



## EXCO MEDIA STATEMENT

### For Immediate Release

### All Media Houses

**Date: 27 March 2025**

### **PREMIER NDLOVU CONVENES EXCO AND PCF TO ADDRESS SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and Executive Mayors attended the sittings of the Executive Council (EXCO) and the Premier's Coordinating Forum (PCF) on Wednesday at the Ehlanzeni District Council Chamber in Mbombela. The Premier, Mr Mandla Ndlovu convened both structures to align the activities of the two spheres of government, accelerate the pace of service delivery and the completion of infrastructure projects.

#### **1. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

Since the establishment of the 7<sup>th</sup> administration, Premier Ndlovu has emphasized the apex priorities as targets for all state institutions. During the State of the Province Address (SOPA) in February, the Premier reiterated the apex priorities which he pronounced when opening the legislature last year, of driving inclusive growth and job creation, reducing poverty and the cost of living, as well as building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

During the session, EXCO noted a significant progress made in the construction of infrastructure projects in the province. The projects are marked as massive investment by the Provincial Government and are geared towards improving access to education, primary health care for the previously marginalized communities and the growing population. They are also vital for the realization of economic growth targets and for the much-needed job opportunities.

EXCO identified various contributing factors which delay the completion of some of the projects, chief among them, strike actions, theft and vandalism as well as the inclement weather conditions. The Premier has resolved to pay special attention to the infrastructure projects by visiting the construction sites to address identified challenges that may cause further delays, accompanied by the MECs.

#### **2. OUTBOUND MISSION TO UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

Efforts to reposition Mpumalanga as an investment destination, in line with economic growth targets and job creation measures, are intensified. This include vigorous attraction of investors into the province. The approval of an outbound mission to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to be undertaken by a delegation led by MEC Makhosazana Masilela of the Economic Development and Tourism (EDT), affirms this approach.

The delegation will travel to the UAE in Abu Dhabi, from the 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2025, and will participate in various global investment engagements, such as the Ministerial Investment and Tourism Roundtable.

The department is mandated to foster sustainable economic growth and driving investment strategies. EXCO views the mission as a catalyst to achieve the investment objectives. Furthermore the global investment platform is also viewed as an opportunity to secure investments for major provincial projects, including the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and the operationalization of the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market.

### **3. MUNICIPAL AUDIT OUTCOMES**

Audit outcomes are among the measurement instruments geared towards entrenching a culture of accountability and good governance in state institutions. The Auditor-General, whose responsibility, as Chapter 9 Institution, is to conduct the audit, announced during the PCF that Ehlanzeni and Nkangala Districts have received clean audits for the 2023/24 financial year.

Although the Province has not recorded any municipality with a disclaimer, and adverse findings, however, the decline in the number of clean audit achievements over the years, has been raised as a going concern during the session. The observation of the A-G office is that clean audit outcomes entrench a culture of accountability for public funds, and therefore the non-achievements in many municipalities will erode the culture, with a detrimental effect to public trust in Local Government.

The PCF noted that all municipalities have developed audit action plans and further committed themselves to the implementation thereof. It was resolved that all municipalities must implement the action plans, and that audit outcomes must be a standing item on the agenda of EXCO to monitor progress.

### **4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHITE PAPER ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Measures to support the effective functionality of the sector, as the first point of contact for communities at local level, were discussed extensively.

This include a review process of the implementation of the White Paper on Local Government which was presented by the Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance, Dr Namane Masemola. At the core of the process, is to understand the failings in the current system of local government, emerging problems and opportunities, and to solicit inputs to address them decisively.

The PCF resolved to develop an action plan to consult all stakeholders, including community-based structures. The process will be concluded in September 2025 and with the submission of inputs to the Department of Cooperative Governance.

### **5. REGISTRATION OF SPAZA SHOPS**

The sitting received a report about the registration process of spaza shops in the province, which expired on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. The process was instituted as a directive by the President, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, at the height of the sporadic cases linked to the food borne illnesses in the country. The Premier established a Provincial Inter-Departmental Committee, led by MEC Sasekani Manzini of Health to monitor, among others, the outbreak of cases and to conduct unannounced visits to spaza shops to check compliance to legislation.

Although there was no conclusive evidence to link food poison to the cases, however, health experts linked the cases to poor food handling by illegal spaza shops. The report states the total number of 8 129 spaza shops in Mpumalanga, of which 3 740 are registered, and the 243 were shut down for non-compliance.

The PCF resolved that further engagements with Municipalities must take place to ensure that all spaza shops have complied with the President's directive.

## **6. NEW APPOINTMENTS**

EXCO approved several appointments during the session on Wednesday, to affirm priority 3 of the 7<sup>th</sup> administration, of building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

The appointments are as follows:

### **6.1 Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport**

- **Ms Fikile Sengwayo** – Deputy Director General: Transport Management
- **Mr Mikateko Rikhotso** – Deputy Director General: Public Infrastructure
- **Mr Skhumbuzo Mona** - Deputy Director General: Corporate Strategy
- **Mr Vusi Ntimba** - Chief Director: Human Resource Management and Development

### **6.2 Department of Economic Development and Tourism**

- **Ms Hleziphi Mokoena** – Director: Regional and Local Economic Development (LED)
- **Mr Solly Mhaule** – Director: Enterprize Development

Ends.

### **Issued by the Mpumalanga Provincial Government**

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