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MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: Thursday, 13 March 2014

ATTENTION: Editors, New Editors and PR Wires

MCHUNU INTERVENES TO MAINTAIN TAXI INDUSTRY PEACE IN NEWCASTLE AND MANDENI

KWAZULU-NATAL MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has stepped—up efforts to maintain taxi industry peace and stability in Newcastle and Mandeni, the two areas which recently reported violence incidents.

Over the last few months, Mchunu has held a series of meetings with leaders of affected taxi associations – all to ensure that great strides made in the past 10 years by the province to grow the taxi industry are safeguarded and advanced.

A fortnight ago, four taxi operators were shot and wounded at a taxi rank in Newcastle, in what was reported to be disputes over taxi routes.

Last week and yesterday Mchunu met the leadership of all five Newcastle associations to resolve the conflict, the highlight of which will be the signing of a cooperation agreement by all parties.

Mchunu also last week met Mandeni's newly elected taxi association executive, where two people were recently murdered in another taxi operations related killings.

"It is important that this industry, which provides transport services to millions of our people, operates legally, continues to enjoy peace and stability so it can grow economically," he said.

"Our engagements with the leadership of the industry is fundamentally about advocating for peace and stability so we can have sustained growth which improves the livelihoods of all. This is especially important in a year when we celebrate our freedom and democracy – for which so many sacrificed, even paying the ultimate price," said Mchunu.

Tomorrow (Friday, 14 March 2014), MEC Mchunu will meet all taxi operators in Mandeni to address recent incidents of violence and announce new measures to restore stability.

Ends.

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