



community safety,  
security & liaison  
**MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## Media Statement

**08 June 2018**

### **Bring back TRT- says Crime Indaba participants**

Barberton communities have had enough, and they want the provincial SAPS to deploy special units including the Tactical Response Team (TRT) to deal with crime in the area. In a Crime Indaba today (08 June 2018), various stakeholders made a call for the redeployment of the TRT saying it will bring stability in Barberton.

The Indaba which was hosted by the Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison was held at Barberton Town Hall where different stakeholders met to discuss and come up with strategies aimed at fighting crime in the area. It was part of the resolutions taken during a stakeholder meeting that MEC Pat Ngomane lead in Barberton recently after there were complaints with regards to the increase of crime.

During the Indaba, the stakeholders were grouped in four commissions where they deliberated on topics which included illegal mining, substance abuse, gangsterism and school and health facilities' safety.

Unemployment and substance abuse appeared to be the most contributors of crime while illegal mining and gangsterism also featured as threats to the safety of the people in the area.

The stakeholders who are also residents of Barberton said that the level of crime in the area was getting out of hand and needed special attention and an integrated approach. They added that the Organized Crime together with the Crime Intelligence Units must be at the forefront in crime prevention by detecting it before it happened.

On illegal mining, the stakeholders recommended that the mines should improve security measures including increasing personnel to prevent easy access of illegal miners. They also added that security personnel must be rotated at least every three months because some end up colluding with the illegal miners.

Mr. Martine Jooste of Barberton Mines revealed that since the beginning of the year, 124 cases of illegal mining were opened and about 600 illegal miners arrested. With the unremitting support of police officers, Jooste said that illegal mining will be curbed.

Jooste however criticized the way the judiciary was handling illegal mining saying some cases were prolonged and some illegal miners getting very lenient sentences.



Stakeholders also mentioned that some crime generators were linked to the lack of recreational facilities in the area and the non-compliance of liquor traders. They called for the monitoring of liquor outlets and vendors at schools as they alleged that some of them were also selling drugs to learners.

They also made recommendations that there should be enforcement of by-laws to curb some of the illegal activities happening in houses occupied by foreign nationals.

They called for intensified policing at the borderlines to stop people from entering the country illegally.

The team that dealt with safety of schools and health facilities recommended that there should be cameras installed in schools and health facilities to monitor the activities happening in those areas.

It was further recommended by all stakeholders that there should be satellite police stations because the one station is not sufficient to provide service for all the community members of Barberton.

A task team will be formed to ensure the implementation of all the resolutions that were taken during the plenary.

Meanwhile, MMC for Public Safety in the City of Mbombela Councilor Majaheni Nyalunga said that it remains the responsibility of the community to be involved in crime prevention.

“We need to support our police officers; today we say we want police officers but when they do their work we then open cases against them. If we want to win the fight against crime, let us stand for the law and not against it,” he said.

Ends.

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