



# correctional services

Department:  
Correctional Services  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## MEDIA STATEMENT

23 February 2024

### DCS PAVES WAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN NKOMAZI

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) held a successful Youth Engagement Session at Steenbok in the Mpumalanga Province on Friday, 23 February 2024. The engagement focused on eliminating crime in the area and refocus the mindset towards available economic opportunities.

It was an interactive session where young people were separated into different working commissions. They were entrusted with the responsibility to find solutions towards social problems. Amongst others, the discussed subjects related to substance abuse, crime, local economic development, the role of law enforcement and the role of traditional leaders in uplifting local communities.

The National Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Makgothi Thobakgale emphasized the importance of supporting the youth and community development initiatives through DCS resources - working together with other stakeholders. The Youth Engagement Session was a response to a call made by Inkhosi Lungedlane II, who raised concerns over social ills and the lack of youth development programmes, education and training in the area.

Commissioner Thobakgale indicated that, "young people must be afforded space to drive and participate in community development programmes. But this calls for a formal foundation by means of staying in school, pass matric and proceed to institutions of higher learning." In addition, "taking advantage of opportunities that are available to them to enter the job market has to be encouraged. However, this calls for young people to be in their best behavior to maximize their chances of achieving something in life," said Thobakgale.

Inkosi Luggedlane II highlighted the importance of empowering the youth with knowledge and skills, equipping them sufficiently to conquer the challenges of today and tomorrow. "Let us remember that the challenges we face today are not insurmountable. With determination, collaboration, and a steadfast commitment to our youth, we can build a safer future for all. Each young person in our nation is a beacon of hope, a reservoir of talent, and it is our duty to nurture and protect them," echoed by Inkosi Luggedlane, to a thunderous applause.

Inkosi appreciated DCS for keeping its promise by returning to the area determined to address social ills and paying attention to economic opportunities for young people.

Various government organisations working with the youth and community in general, traditional leaders and non-governmental organisations pledged their support towards youth empowerment in the area and further shared available opportunities for the youth to explore in a quest to uplift themselves.

**ENDS**

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