

***Speech EC Anti-Crime March in Gqeberha, Nelson Mandela Bay on Friday, 10 July 2026***

Good morning, Nelson Mandela Bay.

Thank you for walking with us today, from Gelvan Park to the SAPS 10111 Centre in Schauderville.

That walk matters immensely.

We have sent a clear message that this city refuses to accept that crime is simply how things are here.

But before anything else, I want us to pause. Not for politics. For people.

For every family in this city that has buried a son, a daughter, a mother, a father, to violence. For the police officers who put on a uniform each morning not knowing whether they will take it off again tonight.

For the neighbourhood watches and community safety volunteers who patrol streets that government has abandoned. And for every one of you who organised, marshalled, and walked this route today, because you believe Nelson Mandela Bay is worth fighting for.

And I want us to remember one name in particular:

Constable Callan Andrews. Twenty-nine years old. Two months into a job he had applied for five times, because he wanted to serve the very community he grew up in.

He was gunned down on New Year's Eve in Helenvale, after helping push-start a broken police van, a van that should have been working, in a police service that should have had his back.

Behind every crime statistic you will hear today is a person, a family, a future that was taken. That is what this march is about.

Andrew has told you how policing has collapsed: stations that don't answer their phones, a 10111 centre that cannot cope, officers without the tools to catch violent criminals.

Retief has told you how even the arrests we do make collapse before they reach a courtroom, because detectives are overstretched, dockets go missing, and forensic evidence takes months.

Solly has told you why: because in too many places, the very institutions meant to protect us have been captured by the criminals they are supposed to catch.

Every one of those failures is a broken link in the same chain, and in South Africa, every link is broken.

We have to fix that chain.

The DA has a plan to fix each broken link of that chain.

Catch. Convict. Clean up. This is the plan a DA-led national government will implement.

We can start by having a permanent Minister of Police.

I'm calling on President Ramaphosa: South Africa needs a permanent Minister of Police.

And we cannot continue paying the salary of two ministers.

This weekend marks one year since the Acting Minister of Police was appointed. A whole year where two ministers are being paid for the work of one.

The suspended Minister of Police is still getting his salary of over R2,6 million while he sits at home.

With that money, we could employ 8 more detectives full time!

In a country where so many criminals walk free because cases aren't properly investigated, every new detective counts.

8 new detectives means more criminals behind bars and off of our streets.

South Africa needs leadership, authority and accountability in the middle of a national crime crisis.

You cannot fight permanent crime with temporary leadership.

You cannot rebuild crime intelligence, fix broken police stations, support detectives, restore discipline in SAPS and clean up corruption in law enforcement if the person responsible for doing it does not have a clear, permanent mandate.

The President must end the uncertainty. He must appoint a permanent Police Minister, give that Minister clear targets, and hold that Minister publicly accountable for results.

Nelson Mandela Bay cannot wait. The Eastern Cape cannot wait. South Africa cannot wait, while honest police officers are being failed by the system, and while criminals act as if the state has surrendered.

We need a government that acts with urgency, because the people living with this violence do not have the luxury of waiting.

Because where there are no jobs, gangs recruit. Where infrastructure crumbles, extortion rackets move in. Where there is no opportunity, there is despair, and despair is where criminality takes root.

That is why the DA does not treat crime-fighting and economic growth as two separate tasks. They are the same task.

No investor will build a factory in a community run by a construction mafia.

No small business will open its doors where extortion is the price of trading.

No family can plan a future where their children are not safe walking to school.

Safety is not a luxury that arrives after development. Safety is a precondition for development. And development, in turn, is what starves crime of the desperation it feeds on. Get one right, and you start to get the other right too.

That is why fixing our criminal justice system is not only about catching criminals.

It is about making Nelson Mandela Bay a place where business will invest, where jobs will be created, and where this city, and this country, can finally work, for everyone.

On the 4th of November, the people of this country face a choice.

One option is a government that has run out of excuses but keeps making them anyway: that policing is under-resourced because someone else spent the money, that corruption will be investigated eventually, one day, at some point.

The other option is a DA government that will professionalise the police instead of politicising them.

We will back prosecutors instead of protecting the connected.

I am an optimist about this country.

Every single day I meet South Africans who refuse to give up, no matter how hard it has become to hold on to hope. You are those South Africans. You are here on a Friday morning, marching for a safer Bay, because you still believe this city, this province, this country can work.

I love this country, and I love this Bay. I refuse to accept that Kwazakhele, New Brighton, Walmer, Kwanobuhle and Helenvale must simply live with gangsterism as their permanent condition.

These are proud communities, full of people who get up every day and try to build something decent for their families. You deserve a state that matches their effort with your own.

You are right to believe that South Africa can work, for everyone. Not for some. Not for the politically connected few.

You deserve a government that is on your side. The DA is that government.

Media Enquiries

Geordin Hill-Lewis

Leader of the Democratic Alliance

Charity McCord

Media Manager: Federal Leader's Office

078 126 2765