

22.12.2013.

Dear Southern Peninsula Resident,

Four days before Madiba passed away, four residents of the informal settlement 'Wetlands' in Masiphumelele lost their life. It happened on 1 December 2013 when a fire destroyed the homes of about 200 people. It was not the first fire in this area and we all know that it will not be the last. The situation is getting worse each year. The response from Disaster Management is to provide Starter Kits and Food Hampers. This is helpful but it does not take the whole dismal situation these people live in forward in any way. Madiba said, poverty alleviation is not an act of charity, it is a task of justice. Here is one way in which we can honour his legacy.

I want to encourage you to put your signature to the attached letter. It is addressed to the Provincial and Municipal leaders of our Province. This is to be a local initiative by concerned people who want to do something substantive that affects the area of Masiphumelele that couples up 40,000 people in an area designed for 10,000. Other areas need attention also and this is but a first initiative. It asks our public representatives to make real the promise of more land. It seeks urgent action with regard to road access to Masiphumelele

Thirdly it seeks an intervention that allows emergency services to better deal with disasters and emergencies.

Prof. Andy Dawes and Dr Lutz van Dijk are the initiators of this appeal. They hope that you, as a local citizen, whose voice will add weight to the appeal, to sign the letter with them. To communicate with them please write directly to Dr Lutz van Dijk <lutzvandijk@iafrica.com>, if possible before the end of the year.

In this first round the emphasis is to get senior citizens who enjoy respect in their constituencies and representatives of organisations to be the first signatories. Representative organisations in Masiphumelele who have supported the initiative are: the Informal Settlement Forum, Amakahya ngoku Housing Project, Community development workers, Masi NGO Forum, HOKISA, Living Hope, Sinethemba Special Care Center. The initiators hope to get the support also of local Residents' Organisations, Rate Payer's associations, environmental groups, civic organisations, business people, social and cultural NGO's working in Masiphumelele are all to be part of the group of first signatories. Once this has been achieved a wider appeal to the communities of the Southern Peninsula will take place, before the appeal will be presented to the Premier and Mayor and our local councillors in early 2014.

PLEASE do not publish this appeal in any media as yet!

Please let the sponsors know before the end of the year whether you will be part of this initiative.

The appeal is a citizens initiative and independent of any political party.

If we want a society in which greater justice prevails and the enormous disparities in our society at large but for us in our local community are to be addressed, we have to start somewhere. I endorse this call and hope you will join me.

Yours sincerely,

Horst

