



EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

Retief Odendaal, MPL

Provincial Legislature
Private Bag x0051 or
Independence Ave
Bhisho, 5605

Tel: 040 608 0284
Cell: 082 374 9232
Email: retiefodendaal1@gmail.com



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THE HONOURABLE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

Honourable President Ramaphosa,

RE: DROUGHT DISASTER – EASTERN CAPE

I refer to the aforementioned matter.

It is unfortunate that I have to address this correspondence directly to your good office but the lack of responsiveness by your governmental departments necessitated such action.

The Eastern Cape continues to grapple with an unprecedented drought disaster and both National and the Provincial Government are doing nothing to assist the farming communities in our province.

On 20 July 2021 the National Disaster Management Centre classified the ongoing drought in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape as a national disaster. Unfortunately, the aforesaid acknowledgment of the severity of the drought has meant very little to Eastern Cape farmers, as they have received no assistance from government.

The Eastern Cape Provincial Government last declared a Provincial State of Disaster as a result of the prolonged drought in October 2019. During this time an amount of R74 million was made available to assist struggling farmers. It was estimated at the time that more than a billion rand was necessary to provide meaningful support to those farmers in need.

This was the last assistance that drought-plagued farmers received in the province. Since 2019 the ongoing drought has tightened its grip on the Eastern Cape and the

situation has become worse.

Some farmers have been forced to sell their farming operations and others are facing financial ruin as a result of this unprecedented drought disaster. It's an absolute travesty that government seems to be in denial as to the extent of this crisis that is destroying lives and livelihoods on a daily basis.

Whilst the National Disaster Management Centre, CoGTA and the DWA have been monitoring the situation, I fear that the crisis is getting worse and that government is not being responsive enough.

It is against this backdrop that we appeal to your good office for direct intervention in the matter. It cannot be that your government acknowledges the seriousness of the drought without providing the necessary support to assist our people.

I trust the agricultural community in the Eastern Cape can count on your direct intervention in this crisis.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours in anticipation.

Sincerely,



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HON. RETIEF ODENDAAL, MPL (LLB – NMMU)
SHADOW MEC FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRARIAN REFORM



A People's Assembly for Good Governance
Independence Avenue, Bhisho, 5600 / Private Bag X0051, Bhisho, 5605
Website: www.eclegislature.gov.za
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