



**Address by Public Protector Adv Thuli Madonsela during the  
Stakeholder Consultative Dialogue meeting in Bloemfontein, Free  
State on Monday, July 30, 2012**

**Programme Director, Ms Sune Griessel  
Speaker of the Free State Legislature, Hon. K. Sesele  
MEC for Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements, Ms O  
Mlamlali;  
Deputy Mayor of Mangaung Metro, Cllr. M. Siyonzana  
HOD of the Department of Human Settlements, Mr TN Mokhesi;  
HOD of the Department of Labour, Ms Marsha Bronkhorst;  
Mr P Helepi of the Public Service Commission;  
Provincial Head of the SA Human Rights Commission, Ms L Khumalo;  
Acting Provincial Coordinator of the Commission for Gender Equality, Ms A Madikgetla;  
Director for Quality Assurance at the National Department of Human Settlements, Mr M  
Lesola;  
Chairperson of the Free State Provincial Taxi Association, Mr Qumbu;  
Matjhabeng Rape Intervention Care Centre Project Manager, Mrs S Mandisa;  
The Public Protector team;  
Members of the media;  
Ladies and gentlemen;**

Thank you Honourable Speaker for the warm welcome. My team and I certainly feel at home.

The Public Protector team is sincerely grateful to all the guests for agreeing to meet with us this morning. We trust that your being here signifies your commitment to join hands with my office and others that are seeking to end maladministration and entrench good governance in all state affairs.

By now most if not all of you must be aware that my team and I are visiting all provinces as part of the third annual Public Protector National Stakeholder Consultative Dialogue. Yours is the third province we have visited since launching the dialogue on 12 July in Pretoria. We have since been to the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Theme for this year's dialogue is ***“Joining hands to end maladministration and ensure responsive service delivery: Focus on RDP houses and regulatory gaps on the illegal conversion of panel vans into taxis.”***

This dialogue is slightly different from its 2010 and 2011 precursors in that it incorporates public hearings on two systemic investigations that we are currently conducting. The one deals with problems associated with the RDP housing programme and the other with regulatory gaps on the conversion of panel vans into taxis.

We are here to give all of you an opportunity to relate your own experiences regarding RDP housing and the conversion of panel vans to taxis, if any. You will also be at liberty to share with us other systemic service delivery concerns affecting groups or communities.

However, before we go there, let me give you a sense of what the situation is like in this province with regard to complaints that we have received. Of the 2 129 complaints we received from residents of the Free State in the last financial year, 264 related to the plight of RDP housing beneficiaries.

The main RDP problem we have had to tackle from this province relates to Nala Municipality, which we visited about two months back. The problems include:

- a. An incomplete settlement;
- b. A dysfunctional sewage system; and
- c. Allegations of corruption and payment for shoddy work or work not done.

We have been provided with a forensic report that details the problems. There are other individual problems, including those waiting for too long for an RDP house. We are also investigating allegations relating to Operation Hlasela. These and other allegations have informed our decision to conduct a systemic investigation. Some of you may be wondering what exactly do we mean by a systemic investigation and how does it differ from other investigations. A systemic investigation is a more complex investigation that goes beyond addressing individual complaints and ensures that the structural deficiencies that give rise to the complaints are addressed to avoid a recurrence. While your individual complaints will be remedied, we will also take care of the root causes of the complaints that ensure that no one else suffers the same fate in future.

Such investigations are pursued as part of fulfilling the mandate of strengthening and supporting constitutional democracy through investigating any conduct in state affairs, or in the public administration in any sphere of government, that is alleged or suspected to be improper or to result in any impropriety or prejudice; report on that conduct and take appropriate remedial action.

The power to conduct a systemic investigation is one of the powers awarded by the Public Protector Act. The PPA also powers to resolve public grievances through conciliation, mediation and negotiation. You probably know that my office's powers also derive from the Executive Members' Ethics Act. Under this act, my office oversees the ethical conduct of all members of the Executive. The office is also one of the institutions protecting whistle-blowers under the Protected Disclosures Act and has an anti-corruption mandate under the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act. The office has the power to review the decisions of the Home Builders Registration Council under the Housing Measures Act and is one of the information regulators under the Promotion of Access to Information Act.

I look forward to hearing about your experiences on RDP housing problems and the illegal conversion of panel vans into taxis. By airing your views in this process, you are joining hands with us in pursuit of an accountable state that operates with integrity and is responsive to the

needs of its citizens and residents.

Thank you.

**Adv TN Madonsela**

**Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa**