

**Memorandum by Athol Trollip**  
**ActionSA Eastern Cape Provincial Chairperson**

To: Premier Oscar Mabuyane  
Office of the Premier Building  
Independence Avenue  
Bhisho

**Subject : MEMORANDUM BY ACTIONSA OUTLINING SERVICE DELIVERY  
SHORTCOMINGS**

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The Eastern Cape is an important part of the fibre which makes up the tapestry of our country's rich heritage. Not only did our magnificent province provide us with leaders who fought valiantly against the oppressive system of apartheid, it is also the most beautiful province in South Africa. Our coastline is unparalleled in beauty and holds extraordinary economic potential due to the richness of marine reserves. These resources if properly harnessed can be an important key to unlock economic growth and improving our eco-tourism offering that could go hand-in-hand with our land-based wildlife tourism offerings.

The vast tracts of high, yet largely fallow, agricultural land belies the pervasive poverty and lack of development that defines our provinces rural hinterland. Premier, you, yourself, recently admitted that the ANC has let the people of the rural areas of this province down.

ActionSA embarked on a campaign to assess the true state of the province at the start of this year prior to the President's SONA and your SOPA. The unfortunate findings of this campaign have led us to your office today to hand over this memorandum to you and your executive, the very people tasked with harnessing the human and natural resources of this province for the collective good of all its citizens.

This memorandum highlights how the appalling levels of service delivery and unprecedented levels of corruption continue to adversely impact the lives of the people of this province. Our findings, which are outlined in this memorandum, underscore the specific elements of the province's poor service delivery and corruption.

**Education**

Education in the province is in a dire state. The majority of our schools fail to meet the minimum standards prescribed under the South African Schools Act. The Eastern Cape has over 5 200 schools, 3 000 of which are without adequate sanitation and with over 1 000 schools still using pit latrine toilets. This is despite the department of education promising to eradicate pit latrines by the end of 2022/23 fiscal year, through its Sanitation Appropriate

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for Education (SAFE) initiative, to meet the minimum Norms and Standards for school infrastructure.

Despite all of this, at the end of the 2022/23 fiscal year, the Eastern Cape education department forfeited R205 million meant for construction & maintenance of schools. The money formed part of the R1.64 billion education infrastructure grant for the province for the 21/22 fiscal year. The underspending of the infrastructure grant funding tragically flies in the face of the inexcusable state of the province's schools.

The critical shortage of competent and committed teachers further contributes to the calamitous state of education.

All schools in the province that depend on and benefit from the National School Nutrition Program received notices at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> term (government's new financial year 2023/24), informing them that the food deliveries will be delayed by a month and a half. This unacceptable, as *the objective of NSNP is to provide nutritious meals to learners so as to improve their ability to learn*, and these learners cannot do so without access to this nutrition. This is compounded by the lack of scholar transport, which leads to learners walking long distances to school, especially in rural areas.

ActionSA Eastern Cape provincial campaign manager, Nongoma Mtsitshana, visited Nkwezana Primary school in Crossways, East London. Historically, the school was established on a farm in 1995. Prefabricated structures housed the first cohorts of students. The construction of proper school buildings started in 2017, with an approved budget of R58m. Construction of the school was abandoned in 2018, with non-payment of the appointed contractor cited as the reason for the cessation of construction work.

Nkwezana Primary currently accommodates 857 learners, from grade R to grade 7. The cultivation of these hungry minds is the responsibility of 26 teachers. Teaching takes place in wholly unsuitable prefabricated and corrugated iron structures. Pit latrines are the only form of ablution facilities for, both, staff and learners.

The University of Fort Hare has cemented its place in our country's academic legacy due to the illustrious leaders of the continent that are part of its alumni. It is regrettable that this great institution is now being used to facilitate phony qualifications for the ruling elite of our province.

## **Crime**

New Brighton (NMB), the murder capital of the country, and Mthatha (OR Tambo) are in the top ten of places with the highest murders reported in the country. Our police stations are under-resourced, and police are demotivated & overworked. We visited the Mount Fletcher police station and despite its renovation and upgrading being underway for the past twelve years, it remains a sad reflection of the state of policing in the province. Political meddling in the work of the police and public prosecution services undermines efforts to deal with the

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levels of crime that are completely out of control. Criminals in the province are brazenly armed with military grade weapons and communities are terrorised by the general state of lawlessness.

Victim empowerment facilities for GBV cases are almost nonexistent, especially in rural police stations.

The distribution and abuse of drugs has become a rampant scourge, even in remote rural communities. Mass murders, stock theft and reprisal attacks are decimating rural communities. As a result, the police are completely overwhelmed and totally unable to deal with the situation, which has resulted in a total distrust of the SAPS. This is no better illustrated by police stations that are locked up at night and inaccessible to the public out of fear of the police themselves being attacked by these criminals.

### **Infrastructure**

The recent floods that have ravaged various parts of the province have exposed the terrible condition of the province's roads and drainage infrastructure. The access roads to most rural villages are impassable, with many bridges in a dangerous condition, if not already washed away. One of the greatest causes of water shortages in large parts of the province are water leakages as a consequence of ageing and unmaintained infrastructure, yet little to nothing is being done to address this. The vandalism and destruction of state-owned infrastructure has reached crisis proportions.

Nowhere is this better illustrated than in Nelson Mandela Bay, where community halls, schools and sports facilities are literally being carried away right before the eyes of municipal officials and security personnel. The Allanridge hall in Kariega is a tragic and totally unacceptable example.

### **Local government and traditional affairs**

The recent public protests in Komani have exposed a serious power crisis in the province, which extends beyond the already 'abnormal' loadshedding being experienced across the rest of the country.

Communities have to endure days and weeks without electricity due to the lack of infrastructure maintenance, cable theft, theft of electricity and no payment for electricity. The Eastern Cape could and should be a renewable/sustainable energy powerhouse if the provincial government had a clear vision and commitment to make this happen. This situation also plays right into the hands of indiscriminate criminals that have also infiltrated the pastoral peace of rural communities who lived in relative harmony under historical traditional leadership. The neglect of these areas by the current provincial government is a slap in the face of these leaders and makes a farce of the existence of the House of traditional leaders across the road from the Premiers office.

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## **Pollution**

ActionSA is alarmed by the growing number of reported incidences of raw/untreated sewerage effluent that is being discharged into streams and rivers across the province and is being allowed to flow into our pristine coastal waters. These incidences are hidden from the unsuspecting residents and downstream farming communities and visitors of our coastal towns. The principal cause of these sewerage outflows is the lack of management, accountability and maintenance of water treatment infrastructure, which is a dereliction of duty on the part of those mandated with the upkeep of municipal infrastructure. We are concerned about the risk of a health disaster as a consequence of the sewerage contamination, as we are acutely concerned about the potential impact or export exclusion of our agricultural products due to unacceptable levels of e coli and other bacteria. This would have devastating consequences for this important sector which provides most of the job opportunities in the rural areas of this province.

## **Agriculture**

Agriculture can help diversify the province's reliance on the automotive industry and generate much needed employment. Out of the R64.5bn of exports out of the Eastern Cape, R51.1bn was motor vehicles and parts (2021/22). Why import maize when large tracts of extremely fertile land exist in the province?

## **Corruption**

The fight against corruption will never realistically commence effectively, let alone be won, without holding senior politicians and senior public servants, that have been deployed into their positions by virtue of them being ANC cadres, accountable for their unconscionable use/abuse of public funds.

In this regard the examples are regrettably too numerous to mention, but whose consequences have become a curse that the people of this province are expected to live with. Well, we as Action SA are here today to inform you and your government that we will no longer silently endure this kind of disrespect.

## **Unemployment**

The province's unemployment rate of 42.1% is not only disturbingly high, it is also far above the national unemployment rate of 32.7%. Youth employment is estimated to be close to 70%. This leaves the future generations completely without hope and makes them all the more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of anti-social behaviour.

The province is not attracting anywhere near the employment-yielding investments promised by the Premier. Instead, potential investors are being enticed by better run provinces. The Industrial Parks of the former TBVC States, which could be the bedrock of

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entrepreneurship and employment creation, remain derelict despite the claims made by the province in his latest and previous SOPA's.

Our recent visits to Fort Jackson, Dimbaza and Butterworth exposed nothing more than cosmetic investment into expensive fencing of some of these industrial sites and some upgrading of electricity infrastructure which has incidentally already been vandalised and stolen despite the newly erected.

### **Health**

The only option for many indigent citizens of our province is poorly run and unmaintained health facilities, which are often without medicine for chronic conditions. The shortage of doctors and other medical staff often results in long waits for many indigent patients, especially patients in need of urgent surgeries, like orthopedic surgeries.

### **Housing**

Inadequate low-cost housing, and the inability to spend housing grants, have contributed to the surge in informal settlements, especially in our two metros.

### **Under-Utilisation of allocations from National Treasury**

Reports of 15 dysfunctional municipalities, including the two metros, forfeiting over R800m of conditional grants for underperformance and non-compliance is troubling, given the desperate need for development in the province. Amathole and OR Tambo district municipalities lead the pack with each forfeiting R150m. Another example of the ineptitude in your government is how the Eastern Cape human settlements department failed to spend R338 million allocated for housing developments during the 2020/21 financial year, in spite of the 115 townships earmarked for upgrades.

### **Death of Initiates**

The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL) estimates that around 700 initiates have died in the Eastern Cape in the last decade, with 34 deaths reported during the last summer initiation season. ActionSA wishes to advise the government of the Eastern Cape that whatever steps have been taken, to date, to stem this hemorrhage of our future generations have been utterly ineffectual and that we will no longer endure the unnecessary loss of lives during initiation season.

We believe that *“you can't leave those who created the problem in charge of the solution”*, so therefore we believe that it's time for the people of this province to elect a government that, for a start, will prevent the deaths of our children.

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## **Undocumented immigrants**

The infiltration of illegal immigrants impacts on the micro economies, particularly in townships. Some of the spaza shops owned by undocumented foreigners front as drug distribution dens.

## **In conclusion**

ActionSA is hereby advising the government of the Eastern Cape, under the leadership of Premier Oscar Mabuyane, that your days of failing to govern this province in the best interests of all its people and of neglecting to deal with the seminal issues that compound the misery of the people of this province are coming to an abrupt end.

We are not only placing this inept government on terms that the 2024 National and Provincial elections will be the beginning of the end of your term in office, but we also wish to inspire every person in this province that has had enough of being a citizen of the Cinderella province of SA that they can change their lot in life by voting for a new and viable political alternative in ActionSA.

Corruption and cadre deployment robs the province of the resources and talent needed to alleviate the prevailing intolerable conditions. The eradication of corruption needs to be more than a campaign slogan, but a reality and voting against the party embraces these two evils can rid society of them overnight.

Education is a basic right that should empower our citizens to forge a future for themselves with less dependency on the state. The quality of public education provided by the government of the Eastern Cape does not improve the odds of a prosperous life for the average child in the province. We demand better management of the education department's financial resources to mitigate the shortage of teachers and to improve the overall condition of the schools' infrastructure. No child should ever drown in a pit latrine, more especially when grants which should have eradicated such toilets are forfeited by the province.

The aspirations, health, safety and security of our residents should be paramount preoccupations for those tasked with the improvement of the quality of lives of our people.

We Deserve Better!

### **Issued by:**

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Eastern Cape Provincial Chairperson

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