



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**GEORGE MICHALAKIS**

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14 May 2026

His Excellency Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa

**President of the Republic of South Africa**

**Per e-mail**

Your Excellency,

**RE: REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORISING SIU INVESTIGATION INTO  
CITY OF EKURHULENI R2 BILLION SHORTFALL**

I write to you in relation to recent news reports alleging that cyber criminals conspired with officials from the City of Ekurhuleni (the City) allegedly to gain access to, and manipulate, the City's electricity billing system. It is alleged that these cyber criminals, in collusion with city officials, erased electricity bill debts (either partially or in full) in return for payment by businesses and individuals to whom said debts accrue.

It is reported that this practice has directly resulted in the City experiencing a revenue shortfall in excess of R2 billion. It is our understanding that such a shortfall will have a disastrous impact the City's ability to render municipal services to residents.

It is alleged that these cyber criminals were able to access to the City's electricity billing system due to a failure by officials to implement adequate Internet and Communication Technology (ICT) security practices. It is alleged further that the City had negligently allowed its ICT firewalls to collapse, leaving the electricity billing system severely exposed to cybercrime. While we cannot comment on whether such collapse was in part orchestrated by City officials, reports draw the inference that this is indeed the case.

In a briefing to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) in Parliament on 7 May 2026, City officials told members of parliament that the City uncovered the alleged practice in the 2024/25 financial year by comparing its revenue to its income in quarterly reports for that period. It is our understanding that, although the alleged practice was discovered in this period, its occurrence was not limited to that period. Acting City Manager Mr. Tsholofelo Koopedi told members of SCOPA that the breach appears to be constituted by a series of ICT attacks over a long period of time.

Mr. Koopedi explained that cyber criminals were able to park their vehicles outside of municipal buildings, gain access to the building's Wi-Fi network, and hack the City's Virtual Private Network (VPN). It is our understanding that by hacking the City's VPN, cyber criminals allegedly gained access to billing systems and were able to manipulate the system in various ways.

This allegedly includes, but is not limited to:

1. the erasure of outstanding debts owed to the City;

2. the lowering of electricity rates charged, thereby resulting in a substantial reduction in the debt owed; and
3. the issuing of fake invoices which allowed contractors to pay themselves.

We understand from reports that the cyber criminals would allegedly manipulate certain debt amounts and invoices in return for payment.

We understand that if City officials were involved in this practice and received “kickbacks”, as alleged, this constitutes corruption. City officials being complicit in the practice notwithstanding, we understand that the negligent act of allowing the ICT systems to become vulnerable to cybercrime and the failure to identify such vulnerability and the subsequent crime may, in any event, constitute a contravention of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003.

Further to the above, the City Mayor, Ald. Nkosindiphile Xhakaza, has linked this practice to the alleged murder of an employee of the City, the late Mr. Mpho Mafole, who was allegedly tasked with investigating the same. We understand from various media reports that Mr. Mafole had submitted a report detailing the extent of the practice shortly before his death.

In light of the severity of the allegations as detailed above, we humbly request that you will consider issuing a Presidential Proclamation authorising the Special Investigating Unit to conduct a full investigation into this matter.

Your guidance on this would be greatly appreciated, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Michalakis', written over a horizontal line.

**Mr G Michalakis MP**  
**Parliamentary Leader of the Democratic Alliance**