



# AZAPO

AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

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**TO: MEDIA STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FROM: AZAPO Publicity Secretary: Gaontebale Nodoba**

**DATE: DECEMBER 22, 2021**

**SUBJECT: DENIAL OF ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR RESIDENTS IN ENOCH MGJIJIMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

AZAPO expresses disgust and dismay at the heartless manner in which the Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape is treating its residents – no access to clean drinking water! The continued denial of this basic right to communities in this municipality shows the uncaring nature of the ruling party.

AZAPO is reliably informed by members of Sterkstroom community that in the townships of Masakhe, Sonwabile and Mqeshi people have been without clean drinking water for almost ten (10) days. This is a dire situation that calls for immediate intervention. Society cannot remain silent in the midst of such blatant violation of basic human rights. It cannot be that black people from these townships are expected to go without access to clean running water, especially during this festive period.

What is even more painful is the sight of dry water taps and back-up water storage tanks meant for COVID-19 and Drought Relief - a clear indication of lack of visionary leadership on the part of Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality. Sadly, this is a feature characteristic of most local municipalities under the leadership of the current ruling party. AZAPO calls for immediate measures to remedy the situation and ameliorate the plight of black people in these affected areas. It is about time that this anti-black and anti-poor attitude should be brought to an abrupt end.

AZAPO is also aware of more communities in the Chris Hani District Municipality who have been without access to drinking water for almost three (3) weeks. If as a country we are serious with restoring dignity to our communities and putting into effect the "***Batho Pele Principle***", then heads must roll. Community leaders in these affected communities have tried to reach out to the media to highlight their plight, but to no avail. AZAPO highlights this injustice by declaring that she will not stand idle while Black people are disgraced and denied a basic human right such as access to clean water. Mr Oscar Mabuyane, the Premier should take decisive action through the relevant MEC. AZAPO hopes the Human Rights Commission will not institute a commission to investigate this serious violation of people's rights but act decisively and intervene on behalf of the people of Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality.

In AZAPO's assessment the communities in these municipalities are experiencing a violation of a number of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. AZAPO therefore reiterates the call for consequence management and for heads to roll. The indignity of Black people stops right here.

Ends.

Issued by AZAPO Department of Publicity and Information (DPI).

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