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NEW ERA FOR KWAMASHU HOSTEL AS RIVAL LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS COMMITS TO END VIOLENCE

A new chapter to end political tensions and violence in KwaMashu hostel was launched yesterday when rival local political leadership met for the first time to discuss political tolerance since violence broke out recently.

Yesterday (05 November 2012) the leadership of the NFP, IFP and ANC from the KwaMashu hostel met in Durban to discuss peaceful co-existence and political intolerance in the area.

The local leaders were meeting for the first time since the formation of the NFP before the local government elections in 2011.

This breakthrough meeting was convened by the multi-political party committee led by the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison in KwaZulu-Natal, Willies Mchunu.

The meeting was called to create a political space for the local political leadership to engage and to strengthen communication channels among them.

The meeting noted that since the abduction and the killing of councillor, Themba Xulu there are serious tensions in the hostel and people are still living in fear.

This historic “ice-breaking” meeting came after the hostel in ward-39 witnessed peaceful voter registration over the weekend. The voter registration was preparing for the by-election to take place on the 5th December 2012.

It emerged during the meeting that historically this hostel has been hostile to various political parties campaigning freely and without intimidation.

After robust deliberations, all parties agreed that the resurgence of violence is unacceptable and is condemned.

Mchunu commended all political parties for making valuable inputs and for their commitment to non-violence.

“This is indeed an important step towards restoring peace at the KwaMashu hostel. It was important to meet the local leadership of political parties in the area to hear their views on how best we can normalize the situation in the hostel. This is important in making sure that the information and the spirit of peace and tolerance is cascaded down to the people on the ground,” said Mchunu.

Mchunu cited the administrative “nightmare” of the KwaMashu hostel dwellers and the access control as obstacles to the work of the police in the area.

However Mchunu indicated to the meeting that there is already a process of addressing the socio-economic issues and the wellbeing of people in the hostel which has already begun.

This process involves the Department of Community Safety and Liaison, eThekweni municipality, Department of Human Settlement and the Department of Cooperative Governance.

Presenting the meeting resolutions, Mchunu was pleased that all political parties agreed that police must be given support to disarm the heavily armed hostel dwellers.

“The meeting agreed that police must be given space to intensify their efforts of collecting all illegal fire-arms in the hostel.

It was also agreed that there must a committee of the local leadership with all political parties represented to ensure constant communication and to create a space for political dialogue.

This committee will work in preparing a peaceful by-election in December and it will be monitored and constantly monitored by the multi-political party committee.

All parties also agreed to sign a public peace pledge before the by-election as a symbol to honour all the commitments made in the meeting,” said Mchunu.

Ends

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