**African Christian Democratic Party**

 **9 July 2019

ACDP Parliament
Budget Vote 38: Human Settlements
Speech by: The Leader of the ACDP, Rev Kenneth Meshoe MP**

 **ACDP withholds support for Human Settlements budget until criminal investigation into the Alexandra Renewal Project concludes**

“Chairperson,

Challenges faced by residents of Alexandra township are substantial, and the people of Alexandra deserve answers to what happened to the R1,4 billion of taxpayers money that was allocated for the Alexandra Renewal Project. This money was supposed to be used to develop the township and build houses for residents who are living in very unhygienic conditions.

There has been allegations for a number of years that most of the R1,4 billion has gone missing with little or nothing to show for it and nothing has been done about it. Most people who know about this ARP project are very disappointed that Treasury has not demanded full accountability for the missing funds.

The vision of the Medium Term Strategic Framework is to realise sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life.

Priorities include the delivery of 110 000 new housing units by 2019. Chairperson, unless corruption is rooted out, and accountability demanded, this vision cannot be realised.

Chairperson, millions of our people still live in squalid conditions in informal settlements where there are no basic services such as water and sanitation.

On the 31 May, we were shocked to see the demolition of about 80 houses in Seshwetla informal settlement in Alex. Protestors reacted by throwing stones and sadly - two bonded houses were torched in the process.

JMPD spokesperson, Chief Superintendent, Wayne Minnaar, later said that the demolished houses were illegally built and too close to the river.

The ACDP believes that it is cruel to demolish houses that are occupied and inhabited after allowing such houses to be built illegally in the first place.

The ACDP calls on government to stop the illegal invasion of land and the subsequent illegal building of houses in the first place.

Government should subsidise and encourage self-help schemes throughout the country so that many of our people can start building their own houses. If this is not done, then informal settlements will forever be with us.

The ACDP will not support this budget or subsequent budgets until a criminal investigation into the unaccounted for R1,4 billion has been concluded, and steps against thieves and all those who benefitted from corruption at the expense of the needy people of Alex, have been taken.”

**-END-

For more information contact Rev Kenneth Meshoe MP, 082-962-5884

Media enquiries: Keeno Petersen, Media Liaison Officer, ACDP - Parliament, Tel: 021-403-2971 or Cell: 073-580-2902 or Email:** **kpetersen@parliament.gov.za**

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