

TO: News Editors, Political Reporters, Reporters

03 June 2010

Statement on the visit to Nongoma by KwaZulu-Natal Legislature.

THOUSANDS OF ZULULAND PEOPLE ATTEND THE KWAZULU-NATAL PARLIAMENTARY SITTING IN NONGOMA.

Thousands of people from five municipalities in the Zululand District attended the three day parliamentary sitting held in the Mthashana FET college in Nongoma in the past three days (from 01-03 June).

The visit by the KwaZulu-Natal legislature was part of its constitutional mandate to enhance public participation and deepen democracy. Almost all KwaZulu-Natal cabinet ministers and MPLs attended the sitting.

The sitting was opened by the Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature Ms Neliswa Nkonyeni and addressed by Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize, His Majesty the Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini and the newly appointed District mayor of Zululand Blessed Gwala.

People came from all Zululand District municipality local councils such as Dumbe, Filidi, Ulundi, Nongoma and Pongola.

Most of the people who visited the sitting and interacted with the Members of the Legislature were very happy about the legislature's visit. They expressed gratitude that the legislature has come to Zululand to listen to their problems.

Nkonyeni told the sitting that this government led by President Jacob Zuma at a national level and Dr Zweli Mkhize at the provincial level was serious about improving the lives of the people especially those living in rural areas.

"This government has identified five priorities which are job creation, improving education, health, fighting crime and rural development. Many parts of the Zululand district are still under developed and it is for this reason that we have visited the area in order to familiarise ourselves with your problems and the provincial government has put together a report responding to your grievances," said Nkonyeni.

This sitting followed the visit by the Multi-Party Oversight Committees of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature earlier last month.

The multi-party visit went to Zululand district municipality on a "fact-finding" mission to learn about the difficulties faced by the people of Zululand. The multi-party oversight committees' visit that was

led by Chair of Chairs at the KZN Legislature Mr Sam Mthethwa who also submitted its report to Ms Neliswa Nkonyeni.

At the Nongoma sitting the provincial government led by Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize provided a comprehensive report, which was handed over to Gwala, in response to the issues raised by the people of Zululand during last month's multi-party visits.

"KwaZulu-Natal legislature is grateful to the people of Nongoma for their invaluable contribution to the sitting of the legislature and the good behaviour that they demonstrated throughout the sitting," said Nkonyeni.

Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini urged the provincial government not to forget Nongoma. The King particularly mentioned the state of the deteriorating former KwaGqikazi College which is now Mthashana FET college saying the government should investigate ways to renovate it and turn it into a productive educational institution it once was.

While Mthashana FET is still an institution of further education and training, a number of people have moved in to the institution and made it their residential area.

Nkonyeni committed the legislature that, together with the provincial government, it will investigate ways of resuscitating the institution to save it from deteriorating into a state of anarchy.

The legislature wrapped up its sitting with the Speaker's Social Responsibility Programme in which Deputy Speaker Mtholephi Mthimkhulu handed out soccer kits to schools from five municipalities from within the Zululand District. Mthimkhulu also handed out small scale farming starter packs which included seeds, watering cans and hoes.

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