



## MEDIA STATEMENT

**To:** All Media

**Attn:** News Editors / Transport Reporters

**15 July 2021**

### **Gauteng government commends taxi industry for firm stance against acts of criminality, looting**

Gauteng MEC for Public Transport and Roads Infrastructure, Jacob Mamabolo, has commended the leadership of the Taxi Industry in the province for taking a firm and decisive stance against acts of rampant looting, destruction and criminality.

MEC Mamabolo noted most taxi ranks are located in and around commercial sites and shopping malls as operators transport the workforce and customers to these sites. Therefore, any destruction and looting at these areas is a direct attack on the industry's livelihood.

"It is within this context that we welcome and appreciate the stance taken by the taxi industry to defend their business around malls and commercial sites. We further appreciate that the industry is working with law enforcement agencies and communities to protect these important sites."

"We also commend various structures in our communities that are working with law enforcement and other agencies of the state, to restore law and order across our province," MEC said.

The MEC raised his concerns that the recent unrest could revive simmering conflicts between taxi associations over routes at this difficult time.

"It is of utmost importance that the industry protects its interests as this will contribute to peace and stability. The unrest, looting and destruction of commercial sites and malls was likely to lead to conflicts and fights for lucrative routes," Mamabolo remarked.

The current volatile situation has also seen workers and residents struggling to get to their places of employment and elsewhere due to safety concerns and limited access to transport systems.

Mamabolo further commended the taxi industry for being available to transport commuters in the midst of instability and for maintaining public transport services in line with the province's vision of Smart Mobility.

"We further commend the leadership of the Gauteng taxi industry for taking a stand as their business and those of others face threat from violent protests. Their stance in protecting

lives and property is the most encouraging during this time of untold devastation and despair,” said Mamabolo.

Mamabolo also expressed his deep concern on the effects of ongoing unrest on the already battered provincial economy and the taxi industry, in particular.

The industry bore the brunt of the lockdown regulations that led to industry’s revenues dropping significantly and left many operators/owners in financial difficulty.

“The outbreak of the pandemic has had a significant impact on the taxi industry and the latest unrest could serve as a trigger leading to conflicts over routes in the province. This would have been a double whammy for the industry reeling from the economic devastation as a result of the lockdown restrictions”.

"We, therefore, make an appeal to communities in Gauteng to act responsibly and desist from acts of lawlessness that has resulted in economic and social disruptions," said the MEC.

Mamabolo added that restoring calm and stability in the province was of critical importance so that attention is paid to efforts to reboot the economy.

**Issued by the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport**