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MEDIA RELEASE

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Premier Mokgoro reassures Ventersdorp community of government's intent to solve grievances

Ventersdorp: Premier Job Mokgoro of the North West Province has urged the Ventersdorp community to focus their energies on identifying factual points on why the amalgamation of former Tlokwe and Ventersdorp Local Municipalities was not working, saying it is that approach that will assist government in taking an informed and objective decision about the community's demand for de-amalgamation of the two municipalities.

The Premier's call emerged during his interaction with the community of Ventersdorp at a meeting that was held today, 24 Wednesday.

The meeting which focused on basic service delivery challenges and the community's demands which included a call for some ward councilors to be removed on allegations of not being in touch with the community; the de-amalgamation of the two municipalities on claims that the newly established JB Marks Local Municipality was not benefiting the Ventersdorp community; as well as a demand for the N14 development project to be immediately rolled out as it was long promised, was held at Ventersdorp sports ground.

Premier Mokgoro who was accompanied by Dr Mpho Motlhabane, MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management and the Acting Executive Mayor of JB Marks Local Municipality, Cllr Kelvin Johnson, welcomed the complaints raised by the community as fair, undertook to ensuring that the concern involving some ward councilors who never hold community meetings is discussed with relevant provincial political leadership structures for a decision to be taken, and that equally, the call for de-amalgamation which

has already been raised with the highest national authorities, receives the attention it deserves.

Premier Mokgoro also urged the community to package detailed information on why they believe the amalgamation has not worked and will never work, maintaining that this information remains critical in this process.

“We acknowledged that we have a revenue management system that has worked well for Potchefstroom over the years, but we do not seem to have taken into account the uniqueness on Ventersdorp where we have villages and farms, with the income basis that is low and different from the Potchefstroom area”, remarked Premier Mokgoro adding that there is a need for some of these distinctions to be noted while dealing with the communities concerns.

“We might also at this stage need to look at the possibility of decentralisation and make sure that we have the necessary capacity at Ventersdorp, so that the people here can have a sense of ownership of the municipality”, said the Premier in response to the community’s complaints about all critical services being rendered from Potchefstroom.

Premier Mokgoro who had in the past two weeks deployed a team of Heads of Departments led by a Deputy Director General in the Office of the Premier to Ventersdorp, used this opportunity to also update the community of the feedback from the task team’s assessment, and reassured the community of his commitment to ensuring that all the service delivery complaints including the N14 development project are accordingly attended to by the relevant provincial departments, maintaining that consultation will continue uninterrupted between his office and the leaders of the community.

The community representatives thanked the Premier for his evident commitment to finding lasting solutions to the communities’ challenges, and promised to encourage calmness in the area, this to allow for productive engagements between them and government to continue.

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