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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **KWAZULU-NATAL PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE MEC MARTIN MEYER HONOURS REQUESTS TO MEET WITH MSINGA TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP OVER ASSET USAGE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

Yesterday, MEC for KwaZulu-Natal Public Works and Infrastructure, Martin Meyer, honoured a request to meet with the local traditional leadership of Msinga as led by Inkosi Majozi. This follows a request by the traditional leaders to meet with the MEC to discuss various long-standing issues that affect the local rural community there.

Top of the agenda was the prospect around unutilised buildings owned by KZN Public Works and Infrastructure. The KwaZulu-Natal provincial government and the department have a number of abandoned assets across rural areas that no longer serve their intended primary purpose.

During the meeting, it emerged that the traditional leadership is in need of structures to utilise for traditional court proceedings. Other matters conveyed by the traditional leaders is that of a dire need of a rejuvenation of the local economy.

The request to meet with MEC Meyer follows an initial engagement during the Build KZN Better property management conference held in January this year which was one of Africa's biggest property management gatherings attended by over 500 delegates at the Durban ICC which included investors, developers, architects, tourism players, among others.

The traditional leadership also put forward the issue of slow development while praising the swift response and availability by MEC Meyer under the Government of Provincial Unity.

These sentiments would also set the tone for MEC Meyer's second visit which was an inspection of a local abandoned factory facility owned by KZN Public Works and infrastructure. The facility once employed hundreds of locals when operating as a shoe factory several years back before later operating as a textile factory before the operator closed its doors.

During this visit, MEC Meyer was joined by KZN Economic Development MEC, Rev. Musa Zondi, as part of a joint inspection which aims to best find ways to leverage state-owned assets for economic stimulation and job creation.

The inspection found that despite being abandoned for several years the building was still sound in structure. However, to revamp damaged and unmaintained parts of the facility would cost in the region of R60 million.

This comes as a process is underway to identify a suitable tenant following interests from manufacturers to make use of the factory.

“I am happy with what we have seen here. While it is in an undesirable state, however there is great potential for this facility. The R60 million to repair this factory can be seen as an investment when considering that at least 300 jobs will likely be created here”, said MEC Meyer.

Going forward MEC Meyer has committed to assess the number of assets provincial government and KZN Public Works and Infrastructure has vested in Msinga and to return after reaching out to relevant departments to assist.

The two engagements have been described as fruitful and hope-inspiring for the rural people of Msinga and KZN at large. This is a distinct characteristic of the caring government of the day that looks to put the people of this province first.

END.

**For media enquiries:**

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