

## STATEMENT

To:

All Media/News Editors

**KZN PREMIER AND MECs LEAD MOP UP OPERATIONS AND DISASTER INTERVENTIONS TO ALL AFFECTED DISTRICTS IN THE PROVINCE.**

13 April 2022

### **PREMIER ZIKALALA WELCOMES DECLARATION OF STATE OF DISASTER IN KZN.**

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal Sihle Zikalala has expressed the province's utmost gratitude to President Cyril Ramaphosa for authorising the request by provincial government to declare a state of disaster following the deadly damage caused by severe storms throughout the province over the past few days.

The declaration follows a visit to KwaZulu-Natal by President Ramaphosa for the whole of Wednesday to see for himself the massive destruction caused by the heavy rains that fell in most of the province and left a deadly trail, with at least 283 dead so far, and billions worth of destruction to critical infrastructure.

President Ramaphosa was accompanied by Premier Sihle Zikalala, Mayor of eThekweni Cllr. Mxolisi Kaunda and Deputy Mayor Philani Mavundla, Minister of COGTA Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Minister of Police Bheki Cele, Minister in the Presidency Mondli Gungubele, and MECs as he visited Clermont, Mzinyathi, Mawoti, Ntuzuma and Lindelani areas to examine the extent of the damage, and to offer much-needed comfort and support to bereaved families.

The Presidential entourage witnessed instances where a number of homes had been washed away, church roofs collapsed on top of children, bridges and roads damaged cutting off entire villages and township sections. Water and electricity supply has also been badly affected in most areas of KwaZulu-Natal and over 200 schools have been damaged in the aftermath of this inclement weather.

"The visit by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa to these storm-damaged areas has been a welcome boost to our call for the province to be declared a state of disaster. We are pleased that the President was able to take the whole day to come witness for himself the havoc that has been unleashed by the recent heavy rains," said Premier Zikalala.

### **CABINET LEAD DISASTER INTERVENTIONS IN AFFECTED DISTRICTS**

Last night the Provincial Executive Council convened another special meeting where it resolved to intensify efforts to respond to disaster incidents.

As of this morning all MECs will visit various districts affected and lead profiling of all affected families, quantify the damage to each affected and ensure immediate interventions through disaster management official. The magnitude of the disaster is unprecedented and requires the provincial government, municipalities and social partners to be all hands on deck.

The provincial government is also mobilising resources to speed up the recovery of missing people.

Today Eskom and Municipalities will give a report on efforts to restore water and electricity in all affected areas. Cabinet is aware that interventions are hampered to an extent by disrupted infrastructure networks but has directed that no effort must be spared in reaching the affected people

#### SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING TO AFFECTED FAMILIES

As the Provincial Government tries to access all affected areas to locate missing families. It will also be facilitating counselling to victims.

A plan for a provincial Prayer Day and memorial services for victims including various support interventions to bereaved families is being finalised.

#### CABINET DEPLOYMENT PLAN

Premier Sihle Zikalala will today be visiting iLembe District which is the second most affected after Ethekewini with more than 22 deaths.

MEC for Treasury Nomusa Dube-Ncube as well as Cogta MEC, Sipho Hlomuka will be visiting affected areas in the uThukela (Ladysmith) areas.

MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Ravi Pillay, will be in Ethekewini which is the epicentre of this disaster with most of the rain and the worst damage.

MEC for Health, Nomagugu Simelane will be in uGu District (South Coast) where more than five deaths have been reported.

MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Bongzi Sithole-Moloi, will be in King Cetshwayo District (Eshowe, Richards Bay areas).

Education MEC, Kwazi Mshengu will be in uMgungundlovu District.

Sports, Arts and Culture MEC, Hlengiwe Mavimbela will be in uMzinyathi District covering areas such as Dundee, Msinga and others.

The Executive Council is now mounting a spirited response to the crisis and will be working with Mayors and Councillors and ground structures such as Community Workers and municipal disaster teams.

Among the support intervention will be on food supplies, vouchers, blankets and other necessities.

The declaration of the state of disaster opens the way for an orderly and coordinated response to this crisis. The declaration requires organs of state to strengthen support to existing structures to implement contingency arrangements and ensure that measures are put in place to enable the province to effectively deal with the effects of the disaster.

ENDS

For more information, contact:

KZN Provincial Government Spokesperson

Lennox Mabaso

Head of Provincial Communication

Cell: 082 884 2403

Or

Thami Ngidi

Premier Communication Support

Cell: 066 3066 793