

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON, MXOLISI KAUNDA DURING A MEETING TO RESUSCITATE THE MULTI-PARTY POLITICAL INTERVENTION COMMITTEE AT THE DURBAN CITY HALL, 14 SEPTEMBER 2018

- The KZN ANC Chairperson, Mr Sihle Zikalala
- Deputy Chairperson of the MPPIC, Mr Mawethu Mosery
- Leader of various political parties:
- Senior Government Officials;
- Law Enforcement Agencies present
- All members of the Committee present
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good Morning

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of you for attending this crucial meeting to resuscitate the Multiparty Political Intervention Committee (MPPIC).

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

As the Kwazulu-Natal provincial government, we thought it was timely that we resuscitate this committee to give assurance to the people of KwaZulu-Natal that collectively as political parties, we will ensure that the 2019 general elections are held in a stable and peaceful environment.

The resuscitation of this initiative is a clear demonstration that the ANC government will spare no efforts in ensuring that, indeed, the people of KwaZulu-Natal live in an environment that is free of violence and political conflicts.

Peace has always been a historical mission for this democratic government. The reconvening of the committee is a major proactive step in ensuring that we attend to areas which are regarded as political hot spots as early as possible. Through this initiative, we want to engage with all role players, develop sound and concrete programme of action that will guide our practical interventions. By resuscitating this committee, we also want to ensure that in KwaZulu-Natal there are no go areas and all parties are free to campaign anywhere without facing any threats of disruptions, intimidation or violence.

2016 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS INTERVENTIONS

To build on the peace initiatives that government has put in place over the years, the current administration under the leadership of Premier, Willies Mchunu, also took a decisive step by resuscitating the Multi-Party Political Intervention Committee following its establishment in 2011. Yesterday, the Provincial Executive Council took a decision to support the decision to revive this committee and to ensure that its work begins in earnest.

The MPPIC has no doubt, helped to stabilize political tensions in the province, leading to the successful holding of General Elections in 2014 and the 2016 Local Government Elections. Indeed, through the work of this committee, we have turned the tide and put behind the sad chapter of political intolerance in KwaZulu-Natal.

You will recall that prior to the 2016 Local Government Elections, there were few areas that showed signs of instability which include areas such as Lindelani in KwaDukuza, KwaMashu hostel, Wembezi just to mention a few. Through the intervention of this committee, we were able to bring

stability in these hot spot areas by holding political dialogues and prayer meetings.

We also created a platform and briefing sessions where leaders of all political parties contesting elections publicly pledged to work for peace, free and fair elections.

INQUTHU BY-ELECTION

You will also recall that iNquthu Municipality became one of the hung municipalities in the province after the 2016 local government elections and sittings to elect the council were characterised by tensions between political parties. Again, it was this committee that provided a platform for political parties to engage on issues related to peace, stability and political tolerance in the area. Indeed, in 2017, the by-elections in Nquthu were peaceful.

BREAKTHROUGH IN POLITICAL KILLINGS

It is a matter of public record that prior and post the 2016 local government elections, KwaZulu-Natal experienced few incidents of violence which claimed the lives of scores of political leaders. Some of the underlying causes of these killings were:

- Intra and inter political party conflicts
- Contestation for positions (political and government)
- Fighting for the control of resources
- Corruption and greed

These incidents led to the establishment of the commission of enquiry into political killings. We are pleased that the commission has completed its work and the Premier is currently processing the report which will be made public in due course.

It is important to mention that parallel to the commission, the police have been working flat out to bring to book all those who are implicated in these killings. Yesterday, the Minister of police indicated that since July this year 28 suspects who are implicated in the killing of politicians and high profile people in the province have been arrested out of 12 cases. 22 suspects are in custody, two are out of bail and four have been released pending further investigation.

PREPARING FOR 2019 ELECTIONS

In preparation for the next year's general elections, as political leaders, we must once again rise to the occasion and create a conducive environment for our province to hold free and fair elections.

One of the areas you must play a critical role in, is helping government, particularly our law enforcement agencies to deal with illegal public protests. We have observed a disturbing trend in the province where leaders of political parties in various communities lead violent and illegal public protests. We would like to urge you as leaders to intervene in such situations and talk to your members to desist from this criminal behaviour.

Government has set up a sub-committee on public protests not only to bring law and order in our communities, but to respond to genuine service delivery concerns which are raised by communities. Illegal and violent public protests are harming the image and the economy of our province.

Out of this meeting, political parties must also commit to the following:

- Pledge for peaceful political campaigning

- Adherence to the electoral code of conduct and all other laws of the country
- Profiling of all political hot spot in the province for proactive intervention
- Partnering with NGOs, traditional and religious leaders in ensuring a conducive political climate in the province
- Work with the police and share information on possible areas of conflict and people perpetuating violence
- Intra and inter-political party engagement, tolerance and restraint
- Participate in town hall debates and any other initiatives aimed at promoting free political activity

Therefore, let us all work together to create a stable and peaceful province that is a gateway to Africa and the world. In so doing we will not only ensure peaceful elections next year, but also prosperity and economic growth for our province.

Thank you for your attention.