



community safety &  
liaison

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **UMBILO COMMUNITY ENTERS INTO PARTNERSHP AGAINST CRIME**

#### *Blowing a Whistle Against Crime*

COMMUNITY organisations from Greater Umbilo, which has recently seen an upsurge of criminal incidents including murder and muggings, this weekend, entered into a historic partnership, committing themselves to work together to fight crime and mobilise all locals against this scourge.

Several community organisations entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the historic Umbilo Crime Summit held, in partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Community Safety and Liaison, at the Nelson Mandela Medical University in Umbilo on Saturday.

The summit, officially opened by the Head of the Department of Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Ronnie Bhengu, saw for the first time all local organisations locking horns to work out strategies to fight crime and isolate criminals from the society.

The MOU, chiefly commits the local organisations to:

\*Encouraging communities not to allow themselves to be victims of criminals, meaning they need to isolate criminals in their areas.

\*Blow the whistle "mpimpa izigebegu", report criminals and not allow them to operate freely in their areas

\*Start participating in neighbourhood initiatives to safeguard the areas in which they live, work and play.

\*Attend Police community briefings to start understanding which crimes are the most common their own area.

\*Get all community members registered on our CPF database so that they can be part of SmsNaybers programme which alerts residents of crime happening in the area.

Among others, the Summit was attended by Umbilo Churches in Community, Senior Management of SAPS, City Metro, ADT, Blue Security and UKZN Medical School Student Representative Council.

In his keynote address, Bhengu urged communities to form a united front against crime, adding that it was, after all, within the communities that the criminals were conducting their nefarious activities.

Bhengu said statistics showed that police were doing a splendid job in arresting and locking up criminals.

**"For instance, for a period of 2009 to 2010 a total number of 209 217 arrests were made in KwaZulu-Natal. A total of 229 426 arrests were made in the period 2010 to 2011 with a further 280 641 in the period 2011 to 2012."**

**"Briefly, these statistics mean that police are working extremely hard to identify and arrest criminals and it also means that our communities produce a large number of criminals, causing our police to have their hands full."**

**"It is against this background that I am emphasizing the role of communities in the fight against this scourge,"** urged Bhengu.

He said the reality was that the battle against crime was not a war that could only be waged, sustained and won solely by the policemen and women alone. Representing Umbilo Churches in Community, Rev Derek Potgieter said the Umbilo community was really fed up with crime.

**"This is a very good start. We need to work together to bring the community together against crime and ensure that we work together to eliminate crime."**

**"All things are possible and it is possible to eliminate crime. If we work together we can heal our nation of all social ills,"** said Rev Potgieter.

This Umbilo initiative speaks and responds directly to the call made by KwaZulu-Natal Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC, Willies Mchunu, in urging communities to form a United Front Against Crime.

MEC Mchunu has recently warned that crime had a potential to divide the communities along racial, gender and demographic lines.

**“The biggest danger, for our fledgling democracy, in the current wave of crime is that it has a potential of dividing our society, bringing with it a temptation for racial profiling and to undermine our efforts to build social cohesion.”**

**“My call to all communities is that we should not allow crime to divide us. Instead it should mobilise us towards forming a united front against crime,”** said Mchunu.

Interim Chairperson of Umbilo Community Policing Forum, Ben Madokwe, said the aim of this historic Community Crime Summit was to turn it into a pilot project that could be replicated throughout the province as a vehicle to fight crime.

**“We believe in community’s own initiative to fight crime. These home -grown crime fighting strategies, that emerged from the Summit, are likely to be more sustainable and lasting in isolating wrong-doers and claiming back our areas from rampaging and heartless criminals,”** said Madokwe.

Ends

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