



CITY OF CAPE TOWN

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR, PATRICIA DE LILLE, AND THE IMIZAMO YETHU COMMUNITY LEADERS

Mayor De Lille declares Imizamo Yethu a local disaster area

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The City of Cape Town and Imizamo Yethu community leaders hosted a joint media briefing today to discuss the newly developed plans and provide updates on the process of relocation following the devastating fire which occurred a month ago.

It has been exactly one month since one of the biggest fires in the history of our city destroyed thousands of homes in Imizamo Yethu. This has been a trying time for the victims of the fire, who have faced even more challenges which were unanticipated during this time.

While the City has written to both the Western Cape Government and the National Government to have the area declared a disaster, this application is still being processed and considered. I am using my rights in terms of Section 55 of the Disaster Risk Management Act which makes provision for the 'declaration of a local state of disaster'. It states that:

'55. (1) In the event of a local disaster, the council of a municipality having primary responsibility for the coordination and management of the disaster may, by notice in the provincial gazette, declare a local state of disaster if:

(a) existing legislation and contingency arrangements do not adequately provide,

(b) other special circumstances warrant the declaration of a local state of disaster'

This will enable us to follow emergency procurement procedures, and will also facilitate the acceleration of our response and post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation.

I would firstly like to commend the leadership of the Imizamo Yethu community who have worked so well with the City. On Monday 10 April 2017, we held a meeting to discuss their most recent concerns, namely the conditions of the 237 families who live in three tents on the Imizamo Yethu Sports Complex field (Tent City). They are joined by more than 100 families who have found refuge in community halls and with family members, friends and employers. We are happy to announce that we have once again reached an amicable solution.

The City was ambitious in the thinking that the super-blocking project would be completed in such a short space of time. The terrain is mountainous and therefore very difficult to build on. We remain committed to this project, but the current conditions in Tent City require a more comfortable arrangement for the fire victims for the next three months while this project is completed.

STATEMENT BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR, PATRICIA DE LILLE

We have agreed to create four temporary relocation areas (TRAs) which will allow the community to have their privacy and independence back until they can move to the super-blocked zone.

The first TRA is on the Imizamo Yethu sports field. We have already dismantled one of the tents and started erecting 3 m x 3 m structures on the sports field. This week, 53 identified families from one tent will move into these structures. We will then continue erecting structures to accommodate the 61 families in the second tent, so that this tent can be taken down as well. The City will take responsibility for erecting all structures as it is a TRA and we will also keep a record of occupants. We have already erected 10 standpipes on the field to meet the sanitation needs of the community. We will monitor the chemical toilets closely to ensure they are regularly serviced.

The second TRA will be in Disa Site 2 (forestry site), where the formal housing development is currently being built. The identified area will be prepared to immediately accommodate about 80 structures. There is a building on the site which we will have to demolish as soon as possible so that we can provide another 80 structures on this site. Therefore approximately 160 families will be able to relocate to this site for the next three months. This TRA will not hinder the formal housing project which is currently under way. The Imizamo Yethu housing development will provide 946 housing opportunities, with the first residents moving in in July 2018.

The third site (Hughenden Estate) will accommodate approximately 300 families, while the fourth TRA (Penzance site) will accommodate around 80 families. The earthworks necessary to accommodate these families are yet to be installed. Therefore these sites will only be used at a later stage if required.

These relocations will be temporary while the super-blocking is in process. I want to thank the community leaders, fire victims, and the people of Hout Bay for their patience and cooperation. I am grateful for the partnership that we have built.

As part of our Organisational Development and Transformation Plan, we set out to further mainstream basic service delivery to informal settlements. Practically, this includes the City working with communities that are ready to partner with us to develop service delivery models that are appropriate in less formal contexts.

I believe that Imizamo Yethu is going to be one of our first successes in that regard if we continue to work together in this manner.

Message from the Imizamo Yethu community leaders

Since the day of the fire, we have called all leaders of different organisations and sectors and formed a community leaders forum. Later that same day we were joined by the City of Cape Town and as the days went by we were also joined by the provincial and national spheres of government. We have all joined hands in the struggle of assisting the fire victims.

STATEMENT BY THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE MAYOR, PATRICIA DE LILLE

We have worked very well with the three spheres of government, especially both the National Department of Human Settlements and the City of Cape Town in making sure that the three people who lost their lives in the fire were laid to rest.

We furthermore forged a very good relationship with the City of Cape Town in addressing our immediate needs and finding long-lasting solutions for the people of Imizamo Yethu. This has required a lot of time and meetings on a daily basis.

We are happy that we have managed to come up with a mid-term solution of housing people in the TRAs in four pieces of land while the super-blocking is under way in the fire-affected areas.

We, as the community leaders, give the City the undertaking that we will ensure the cooperation of the community so that everything that we have agreed upon is implemented.

We have worked very well with the City thus far. We thank you, Usodolophu, for your leadership. Without you and your team in the City of Cape Town, we wouldn't have gotten this far. Your leadership and tolerance has given us hope that together we can progress to a better South Africa than it is today. We hope that that some few individuals who see blacks as people to be separated from them will now change their attitude. We are all human beings. The Bill of Rights (Chapter 2 of our Constitution) enshrines the rights of all people living in South Africa and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. We thank the community of Imizamo Yethu as well as the councillors and the greater Hout Bay residents.

We thank you Sodolophu. It is in the true sense of the City's slogan that we are making

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