



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**Press Release**  
**09 July 2019**

**UTHINGO PARK PROJECT NOT FOR SALE OR TRANSFER TO PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

Government maintains its position that Uthingo Park Social Housing Property at eMalahleni Local Municipality remains government's property and will not be sold or transferred to individuals for private ownership. This stance is sequel to a protracted rental boycott by the tenants in the property as they were misled to believe that they were renting the units to own them. The firm department by government follows a recent meeting between the National and Provincial Departments of Human Settlements, local municipality, Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) and Emalahleni Housing Company to address the impasse.

Communicating the government position on the matter the Head of Department, Mr Kebone Masange stated that social housing properties are only for rental purposes. "The Uthingo Park tenants must informed that social housing is for rental purposes. The Social Housing Act does not permit the transfer of the social housing willy-nilly, in order to effect any transfer an approval and thorough consultation must be done with the involvement of the regulatory authority", stated Masange. He added that the matter of rental boycott will be referred to Rental Tribunal in order to get the tenants to honour their rental obligations.

Outlining the policy on social housing and the development of Uthingo Park, Mr Masange emphatically indicated that since inception, government adhered to policy. "The social housing stock is meant to cater for low to medium income households and we have ensured that our rental fees are in line with policy", he said. He concluded by dismissing the notion that government has not communicated this information. "All we did at Uthingo Park was above board and tenants understood this fact until the rogue elements surfaced and caused the pandemonium we are seeing there", he charged.

The Uthingo Park Social Housing Project was built to cater for low to medium income earners and it accommodates 1204 tenants who pay a rental fee aligned to SHRA's policy imperatives. Tenants have been in a rental boycott since early this year as they were misinformed that the units are meant to be transferred to them. The series and consistent engagement have been taking place between the affected parties to resolve the issue. In the meantime, the Department's Rental Tribunal Unit will engage the tenants on the ongoing rental boycotts. The Department commits to further continue with such engagements to see an end to rental boycott and put matter to bed.

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**ISSUED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE**  
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