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## ***MEDIA STATEMENT***

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Date: Tuesday, 25 May 2021

Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MKHATSHWA ENGAGES MPUMALANGA EXECUTIVE MAYORS AND MEMBERS OF MAYORAL COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**Mbombela** – MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Vusi Mkhathshwa, today held a meeting with Mpumalanga Executive Mayors, and their respective Members of Mayoral Committees (MMCs) responsible for Finance and Local Economic Development, to strengthen working relations. Dubbed the *MunMEC* (Municipalities and MEC), the meeting was the first engagement since the MEC took office in February earlier this year.

The meeting discussed the following:

- (1) the proposed Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (MERRP);
- (2) the Financial Recovery Plan of distressed municipalities (and the support provided);
- (3) Revitalisation of industrial parks (to re-ignite local economies, working with government entities like MEGA);
- (4) Disaster relief on damaged infrastructure and rehabilitation of tourism infrastructure; and
- (5) Resuscitation of LED (Local Economic Development) Forums in municipalities.

“I am humbled and appreciate that our Executive Mayors, and their respective MMCs for Finance and Local Economic Development, have honoured my invitation. We share a common vision; that of reviving our township and rural economies, that is why we have collectively agreed to meet regularly to update each other”, explained MEC Mkhathshwa.

The meeting has agreed that the *MunMEC* should be convened on a quarterly basis, to update each other on the progress made. It also endorsed the proposed MERRP (still on draft format), paving the way for the MEC to consult all stakeholders (municipalities, social partners and the private sector) in the three (3) district municipalities.

These consultations are scheduled to start next week on 01 June 2021 in the Nkangala District, thereafter in the Ehlanzeni District (03 June 2021) and finally at the Gert Sibande District (on a date to be confirmed). The MERRP is expected to be launched the Premier of the Province, Ms. Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, once it is endorsed by all stakeholders.

“The meeting has now given us a green light to consult all stakeholders at district level on the MERRP; our economy recovery blue-print, which proposes massive infrastructure roll-out throughout the Province, to revive our economy. Once all stakeholders have endorsed the Plan, it will then be released to the public by the Premier. Our plan is to start the consultation process from next week, starting in the Nkangala District”, concluded the MEC.

***ENDS***

***Issued by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism***

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