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Date: 14 May 2025*

To: Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi
Provincial Commissioner of Police
KwaZulu-Natal South African Police Service
Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

RE: Urgent Intervention Required Following Theft of Cyberlab Equipment at Sibongumbomvu Combined School, uMngeni Municipality

Dear Lieutenant General Mkhwanazi,

We write to you with great urgency and deep concern following a serious criminal incident that occurred on the night of 13 May 2025 at Sibongumbomvu Combined School, located in Ward 6 of the uMngeni Municipality.

This school was recently the beneficiary of a digital cyberlab, handed over by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies on 15 April 2025 as part of a national initiative to promote digital literacy and coding education. During the break-in, all 20 laptops donated to the school as part of this programme were stolen, along with additional school-owned IT equipment. Significant physical damage was also caused to the school's infrastructure.

What is particularly distressing is that, at the time of preparing this correspondence — more than 12 hours after the incident was reported — members of the South African Police Service had still not arrived on the scene. This delay is deeply troubling and raises serious concerns regarding the responsiveness of SAPS in cases where vulnerable communities and public institutions are targeted.

Initial reports from the school indicate that the break-in was not opportunistic, but appears to have been planned by individuals with intimate knowledge of the school premises, including the location of the strongroom where the equipment was secured. This suggests the possibility of an inside link and calls for a full and thorough investigation.

As public representatives, we urge your office to prioritise the deployment of senior investigative personnel to this case, to ensure swift action is taken to identify, apprehend, and charge those responsible. It is essential that SAPS sends a clear message that criminal acts targeting children's educational futures will not be tolerated.

We also urge SAPS to strengthen local police visibility and engagement in rural schools, and to work proactively with communities to prevent such devastating incidents from recurring.

We thank you in advance for your attention to this matter and trust that your office will treat this as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,
Edwin Macrae Bath
DA Co-Constituency Head for uMngeni