

KWAZULU-NATAL LEGISLATURE HOLDS ITS ANNUAL WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT IN UMKHANYAKUDE DISTRICT

Media Statement
For Immediate Release
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The Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, Hon. Neliswa Peggy Nkonyeni, today announces that the Legislature will celebrate the women's month in Umkhanyakude District by hosting its annual Women's Parliament on 7 - 8 August 2010 at KwaMsane Sports Ground in Mtubatuba.

This year's event marks the 6th session of the Women's Parliament which started in 2005 in the 3rd term of a democratically elected Legislature. The theme of the 2010 Women's Parliament is "Celebrating the legacy of Mandela - contributing towards nation building". Participants are expected to reflect on this theme during debates and the enormous contribution of Nelson Mandela to the struggle for freedom, democracy, equality, human rights and nation building. Delegates are ordinary women who have been drawn from six parties that are represented in the Legislature.

The Women's Parliament is a public participation programme which aims to give ordinary women of KwaZulu-Natal a platform to debate issues which affect them and engage with Members of the Legislature including Members of the Executive Council. It seeks to promote dialogue among women and to enhance participatory democracy in KwaZulu-Natal.

Speaker Nkonyeni said "the Legislature has chosen Umkhanyakude as the host district of this year's Women's Parliament because most women from this district still bear the brunt of poverty and under-development. We want to celebrate the women's month with them in order to listen to what they have to say to us as Parliamentarians and women in particular. We want to share with them information that will empower all of us as women, information that will enable us to seize all available opportunities to create a better future for all women".

The Women's Parliament has been growing from strength to strength since its inception with more than 5000 women attending each sitting in the previous sessions. It is expected that this year's event in Umkhanyakude will be attended by more than 5000 women daily. Transport has been arranged to take women from all municipalities under Umkhanyakude District and bring them to the venue.

Speaker Nkonyeni further said "Previous sittings of the Women's Parliament have been held in other districts such as Zululand, Ugu, Amajuba, Durban Metro, Sisonke in keeping with our commitment to take the Legislature to all districts of KwaZulu-Natal and bring the Legislature closer to the people".

On the first day of the event, there will be presentations that will be made by various organisations on issues ranging from Millennium Development Goals, poverty alleviation, rural development, economic opportunities, skills development, women and health as well as women's rights.

The second day of the event will be dominated by debates on the theme of the 2010 Women's Parliament.

The media is invited to attend the Women's Parliament.

Ends.

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