

## **MEC KAUNDA EXPRESSES CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF POLITICAL PARTIES TO PEACEFULLY MANAGE THE POLITICAL SITUATION AHEAD OF AUGUST LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Mxolisi Kaunda, has expressed confidence that all political parties in the province have the commitment and capability to deliver free and fair local government elections come August 3, 2016.

MEC Kaunda made this observation during his maiden speech to the Multi-Party Political Intervention Committee – a body made up of several political parties in KwaZulu-Natal - charged with the task of working towards creating an environment conducive to the holding of free and fair elections in the province.

Yesterday MEC Kaunda was handed a baton of leading the Multi-Party Political Intervention Committee as its chairperson by former, MEC Willies Mchunu, who is now the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal.

MEC Kaunda, who was roundly welcomed by leaders of political parties in the province in this position, said a “good and solid” foundation had already been laid for achieving political stability in the province.

“Given the journey we have travelled together, we know the challenges we are facing regarding political stability in this province. We have to work together to make KwaZulu-Natal the province we want it to be and create an atmosphere that will enable us to effectively deliver services to the people,” said MEC Kaunda.

He said the pledge signed by all political parties last week – committing them to peaceful conduct- gave him a hope that an atmosphere conducive to the holding of peaceful, free and fair elections had been created.

“We have already laid a sound foundation and we have to build on this to ensure peace and stability in KwaZulu-Natal. We need to reduce the high levels of intolerance.”

“All challenges should be brought to this committee, which has seasoned leaders. So we will not allow anyone to divert us from our agenda of peace and stability in the province,” said MEC Kaunda.

Premier Willies Mchunu, who handed the leadership of the committee to MEC Kaunda yesterday, was roundly praised for the way he had led the committee and for bringing about political stability in the province. Mchunu thanked the leaders of political parties for their commitment to the process, assuring that MEC Kaunda would now provide leadership to the committee.

Members of the committee also welcomed the swift action by the police to arrest suspects in connection with murder of two elderly women in Imbali, Pietermaritzburg last week.

Deputy Chairperson of the committee, Mawethu Mosery - who is also the Chief Electoral Officer in KwaZulu-Natal- urged parties to coordinate their political events and ensure that they did not clash as this could cause tensions.

Ends