

National Council of Provinces

D. Feldman MP

UNITED WARD COMMITTEE SYSTEM

28 October 2009

1. I wish to thank the Committee for this opportunity to speak about an issue that all of us feel strongly about, namely, getting municipalities to function more effectively.
2. For this to happen, the work of the ward committees has to be recognised and allowed to be fed into the wider processes of oversight and accountability.
3. If ward committees are constrained in doing what they were meant to be doing, public participation will wither and die. People will then demonstrate against poor performances by the Council and go on rampages.
4. A unified Ward Committee structure, set up through statute, will enable the NCOP to receive information that is well considered, distilled and clarified. Such information will allow for better engagement on our part as NCOP with municipalities.
5. Ward Councils on their own seem to hitting a brick wall. Through collectivised strength they will be able to make a better impact. That in turn will allow for people to get better services and corruption will be more effectively checked.

6. I wish to propose that this matter of strengthening wards so that they can speak with one common voice be taken up to improve their viability and capability. If they remain weak and denuded of the means to impact on local government, the situation will slide and all of us will be the losers.

Thank you,