Patricia de Lille

Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure

Customs House

Heerengracht Street

Cape Town

**Memorandum: Housing for the people, not politicians!**

The Democratic Alliance (DA) hereby submits the following memorandum of demands to the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure as well as to the Cabinet of the Republic of South Africa.

**Background**

The City of Cape Town is facing a worsening housing shortage due to the consistent refusal by the national government to sell, terminate lease agreements or otherwise release land it owns or leases for housing development in the city. Successive administrations – including the one previously led by the current Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure – have pleaded for the national government to release the well-located mega-properties it owns in Cape Town. The development of these sites for housing in partnership with the private sector has the potential to provide thousands of homes to the people of Cape Town who are in desperate need of housing.

**Demands**

Given the cruel, callous and vindictive manner in which the national government and the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure have consistently rejected Cape Town’s constructive requests to release national government-owned land for housing, this memorandum serves to inform the Minister and her ANC Cabinet colleagues that we will not give up on this fight for the people of Cape Town.

We demand that:

1. The national government immediately surrenders its lease over Acacia Park and other parliamentary villages to provide housing for the people rather than politicians. These facilities currently houses a handful of Members of Parliament while the people suffer. Instead of leasing and maintaining this enormous property, Members of Parliament should be given housing vouchers which they can redeem for accommodation in Cape Town. This will save the state millions of Rands currently wasted on maintaining these properties. Once the lease has been surrendered, the DA-led City of Cape Town will negotiate to buy Acacia Park and partner with the private sector to build homes for thousands of Capetonians on this well-located land.
2. The national government must also immediately begin the process to sell, terminate lease agreements or otherwise release the following mega-properties to the City of Cape Town for development in partnership with the private sector: Ysterplaat, Wingfield, Youngsfield and Culemborg. Where small parts of these properties are currently utilised by the military, the national Cabinet must resolve to move these military operations to a site located well outside the urban edge of Cape Town. These military sites were created at a time when Cape Town was much smaller, but given the way in which the city has grown, the land on which they operate is now urgently needed for housing development.

The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure has 7 days to respond to this memorandum on behalf of her ANC Cabinet colleagues, failing which we will be left with no choice but to escalate our campaign to provide housing for the people, not politicians.

Geordin Hill-Lewis

21 September 2021