

MEDIA STATEMENT

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ATTENTION: Assignment Editors / Tourism/ Environment Beat Writers

PHOSA INTERVENES ON THE MTPA BOARD AND CEO MATTER IN ORDER TO BRING STABILITY AT THE AGENCY

Nelspruit – Mpumalanga MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Mrs Pinky Phosa, as the Executing Authority of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) and in terms of the provisions of the MTPA Act, 2005 (Act 5 Of 2005), has intervened and declared the decision of the Agency's Board to place its CEO on a 14 day special leave as invalid and without effect. The MTPA Board had placed Mr Jacques Modipane on special leave following the theft of the rhino horns stock at the Agency's office in Nelspruit.

In terms of the said Act, any decision to suspend or put the CEO on "special leave" or even appoint an Acting CEO can only be done after consulting the Member of the Executive Council responsible for tourism matters in the Province. The Board cannot therefore unilaterally remove the CEO nor appoint an Acting CEO without the consent of the MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. Similarly, the appointment of Mr Edward Thwala as the Acting CEO is irregular and thus invalid.

"As the Executing Authority of the MTPA and in terms of the provisions made in the MTPA Act regarding the role of the Board on the appointment or suspension or temporary removal of the CEO and appointment of an acting CEO, I have written to the Acting Chairperson of the Board to inform her that the CEO, Mr Jacques Modipane will remain in his position. The Board does not have the unilateral right to remove the CEO. I am doing this as a matter of principle, and to also bring stability at the Agency," explained MEC Phosa.

"I think we should leave the law enforcement agencies to investigate the matter, and appropriate actions will only be taken once we know the concrete facts," added Mrs Phosa.

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