



**mineral resources  
& energy**

Department:  
Mineral Resources and Energy  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **Media Statement**

### **For Immediate Release**

**15 June 2021**

### **STATEMENT ON THE VISIT BY KZN MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY TO KWAZULU-NATAL AREA**

Today, Tuesday the 15th of June 2021, the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr Ravi Pillay, together with the Mayor of Alfred Duma Local Municipality, Mr Vincent Madlala as well as officials from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, traditional leadership, the SAPS and representatives of other statutory and regulatory bodies visited the KwaHlathi area outside Ladysmith.

The visit forms part of government's fact-finding mission following the discovery of stones purported to be diamonds. A team of experts from the DMRE - comprised officials from the South African Diamonds and Precious Metals Regulator, the Council for Geoscience and Mintek - conducted an inspection of the site.

Following preliminary analysis of the stones on site, detailed analysis will be conducted on samples made available to the team. Conclusive results are expected within a period not exceeding month. The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy will make an announcement as soon as the analyses are concluded, and results are available.

A steering committee, comprising of the Alfred Duma Municipality Mayor, uThukela District Deputy Mayor, Alfred Duma Speaker, DMRE Regional Manager, Ward Council and Inkosi of KwaHlathi has been established and will be reporting to the Minister and the Premier.

As expected, the discovery of the stones have led to throngs of people flocking into the area. We are concerned about the threat that this poses to the health and safety of persons involved. It is also concerning that there is no adherence to Covid-19 protocols. Therefore, we appeal to members of the public not to go to the area. We further appeal to those at the site to vacate until all processes are concluded.

As the investigations are underway, the committee urges for cooperation and patience. A drive to engage and educate members of the public on mining regulations will be undertaken.

South Africa is a signatory of the UN global diamond governance structure known as the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme. This structure was established to prevent the proliferation of conflict diamonds into the global trade of natural diamonds. The processes to be followed in the KwaHlathi matter will be in keeping with KPCS minimum requirements.

All relevant structures and government departments will remain on the ground to monitor the situation.

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ISSUED JOINTLY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY AND THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS.

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