

Office of the Minister responds to recent Nkandla allied allegations

By Nolwazi Ndhlovu

The office of the Minister of Public works, Mr T W Nxesi, sent out a media statement addressing allegations that the Minister endeavoured to suppress Nkandla related documents needed in the investigation by the National Treasury.

The media statement was released after recent allegations from a report released to the public by **News24** wherein the Democratic Alliance (DA) was accusing the Minister of misleading Parliament on the Nkandla costs calculations.

The same accusations were made in the **Sowetan** newspaper where it was insinuated that the Minister failed to cooperate with Treasury investigations into the Nkandla matter. The **Sowetan** article, like the DA, gives an impression that the Minister or the Department was attempting to stifle the investigation by the National Treasury.

However, the media statement issued by the Minister's Legal Advisor, Mr Phillip Masilo, says the Minister as well as the Department at large, fully co-operated with the National Treasury and that all documents were handed over to be part of the investigation.

"It should be recalled that Minister Nxesi took over as the Minister of Public Works when the Nkandla project was implemented and completed. He instituted an investigation that made several recommendations including that the matter be referred to the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) for further investigation.

"The Department has co-operated with all investigation teams, including the Public Protector, SIU and the National Treasury. It is for this reason that the Minister of Public Works was not even cited as a respondent in the Constitutional Court matter as one of the parties who failed or refused to comply with the Public Protector's report," Mr Masilo said

"The Public Protector's report confirms that her office received 'voluminous' documents from the Department including among others, cost estimates, bill of quantities prepared by R&G Consultants (professional quantity surveyors) , designs and site plans of the project etc. This is what is in possession of the Department which was made available," he added.

"The Department maintains that it is a fact that the Minister cooperated with the National Treasury and provided them with all the documents in the Department's possession," Mr Masilo stated.