

MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM THE MEC FOR TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON, WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE LAUNCH OF THE FESTIVE SEASON SAFETY CAMPAIGN BY THE SAPS

08 December 2012

Programme Director;
Provincial Commissioner;
Senior Management of SAPS;
Business Against Crime;
Chairperson of the CPF Board;
All police authorities and officers present;
Distinguished guests;
Members of the media;
Ladies and gentlemen.

We take this opportunity to thank you very much for affording us this important opportunity to come and join you as you present the safety plan for this festive season.

We value your invitation because to us fighting crime is a shared responsibility and it is through our strength and unity that we can defeat crime and criminals in our society.

Before I go any further, can I ask all of you to rise and observe a moment of silence to respect those man and woman in blue who died in the line of duty, serving our nation.

The province of KwaZulu-Natal is known for the influx of visitors who will be coming to enjoy the beauty of our nature, the warm weather conditions, including the lovely hills, mountain and the sea.

We have a reputable history of caring and loving our visitors however the escalating levels of crime stand to discredit all the good work and image we have since built for our province.

If is for this reason that on behalf of the government of KwaZulu-Natal under the leadership of our Honourable Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize, we have come support this launch of the SAPS festive season safety plan.

This launch comes at a right time when as the Department of Community Safety and Liaison we continue with our safety awareness activities. Since the month of November which is

declared as safety month, we have been to all corners of the province raising awareness through our Operation Hlasela.

Indeed, it is during this period where we must intensify the fight against crime and make sure that working together we close all spaces for criminals.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the government of this province we are very pleased with the good work by our police officers.

You have managed under difficult circumstances to prove that you are capable of protecting the people of this country.

We acknowledge the fact that the SAPS in our province have always had their hands full dealing with extraordinary challenges – be it community criminal activity, family violence or political confrontation.

We know that KwaZulu-Natal is one province where the police have the extra burden of having to deal with perpetrators of political violence as well as taxi feuds, over and above the usual crime that other provinces have to deal with.

However, we note that there have been many arrests made by our officers regarding killings related to political and public transport killings. We wish to reiterate today our message from the police to those involved in criminal activity out there – that they have a war on their hands and that we are united in the quest to defeat them in our province.

We are launching this festive season campaign more positive and optimistic about the future and security of our country. We are optimistic because the recently released crime statistics indicated that, our collective efforts are yielding positive results.

According to these statistics, the progress that we are making in dealing with crime is manifest in the on-going reduction in the rate of criminal activities, especially the most serious crimes. From these stats, we also know that the 2011/2012 festive season was the safest in recent years. Surely, we will keep this record and do even better during this 2012/2013 festive period.

We are working hard towards ensuring that the trend which has seen a decline in the rate of crimes such as murder, car hijacking and robbery in the past financial year should continue.

This should be a clear indication that Government is working tirelessly to make South Africa, and particularly our province of KwaZulu-Natal, a better place for all, including our visitors during this period.

Ladies and gentlemen, the year 2012 saw our programme of Building a United Front Against Crime being taken to a greater heights. We saw communities responding to the call we have always made for communities, all social formations, youth, families and individuals to actively take a bold stand against crime in their homes, streets, neighborhoods, communities and the entire Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

During this year, we were able to launch the Community Crime Prevention Association (CCPA), the event which took place last month and was blessed by the presence of our Premier and the Provincial Police Commissioner.

This followed a programme that the Department of Community Safety and Liaison embarked on to educate and capacitate the voluntary crime prevention organisations to better understand the laws of our country and to organise themselves into legally recognised associations.

This Association abides by its constitution which includes a Code of Conduct prohibiting any unlawful conduct by its members. Also important about this association is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that as government we signed with them.

Also on the other hand, elections of the Executive Committee of a newly constituted Provincial CPF Board took place in October 2012. We now have the new Board under the leadership of Mr Desmond Mtambo.

Both these structures, they form part of the drive to '*Deepen People's Action Against Crime*' which the Government hopes to achieve through working in partnership with the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster, other government departments, business, religious formations, non-governmental organisations, traditional leaders, and, most importantly, the community.

I have also tasked my team in the Department to see how and when we can establish the Provincial Council Against Crime. This Council should include the structures I have just mentioned.

In conclusion, we have always said that police alone cannot win the war against crime and criminals. We need people to reinforce and assist police in detecting crime and apprehension. Let us all adhere to the commitments we are making today.

And finally, on behalf of our Government, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to all of you who have continuously remained true partners in the fight against crime and criminals.

To all our stakeholders, your presence here is not only encouraging but is a clear sign that working together we can succeed in the fight against crime. We will continue to strengthen our partnership with all of you in our multi-pronged strategy to defeat criminality.

I thank you