MEDIA STATEMENT BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, MXOLISI KAUNDA ON THE FESTIVE SEASON AND OTHER SERVICE DELIVERY RELATED MATTERS, 12 JANUARY 2023

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- Representative from the DCCI
- Senior Management of the Municipality
- Members of the Media

Good morning and compliments of the new year.

We appreciate this opportunity to meet with you once again this year as we round off the festive season.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all our visitors who made Durban their home during this festive season. We also want to thank our residents and

tourism products owners for the warm reception they provided to holiday makers.

Despite the challenges we experienced in 2022 because of floods, we are proud that once again Durban lived up to its tag of being Africa's playground. This was demonstrated by thousands of visitors who flocked to our beaches, promenade, restaurants, hotels and B&Bs.

Apart from enjoying the sea, sand, sun and surf, visitors were also treated to a number of signature events such as the Durban Jazz Festival, Fact Durban Rock, Woz'eDurban and many more. We also successfully hosted a PSL soccer match between Kaizer Chiefs and Golden Arrows as well as the rugby match between the Sharks and the Blue Bulls on New Year's Eve.

All these activities brought thousands of visitors to the city as the accomodation occupancy rate reached 65%. This translates into 702 735 visitors with a direct spend of R1.5 billion, over R3.8 billion contribution to GDP and 7775 jobs.

As a result of heighted police visibility on the roads and in our communities, few incidents of crime and road crashes were reported during this festive season. We are also pleased that due to our systematic preparation and planning, we only saw 47 separated children which were quickly reunited with their families within 24 hours.

We attribute this success to the festive season integrated safety plan which we launched with the provincial government and the release of the new police recruits of Metro and SAPS in December.

As a result of this integrated approach to law enforcement we were able to achieve the following results from 15 December 2022 to 11 January 2023:

- 15617 fines issued;
- 1503 vehicles stopped and searched;
- 70 Compliance inspections to businesses.

As the city, we are encouraged that despite the challenges we experienced with some of our beaches, thousands of visitors still descended on Durban. This holiday season provided us an opportunity to showcase other Durban's hidden gems. Therefore, the success we have achieved during this festive season has laid a solid foundation for us to prepare for the Easter Holidays.

STATUS OF BEACHES

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will recall that during the festive season only 12 beaches were open for swimming. As a result of the progress we have made in repairing our pump stations along the coastline, we have now been able to open more beaches.

We are pleased to announce that the following beaches are safe and open for swimming as per the recent water quality results:

Point, Ushaka, Addington, South Beach, Wedge, North Beach, Bay of Plenty, Toti Main, Brighton, uMdloti Main, Umgababa, Umhlanga Main, Westbrook and Battery Beach.

The beaches that are closed for swimming are Bronze, Country Club, Thekwini, Laguna, Reunion, Warner, Winkelspruit, Pipeline, Anstey's and Causarina.

The city continues to update the status of our beaches and pools as and when it changes. When we provided an update on the festive season in December, we indicated that only 25 swimming pools were open to the public. Today, because of our aggressive maintenance plan, we are happy to report that as from last week, we have seen a number of swimming pools that are open move to 31.

CLEANING CAMPAIGN

Since last year September, the city embarked on an aggressive cleaning campaign to keep the city clean and most importantly create a conducive climate for investment.

Today we have launched a much broader campaign which covers 13 precincts which include the CBD, City Hall, ICC, Albert Park, Warwick, Moses Mabhida Stadium, Point, South Beach, North Beach, Umgeni, Musgrave, Greyville and Dalton Hostel.

A comprehensive operational plan has been developed which focuses on the following activities:

- Blocked drains
- Overgrown grass
- Overgrown trees
- Street lighting
- Unauthorized building works
- Water and sewer leaks
- Enforcement of by-laws
- Bad buildings

- Traffic congestion
- Open trenches on sidewalks
- Potholes
- Damaged manhole covers
- Homelessness
- Illegal dumping

Our teams are on the ground identifying challenges in other precincts, particularly in the secondary CBDs which include Pinetown, Isiphingo, Verulam and oThongathi.

We are pleased to report that our cleaning campaign is beginning to yield positive results as the levels of cleanliness have improved in some parts of the CBD. The campaign we have launched today will be complemented by an intensive education drive to encourage residents to keep their environment clean.

RELOCATION OF FLOOD VICTIMS

Members of the media will recall that on the 15th of December last year, we made a commitment that all flood victims who were accommodated in mass care centres would be relocated to family friendly accommodation before Christmas.

We are happy to announce that as a caring government, we were able to meet this target which ended a difficult chapter for many flood victims. On the 23rd of December, the last families were relocated from mass care centres.

It took an aggressive relocation programme by all spheres of government, including eThekwini Municipality, to keep the promise that the government had made that no family would spend Christmas in a mass care centre.

We would like to thank the families for their patience during what has been a difficult year. “When we promised that no family would spend Christmas in a mass care centre there were many sceptics.

Indeed, some politicians even turned the issue of mass care centres into a political football to score points, but we were steadfast in our quest to restore dignity to flood victims.

Today, we can proudly say we have kept our promise by closing 120 mass care centres housing 8541 families in eThekwini Municipality. Detailed planning is currently underway to build permanent houses in the land parcels the city has identified.

INTERRUPTION OF WATER SUPPLY

Ladies and Gentlemen, in the past few days, the city has been experiencing water supply challenges in areas that are supplied by the Phoenix, Verulam and Ntuzuma reservoirs. The interruption was due to inadequate supply of Water from Durban Heights Water Treatment Works to these areas.

Tomorrow, the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr. Senzo Mchunu will be announcing the progress Umgeni Water has made in finalising the repairs in this treatment plant.

We are confident that the commissioning of Reservoir 3 of this treatment plant will eradicate the challenge of water supply in Ntuzuma, Verulam and Phoenix.

After this media briefing, we will also be meeting with the MEC for COGTA, Mr Sihle Zikalala and Umgeni Water Board to finalise concrete plans to address water challenges in the city.

Other areas that have been experiencing water supply challenges include Umlazi and Folweni. These challenges were caused by several pipe bursts from the trunk main supplying water to these areas from Chatsworth. Working with Umgeni Water, we are finalising plans to replace this bulk pipe at an estimated cost of R900 million.

While we have been able to repair this pipe, we are now remaining with the challenge of prolonged load shedding which makes it difficult to pump water to the affected areas. However, our teams are working tirelessly to restore water supply in Umlazi and Folweni by the close of business today. While, we are addressing this situation, we have dispatched water tankers as an interim measure.

We are also aware that Hambanathi has been experiencing similar challenges because of increase in demand for water. To increase the flow from the water works, the municipality will install a second pump by the end of this month. This intervention will stabilise water supply in Hambanathi.

We want to apologise to all our residents who were inconvenienced by these challenges. We also call upon you to work with us to address other challenges which lead to the disruption of basic services such as theft and vandalism of our infrastructure.

I thank you.