



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON KWAZULU-NATAL

*"Defending the weak"*

### **MEDIA ALERT**

ISSUED : 08 APRIL 2009

#### **MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE ELECTION MONITORING TRAINING WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON**

The MEC for Transport, Community Safety and liaison is gearing up for the 2009 election. Lawyers in KZN volunteer to be observers during the upcoming elections to ensure a free and fair process.

Today he hosted a training workshop on the Electoral Code of Conduct and oversight roles of the various role-players supporting a peaceful and democratic election. Oversight monitors and more than 60 independent observers coming from the legal fraternity in KwaZulu-Natal were afforded the opportunity to be fully briefed on the "do"s and "don'ts" of election procedures.

This is a unique partnership in the country between the IEC, Department of Community Safety and Liaison, SAPS, and the Democracy Development Programme (DDP). The department has previously integrated with the IEC during the 2006 Local Government elections to promote peace and stability among communities during the voting period. The Communities-in-Dialogue programme of the department assisted in 2006 to diffuse tensions and conflicts in various hotspots in the province.

The initiative seeks to give clarity on the role and powers of the police, Electoral staff and all other role-players. This is intended to reduce tensions on the ground and have resources available to provide advice within the parameters of the law as set out in the Electoral Code and other relevant legislation.

The department's officials will be deployed all over the province, especially at hot spots, to ensure that police are carrying out their duties in terms of their election operation plans so that security forces are fully committed to protecting and serving the electorate. This mandate comes from Chapter 11, section 206 of the Constitution which gives the MEC the powers to play an oversight role on the police and ensure that the community and police enjoy good relations.

This mandate is relevant and must be put into action now, more than ever, as this is deemed to be a watershed election.

ISSUED BY

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