



---

## Media Statement

**25 March 2023**

### Shongwe vows to end crime in Marite

Mpumalanga MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Vusi Shongwe has vowed that crime will soon be a thing of the past in Marite and the whole of Bushbuckridge local Municipality. The MEC was speaking during the Public Participation Programme (Imbizo) that was held in Marite on Saturday.

What emerged during the Imbizo is a community that is living in fear of criminals. This became apparent when most of them were even scared to speak during the Imbizo.

Some of the issues that the community decried were that criminals were doing as they please and police in the area were not doing much to solve crime. Most of those who attended the gathering opted to register their issues anonymously through complaints boxes that were provided at the venue.

They went on to allege that these criminals were provided ammunition for their illegal firearms by the police.

Some of the issues that emerged include high levels of contact crime cases such as murder, assault, business robberies, car hijacking, and house robberies.

Communities also bemoaned the armed robberies targeting delivery vehicles such as bakery trucks as well as courier companies' vehicles.

Responding to the community, the visibly distraught MEC Vusi Shongwe, announced that a special Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS) meeting will be held in the next seven days to specifically deal with crime in Marite and the whole of Bushbuckridge.

like this. We must develop JCPS Cluster meetings are chaired by the MEC on a quarterly basis, and it comprises of participants from the police, SANDF, Home Affairs, and Correctional Services among others. The meeting also heard that businesses owned by foreign nationals are often targeted by heavily armed criminals.

"We cannot afford to live a clear programme of action that will respond to the issues in the area. All units in the security cluster must be coordinated in such a way that wanted suspects are caught," Shongwe stated.

He told the gathering that this level of criminality in Marite could scare potential investors. That is why the MEC added that the community must work with the police. He promised that he would not rest until the situation improves. The tough talking Shongwe went on to order the Provincial Head of Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (HAWKS), Major General, Nicholas Gerber, to immediately investigate all allegations of corruption levelled by Marite residents to the police.

He insisted that the few corrupt police officers, once identified, must be taken out of the police service. Shongwe also welcomed the commitment made by the traditional leadership in the area that unoccupied government houses are to be reallocated to other people. This will assist in avoiding such houses to be hijacked for crime purposes. The MEC pleaded with traditional leadership to work closely with municipalities in dealing with such houses.

Shongwe further blasted the traditional healers who were accused of helping criminals evade arrests and prosecution. He called on them to refrain from cleansing crime suspects but instead help the police bring them to book. Yesterday's programme was supported by SAPS, Bushbuckridge local Municipality, local traditional leadership, traditional healers, and other security cluster departments to mention but a few.

Ends.

**Issued by the Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison**

Enquiries: Moeti Mmusi

Cell: 079 291 0664 or 084 311 3372