

**Media Statement
For Immediate Release
24 August 2021**

EDTEA MEC WELCOMES THE SCHEDULED RESTART OF RBM OPERATIONS FOLLOWING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMPANY AND HOST COMMUNITIES

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr. Ravi Pillay, welcomes the announcement that Richards Bay Minerals will restart its operations from tomorrow (Wednesday the 25th of August 2021).

This announcement comes after weeks of a shutdown of operations by the company, following disputes with some of the host communities over a number of issues. This announcement was made by the company today after it reached an agreement with the host communities.

This agreement led to RBM releasing R130 million to community trusts for the four host communities. These trusts were established in 2009 as vehicles through which the four host communities receive dividends for community upliftment.

The provincial government has been at the forefront of efforts to resolve the impasse between RBM and the host communities.

“We are encouraged by the recent developments as they prove that our interventions have not been in vain. This means that many jobs that were placed under threat will now be saved. We thank RBM for showing commitment to our province and to the development of the people of KwaZulu-Natal. But we are also grateful to the host communities for their willingness to resolve these challenges amicably,” MEC Ravi Pillay said.

MEC Pillay said the provincial government will continue working with all parties involved to ensure that there is no repeat of the recent incidents which led to the company closing some of its operations and declaring force majeure.

“The government will strive to continue ensuring that there is enough security and that law and order is maintained. This is part of our broader message of #KZNRising. While RBM operations were not affected by the July civil unrest, the restarting of its operations augurs well for our economic recovery efforts and tells us that investors still have faith in our province,” concluded MEC Pillay.

ENDS

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