**African Christian Democratic Party**

 **20 May 2022

ACDP Parliament
Budget Vote 9: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Speech by ACDP President, Rev Kenneth Meshoe MP**

 **ACDP leader tells Cabinet to prioritise assistance to recent flood victims over flag project**

“Chairperson,

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is a key player in government and therefore should set a good example when it comes to performance. According to the Committee report, “The mandate of the Department is derived from Section 85(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa which includes developing and implementing national policy and coordinating the functions of state departments and administration.

On Sunday when President Ramaphosa addressed the Durban Chamber of Commerce on the recent floods in KZN, he said, “This disaster proved to us that we are not as ready as we should be,” and we will need to work together.”

A Department that monitors frontline service delivery and manages the Presidential Hotline has to operate across all sectors of government. It has to coordinate departments, while persuading cooperation between local, provincial and national levels. Where capacity and political will are lacking, much planning, monitoring and evaluation are needed to turn budgets and grants into actual local service delivery.

The President is correct about our lack of disaster preparedness. But he neglected to mention the existence of a strategic report that could have made a difference in what happened in KZN, if it had been taken seriously and if its recommendations had been implemented. It is unfortunate, Honourable Members, that the 2021 review of the KZN Provincial Growth and Development Strategy was not considered and acted upon. This report was written by the KZN Planning Commission which works for the National Planning Commission, which the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation has a Constitutional mandate to support.

The KZN Planning Commission report, however, had already warned – in 2021 – of “the impact of climate change and the concomitant natural catastrophes.” It called for “the evolution of settlements and land use patterns that can withstand natural shocks.”

Last month, Honourable Members, the President told Parliament that there would be a real-time audit of emergency flood relief. He admitted it is a “great shame” that this is necessary because the public fears that relief funds will be stolen by government officials and others allied to the ruling party. The ACDP agrees that this is a “great shame” – this because corruption has become part of the new culture of the ruling party in South Africa today.

I was surprised and disappointed this morning when I heard on ENCA news that cabinet approved the monumental flag that would cost taxpayers R22 million. How could they approve such a huge expenditure when hundreds of thousands of our people lost everything that they owned in the devastating floods that destroyed their homes, businesses, roads, and infrastructure? Does government really care for our people, particularly those who voted for them? The ACDP calls on Minister Mthethwa to implement President Ramaphosa’s advice to scrap the flag project immediately. Until all the victims of recent floods that are cramped in halls after losing their homes have received appropriate assistance to rebuild their homes, then this expensive flag project must be put on ice.

The ACDP therefore calls on Cabinet to prioritise assistance to victims of the recent floods over all other competing needs, particularly the flag project.

In conclusion, the ACDP would like to know what plans does the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation have to ensure that no-performing departments and municipalities are held accountable? It is their responsibility to monitor whether taxpayers are getting value for their hard-earned money from all departments and municipalities.

I thank you.”