REMARKS BY HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR CLLR MXOLISI KAUNDA AT THE KZN PEOPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (PR2P) PROGRAMME, 30 MARCH 2021 – TUESDAY DURBAN STATION CONCOURSE 10H00

- Programme Director
- Minister of Transport: Mr Fikile Mbalula
- MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison: Mrs Peggy Nkonyeni
- PRASA Chairperson: Mr Mr. Leonard Ramatlakane
- PRASA GCEO CEO: Mr Zolani Matthews and Senior Management
- SAPS Acting Provincial Commissioner: Major-General Thulani Gonya
- EThekwini Municipality Senior Officials present
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning

It is an honour and privilege to join you today as we launch this important campaign – the People's Responsibility to Protect Programme (PR2P).

Let me begin by taking this opportunity to thank PRASA for identifying eThekwini Municipality as a valued stakeholder and giving us an opportunity to play our part in helping in the implementation of this initiative.

As eThekwini Municipality, we wish to pledge our full support and commitment to ensure success of this programme. We are delighted because this will promote stakeholder participation in the protection of PRASA assets and infrastructure to eliminate acts of criminality and vandalism of these facilities.

This initiative is in line with the municipality's effort to deal with crime in our city and create a safer city for all our residents. We are confident that by involving members of the community in our crime fighting strategies, we stand a better chance of tackling this cancer at all levels.

We believe the crime-combating initiatives that the city has implemented will contribute towards making the People's Responsibility to Protect Programme bring renewed hope to PRASA customers and train commuters.

A successful rollout of this ground-breaking programme will also have a positive impact in the economic growth of our city as the majority of our working class use trains to commute to and from work.

It is important that the Minister is driving this programme during the Human Rights Month. We therefore strongly believe that the PR2P initiative, will guarantee the rights of commuters to a safe, reliable and affordable public transport.

We want to reiterate that if we want to ensure a successful rail network that guarantees safety for its users – in a crime-free environment, it is critical that we work together as various sectors. PRASA alone cannot be able to address all the challenges that are facing the passenger rail system in the country. As Municipalities we need to join hands with PRASA and address the challenges of illegal dumping and settlement on our rail network.

We are pleased that a great deal of work has already started in this area through a steering committee that is composed of PRASA officials and the top management of the municipality.

The damage to PRASA infrastructure does not only cost the country billions of rands in losses, but it causes disturbance to the operations resulting in an unimaginable inconvenience to commuters.

Therefore, we must intensify such campaigns, coupled with educational drives to our residents about active and responsible citizenship. Our citizens ought to take ownership of our country's infrastructure and be in the forefront of protecting our assets that benefit all of us in the end.

Again, we want to encourage our communities to be the main driving force in creating greater awareness about the crippling effect crime has in the commuter rail network. As the leadership of eThekwini Municipality, we will continue to partner with community to make our rail network safe. Working together, we must continue to find more sustainable ways of involving communities to deal with the challenges facing our commuter rail network.

For instance, we must explore the role that cooperatives in our communities can play on issues of waste management.

In closing, we wish to reiterate that if we want to have a reliable and safe rail network, we must all play our part. We therefore want to commit ourselves to continue to work with you to ensure a positive and impactful PR2P campaign so that the rail assets of our country are protected.

I thank you!