



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**TO : ALL MEDIA**  
**DATE : 17 JANUARY 2025**  
**SUBJECT : RESPONSE TO MEDIA STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE (KZN) ON 15 JANUARY 2025**  
**ENQUIRIES: NDABEZINHLE SIBIYA (082 375 4742)**

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### **STATEMENT BY THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE CAN BE DEEMED MISCHIEVOUS**

The Department of Human Settlements in KwaZulu-Natal has noted the media statement by the Democratic Alliance (DA) in KZN calling for “a complete turnaround strategy from the KZN Department of Human Settlements” and inviting members of the public to “provide input on housing-related recommendations”.

The Department has always placed huge emphasis on public participation in all its programmes and these calls for further inputs are always welcomed and appreciated. Working together is key in overcoming many challenges that hinder planned service delivery. The Department through its various stakeholder platforms and public engagements have been gaining these inputs from citizens through many decades of programmes geared towards restoring their dignity and pride. These interactions, resulting in strategic interventions, have seen close to a million families benefitting from serviced sites and permanent and rental housing units. The Department has built 537 386 housing units in KwaZulu-Natal since 1994.

However, “concerns” raised by the DA in the media statement warrant a response from a Department, especially since the statement in the public domain can be deemed mischievous by not providing a full context and the uninformed reference to “no plan of action”. The Portfolio Committee has received, from the Department, a full plan of action immediately after its Strategic Planning session.

Moreover, members of the Provincial Human Settlements Portfolio Committee were privy to immediate responses from the Department on all concerns raised. Detailed reports will be submitted to the Committee, thus dispelling this “no plan of action” theory. It is indeed worrying

that the statement from the DA already draws conclusions before the Portfolio Committee has had a chance to interrogate the requested detailed reports.

It must further be noted that the KZN Department of Human Settlements has never shied away from the number of housing projects that are currently stalled or disrupted due to challenges peculiar to each project. It must not be forgotten that interventions by the Department have seen the unblocking of the Thubalethu; Mnyangweni Loskop; Jika Joe; Mbulwane Area H; Ncotshane; Madadeni H39 and uMbhayi Housing Projects. The Department's focus on previously stalled or disrupted housing projects has resulted in the reduction of blocked projects from 68 to 46 projects

The Department has not “passed the buck” and is intervening so that projects can move ahead even when District Municipalities do not keep to their commitments of providing funding for provision of infrastructure needs. To ensure that the wait for comfort and dignity is not prolonged, the Department has, since 2019, spent more than R1,1 billion providing bulk services which is actually a Municipal function.

The Department has also not “passed the buck” when allegations of corruption were raised. The Department was able to investigate and criminally charge a Jozini resident for extortion. Her matter, relating to a “pay-for-employment” scam is now before the uBombo Magistrate Court.

Such is the determination of this Department, that it has become a victim of its own successes. The Department's fiscal responsibility and its stance on not compromising on quality have a direct impact on delivery. There is no rocket science involved in realising that more funding will lead to greater delivery.

Details of the phases that the 46 stalled or disrupted projects are at and steps taken are attached to dispel the “no plan of action” assumption.

It is also surprising that the DA asserts that there is “no plan of action to deal with KZN's 2022 flood victims who are still not properly housed”. The Department has always been clear and determined in its greater vision to provide permanent housing solutions whilst ensuring that the dignity of the victims is not compromised in the meantime. It should be noted that the Department closed all Mass Care Centres in record time as the deadline for this deliverable was December 2022. All 135-mass care centres were closed and people were relocated to the Temporary

Residential Units and to rented flats, also known as Transitional Emergency Accommodations. Despite huge resistance from ‘Not In My Back Yard’ (NIMBY) Activists, the Department has managed to secure land where houses for these victims will be constructed. To date seven such land parcels have been rezoned, yielding 1733 sites. Contractors are now moving to these sites to start building houses. The quest for housing solutions for victims is further being hampered by community leaders and residents who delay the construction of houses for victims in their areas, especially in Shallcross and Chatsworth, by making continued demands of their own before supporting such construction, a fact known by the DA.

The recipients of RDP Houses receive full title of their assets and are always encouraged to take good care of their own houses. The expectation by the DA member that the Department must maintain RDP houses is therefore a display of ignorance. The KZN Department of Human Settlements will issue a full media advisory once all detailed reports are presented to the Portfolio Committee as this is the most correct procedure of placing accurate information in the public domain.

**For more information, please contact Ndabezinhle Sibiya (Spokesperson: MEC for Transport & Human Settlements) on 082 375 4742.**

***#LetsDoMoreTogether***

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