



## NELSON MANDELA BAY CHURCH LEADERS NETWORK

Email: [nmbcln@gmail.com](mailto:nmbcln@gmail.com)

20 September 2023

### **Open letter to:**

President Cyril Ramaphosa,  
Mr John Steenhuisen,  
Premier Oscar Mabuyane,  
MP Andrew Whitfield,  
MEC Zolile Williams,  
Exec Mayor Gary van Niekerk,  
Councillor Babalwa Lobishe,  
Councillor Retief Odendaal

### **RE: Govern according to the will of the people, alternatively new local elections, or Section 12 administration**

The united church leadership of Nelson Mandela Bay representing the majority of the citizens calls on national, provincial and local leaders of the two majority parties in the metro to forego national and personal agendas in order to address the rapid decline of the metro due to petty politicking and acquiescing to the demands of minority parties.

(Though we acknowledge the constructive role the best talent from smaller parties can play, we are shocked by destructive actions of smaller parties which contributes to destabilizing the administration.)

There can be no argument that the standard of living of the citizens of Nelson Mandela Bay has drastically declined.

The metro has had 37 municipal managers and 11 mayors since 2016.

The Statistics South Africa Quarterly Labour Force Survey, for the second quarter of 2023 found that 2 700 jobs had been lost from the corresponding period in 2022.

A March survey by the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber found that some 20% of metro believe jobs will be cut because of the energy crisis. And 90% of businesses have put the brakes on further expansion and investment.

Service delivery protests are so common they do not make the news except in the traffic reports.

Potholes, water leaks, broken robots and streets without lights abound attest to the dysfunctionality of the governance structures of the Metro.

The church leadership draws your attention to the appendix, which is a letter written by the churches to President Ramaphosa and then DA leader Musi Maimane on October 10, 2019. The figures need updating, but none of the issues highlighted has been addressed.

The dismal state of affairs in the metro convinces us to call for new local elections in order to create a more productive balance of power. Alternatively, the church leadership urges the leadership of the ANC and DA to urgently meet with

the civil society coalition to agree on a way forward for the two majority parties to work together for the good of their voters in the metro – who are also our congregants.

This is the will of the electorate.

We propose that the meeting be held as soon as possible at St Stephen's Church in New Brighton.

The church leadership is willing to act as facilitators.

Bishop Eddie Daniels (Anglican Church of SA (Gqeberha Diocese)

Bishop Vincent Zungu (Catholic Diocese Gqeberha)

Bishop Dr William Leleki (Bishop of the Methodist Church of SA (Makhanda District)

Apostle Neville Goldman (Ebenezer International)

Reverend Danie Mouton (Director Synod Eastern Cape DRC)

Dr Dave Pedersen (National Director Vineyard Churches SA)

Pastor Johannes Welskit (Regional Leader EC AFM)

Reverend Themba Mahuwa (Chairperson of the SACC NMB Metro Branch)

Bishop Zola Moses (NMB Metro Religious Leaders Desk)

Plus on behalf of 21 independent church leaders and other heads of church denominations