation and economic diversification. This launch is another milestone for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal in its plans of achieving economic development as envisioned in the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS).

#### 1.3 KwaZulu-Natal Aerotropolis Strategy

KZN Executive Council has adopted the KZN Integrated Aerotropolis Strategy, which is identified in the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS) as one of the catalytic programmes to drive economic growth and job creation. This is in line with the KwaZulu-Natal Vision 2030 to reposition the Province as a gateway to the region. KZN Executive Council noted the development potential that an Aerotropolis can have in the economy of KwaZulu-Natal. The realisation of the Aerotropolis would be the first post 1994 city of its kind.

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#### 1.4 Annual African Economic Expansion Summit

KZN Executive Council noted progress made on the preparations for an African Economic Expansion Summit to be held on 10-14 November 2014 at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre. This summit aims to promote high-level policy and investment dialogue between African leaders and development partners. It is envisaged that the Summit will have the benefit of a renewed push to realise prospects of economic change. It seeks to contribute in linking Africa's pipeline of infrastructure-related projects and large industrial related projects with investors that wants to seize opportunities present in this 'Africa Rising' story. The Summit will be addressed by high-level panellists and thought leaders, and is being hosted by KwaZulu-Natal Government in collaboration with the US-based Rainbow Push Coalition founded by the Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson. PUSH Coalition, is one of America's foremost political figures. Over the past thirty years Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson has played a pivotal role in virtually every movement for empowerment, peace, civil rights, gender equality, and economic and social justice.

#### 1.5 Energy Infrastructure roll-out

KZN Executive Council received a presentation from Eskom regarding delivery of infrastructure that will deliver electricity to affected communities. KZN Executive Council was informed that Eskom had to suspend some projects it was rolling out in KwaZulu-Natal during construction phase due to budgetary constraints. This has affected a total of ten thousand and fifty (10,050) connections against twelve thousand and ninety eight (12,098) achieved connections. In this regard the Department of Co operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is engaging other relevant stakeholders like the Development Bank of Southern Africa to assist so that the extent of the delays are minimised.

## 2. Key KZN Executive Council Decisions

### 2.1 Drought Situation in KwaZulu-Natal

KZN Executive Council received a preliminary report regarding the dry conditions experienced in the province. Drought is defined as an extended period of abnormally dry weather that causes water shortages and crop damage. The recent data by SA Weather Services indicates that most of the areas that are affected have been constantly receiving less than average rainfall in the past five (5) years. KZN will receive below average rainfall, which has to date affected water levels in various catchments. The affected areas are under uMkhanyakude, uThungulu, iLembe, Zululand, uMgungundlovu, Harry Gwala, uMzinyathi and uThukela districts. The dry conditions are deemed so dire and have led to among others:

- a. Most rivers not flowing properly with some completely drying.
- b. More than 80% of boreholes as alternative water sources to supply have dried up.
- c. Agriculture sector has been severely affected. Equally so, communal/farm dams established to cater for the livestock are dry or below expected levels.
- d. Most water schemes implemented by municipalities have been severely affected.
- e. The dry conditions have increased the Province's susceptibility to runaway veldfires, which lead to fatal fire incidents in affected areas.

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Given the severity of the dry conditions that have been experienced in a number of areas in the Province, KZN Executive Council resolved to declare the situation as a state of disaster as guided by the prescript of Disaster Management Act (57 of 2002).

In this regard, the Premier will convene another high level meeting on the 14th October 2014 with the MECs responsible for Economic Development, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Finance and Agriculture and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that emergency relief measures are facilitated. The KZN Executive Council calls on the public to continue to save water as we go through these trying times.

### **3. Updates**

#### **3.1 Implementation Plan of RTI Commission of Enquiry's Recommendation**

The Department of Transport apprised KZN Executive Council on progress made in implementing recommendations of the RTI Commission of Enquiry. KZN Executive Council noted progress made thus far in implementing the recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry.

#### **3.2 Transport Month**

KZN Executive Council noted the importance of October as 'Transport Month' and its observance under the theme of "Transport Moving South Africa Forward" at a national level, and "Road Safety is Our Collective Responsibility" as a our provincial theme. These themes are about highlighting socio-economic opportunities in the transport sector to move our country forward. It is equally about enforcing the importance of adherence road traffic rules.

To underscore the importance of this month, the Premier in collaboration with the MEC for Transport and Community Safety, will meet with the role-players in the taxi industry in KwaDukuza and other affected areas to discuss issues of concern that are contributing to unnecessary tensions and violence.

KZN Executive Council thus calls upon the people of KwaZulu-Natal to do their utmost best in contributing to road safety behaviours.

#### **3.3 Ebola Outbreak**

KZN Executive Council expressed its solidarity with the people of the affected countries in West Africa in their fight against Ebola outbreak. It then noted that to this end the virus has not been detected in South Africa. KZN Executive Council thus re-affirmed that KwaZulu-Natal is to this end safe from any threat of active Ebola transmission. All Provincial Communicable Disease Control units have been placed on alert, and receive regular updates from National Communicable Disease Control regarding current status of the epidemic.

**Issued by the Office of the Premier on behalf of Cabinet**

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