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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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**Date: Wednesday, 10 January 2024**

Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **HLOPHE WELCOMES THE HOSTING OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS' 112TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN MPUMALANGA**

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**Mbombela** – The MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Ms. Nompumelelo Hlophe, has expressed appreciation to the governing African National Congress (ANC), for selecting Mpumalanga as the host for its 112<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, as this will boost tourism and have positive economic spin-offs for the Province. This event brings unparalleled economic stimulation, as all accommodation establishments in Mbombela and surrounding areas, are fully booked for the upcoming celebration to take place on Saturday, 13 January 2023.

“We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the governing ANC, for deciding to host the organisation’s 112<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in our Province. This is a serious boost to our tourism industry, given that the event is expected to be attended by around 46000 people. There are indications that most of the people will spend at least 3 days in Mbombela; meaning that they will spend money here and boost our economy.

“We further urge our visitors to stay even longer, beyond the January 8 Statement and 112<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, so that they can explore and experience our diverse tourism attractions across the Province. I guarantee that they will not regret such a decision, as they will enjoy their stay in the only Province with God’s window; the home to the big-five; the Province of serenity which can be experienced at the Sudwala Caves and the Graskop Gorge, amongst other breathtaking attractions”, explained MEC Hlophe.

“We welcome all people who will descent to Mbombela this week with open and warm arms, and thank them in advance for coming to visit our Province, Mpumalanga – *The Place of the Rising Sun*. To us, they are our kings and queens as their presence will bring money to the Province, and help to grow our economy. Mpumalanga is home to everyone. And as the safety of tourists is our priority, we are currently working with our sister Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison and the South African Police Service, to ensure the safety of our visitors during the event and beyond”, concluded Ms. Hlophe.

Meanwhile MEC Hlophe is also urging all business owners, especially in and around Mbombela, to strictly adhere to their license conditions during the entire period of the hosting of the ANC’s 112<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

“As thousands of people descent to our Province to attend the ANC’s 112<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, we know that they would also like to indulge in various entertainment activities, which surely will include alcohol consumption, amongst others. We, therefore, urge owners of businesses selling alcoholic beverages to strictly adhere to their license conditions, which include adhering to the operating hours as per their licenses. We further urge them not to sell alcoholic beverages to children under the age of 18 years.

**-ENDS-**

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

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