

INVITATION

TO **ALL MEDIA**

DATE **04 OCTOBER 2010**

ATTENTION **NEWS EDITORS/REPORTERS**

GOVERNMENT TO LAUNCH A CRIME FIGHTING STRATEGY TO PROTECT THE FARMING COMMUNITY

The contribution of the farming community towards socio-economic development in the province is well documented. Critically, farmers and farmer workers are the crucial stakeholders who will ensure that government's programme of rural development is speeded up.

It is for these reasons that the Honorable Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Dr Zweli Mkhize, accompanied by MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu and MEC, Mrs Lydia Johnson for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs will engage the community of Mooi River, Mpofana Municipality in a bid to address farm killings.

This will be preceded by the launch of **Operation Hlasela**, a program aiming at pulling all stakeholders together in the fight against crime. This forms part of government's roll-out of a **"Building a United front against crime"** campaign which was launched on the 21st January 2010.

Rural communities already under a huge yoke of poverty often have to bear the brunt of series of attack and killing of farm workers and farm owners as it has happened in the area recently. The seriousness of this matter has prompted government to classify this as a priority crime.

Details of the launch are as follows:

Date : Thursday, 7th October 2010

Time : 10:00 am

Venue : Mooi River Community Hall (Mpofana Municipality)

Background: Recent Incidents of Crime in the Mooi River Area

Following the recent brutal murder of three people on Sherwood Farm at Rosetta, near Mooi River on Wednesday, 21 July 2010, MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Mr. TW Mchunu, visited the farm to pay his respects and to engage local structures on how government seeks to address crime in the farming communities.

Following that incident the MEC assured the community that the police will definitely uncover the culprits. He then had a separate meeting with the local Farmers Association on which he made an undertaking that the government through the Department of Community Safety and Liaison will introduce a new model that will galvanize the farming community to fight crime and criminals in the

area ('Operation Hlasela'). The event on the 7th seeks to bring that into reality and make follow-ups on the team that was appointed to lead a peace-building and crime prevention initiative for the area.

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the launch.

For more information, please contact Mr Kwanele Ncalane, Media Liaison Officer to the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison on 079 699 5755/ 072 803 1462 or Mr Ndabezinhle Sibiya spokesperson for the Premier of KZN, on 082 3754742 or Ms Ncumisa Mafunda, Media Liaison Officer to the MEC for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs on 079 515 7187

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