



# NEHAWU MPUMALANGA STATEMENT ON THE RECONFIGURATION OF PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS

MEDIA STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11 November 2024



The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] in Mpumalanga welcomes and commends the Seventh Provincial Administration for the separation of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism from Provincial Treasury (Finance), and appointing two Members of the Executive Councils of the said Departments.

The union has been calling for the appointment of a separate Member of the Executive Council in each of the two Departments, and such developments serves as the victory for the union. It has been an ongoing campaign of the national union through all its Provincial Days of Action since the year 2016 until August 2023, wherein a Memorandum of Demands was again handed over to the Provincial Government on the 17th of August 2023.

The union views the unbundling as a positive step by the Provincial Government towards the enhancement of service delivery to the community of Mpumalanga at large, given the fact that each one of the two Departments are now focusing on the implementation of their priorities in line with the mandate given to them by the Provincial Administration.

The decision to separate the two Departments comes at the time wherein the three entities under the Department of Economic Development and Tourism as the majority shareholder, namely the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, Mpumalanga Economic Development and Growth Agency, and Mpumalanga Economic Regulator require some serious revitalization and rescue plans in terms of their financial statuses.

We call upon the MEC, Makhosazane Masilela and the newly appointed Head of Department for DEDT, Ms Immy Serakalala working with NEHAWU as a stakeholder to work around the clock in implementing a radical and practical turnaround strategy for the entities which are on the verge of collapse, if there's no urgent intervention. This includes among other things ensuring that the Board of Directors for these entities are supported and functional, so that they continue to provide an oversight role on both issues of governance and operation in these entities.

The Provincial Government should ensure that a turnaround strategy which gets implemented does not compromise workers employed by these entities. There is a need for the entities to continue creating job opportunities for the people of the province and improve the working conditions of our members who are already in the system. This should include the absorption of contract workers and those who are in the internship programs. The viability of the three entities should contribute towards the Economic Spinoffs in Mpumalanga Province.



Similarly, the union has noted the developments within the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as well the Department of Human Settlements on the merger of the two Departments into one Department to be called Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs [COGHSTA] following the Premier's pronouncement on this matter. As the processes to merge the two Departments unfolds, NEHAWU Mpumalanga shall continue to monitor the processes closer by participating in all the identified work streams and steering committees in ensuring that our members and workers at large are not worse off as a result of this merger.

Equally, we call upon the Department to refer the matter of the merger for the two Departments to the Provincial Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council [PSCBC] for further consultation and engagements in line with the PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2019 on the merger and the reconfiguration of Government Departments. We are committed in ensuring that the process must be conducted in an open and transparent manner in line with the Bargaining Council Resolution, and that any shortcuts by the employer shall be completely opposed by the union.

The union notes with serious concerns the snail pace in which the Provincial Department of Human Settlements is moving on the matter which pertains to the Nkangala District Human Settlements Management and the attempt by the employer to short circuit processes instead of conducting the full investigations on the allegations of mismanagement, maladministration, abuse of power and union bashing which were levelled by the union against the District Management. In the Memorandum of Demands which was handed over to the Department during NEHAWU Nkangala Regional Day of Action on the 26th July 2024 at Emalahleni. We call upon the MEC, Speedy Mashilo to direct the Departmental Administration to expedite the processes of investigation in line with the outcomes of our meeting held on the 04th September 2024 which will lead to the closure of this matter.

Lastly, the engagements with the Premier of the Province, Mandla Ndlovu are ongoing and the union is monitoring the implementation of the responses and resolutions taken with regards to the Memorandum of Demands which was handed over to the Provincial Government on the 27th August 2023, and members of the union shall be updated through the relevant union structures with regards to the progress report. Equally, the union shall continue without any fear nor contradiction continue to represent and advocate for the interests and the aspirations aimed at improving the working conditions of its members in all sectors wherein the union is organizing in line with the Public Service Delivery Campaign, and the Close Ranks and Defend the Base Campaign as an Organizing Strategy.

**END**

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