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Gauteng Provincial Legislature, City Hall, Cnr Helen Joseph/City Hall Streets, Johannesburg

31 October 2022

Dear Commissioner, Zamantungwa Mbeki,

**RE: COMPLAINT- WATER SUPPLY IN GAUTENG**

For many weeks, our residents have been left with limited access to water and electricity. Rand Water has been calling on our residents to use water sparingly. Before the supply of water became a crisis, the Democratic Alliance (DA) in Gauteng had a meeting with the top management of Rand Water on 21 April 2022.

This meeting was prompted by the lack of adequate maintenance of our water infrastructure resulting in Gauteng residents having limited access to water. During this meeting, Rand Water outlined its detailed plan, which included maintenance of bulk water infrastructure to ensure that our residents have access to an uninterrupted supply of water.

When load-shedding was implemented towards the end of September, our reservoirs were unable to fill up sufficiently with water, so that our residents could have access to clean water. Since then, the situation has worsened and has prompted the DA to embark on a series of oversight inspections of water reservoirs in the province to assess the situation.

During our recent oversight inspection of the pumping station and water reservoir in Eikenhof on 25th October 2022, we discovered that there is a water leak right outside their premises.

Rand Water blames our residents for not using water sparingly but from what we saw today, it is clear that this entity is failing to ensure that its infrastructure is properly maintained. Regular maintenance of our water infrastructure is critical if we want to prevent this infrastructure from collapsing.

Furthermore, Rand Water's license to purify and supply water has not been upgraded. This despite Gauteng's population growing at a very high rate. This clearly shows that they are not planning to improve access to water as a human right.

We also engaged with the local ward councillors whose areas are the most affected by load-shedding and current throttling of the supply of water in Hursthill.

Residents have to rely on water tankers and, in one incident, a 13-year-old child from Coronationville was knocked down by a car while collecting water and is in critical condition. Old age homes and hospitals in the area are also affected by the shortage of water.

**FREEDOM. FAIRNESS. OPPORTUNITY. DIVERSITY.**



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On 18th October 2022, I conducted an oversight inspection in a water reservoir in Krugersdorp. During this visit, I was informed that the municipality has procured water tankers and installed booster pumps to ensure that their residents have access to an uninterrupted water supply.

This comes at an additional cost to the municipality, something that they cannot necessarily afford. With the electricity being off for at least six hours a day during Stage four load-shedding, the pumping stations are not able to pump water, and reservoirs are not able to fill up sufficiently before the electricity goes off again.

Our water infrastructure is unable to cope with load-shedding, which may lead to the water pipes breaking and needing to be replaced again. Furthermore, this also impacts our sewage system as continued pressure is needed to ensure that raw sewage is moved through the pipes and into wastewater treatment facilities.

Following this oversight inspection, the DA has written to President Cyril Ramaphosa, the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Senzo Mchunu, the Premier of Gauteng, Panyaza Lesufi and the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mzi Khumalo.

To date, we only received an acknowledgement of our letter from The Presidency.

Access to water is a basic human right and this right is currently being infringed on by Rand Water which is throttling supply to various reservoirs and pumping stations in the province. This right should not become dangerous, and our residents pay for a service that they expect to be delivered without interruption.

While residents can manage without electricity, they cannot survive without water. Furthermore, this is also having a negative impact on businesses that are required to use water in the production of their goods.

The DA is, therefore, requesting that the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) please intervene in this situation as our residents cannot be denied their basic human rights on a daily basis.

Kind regards,

**Solly Msimanga MPL**  
**Official Leader of the Opposition-Gauteng**  
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