



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Celebrating Human Rights Day**

KNYSNA - AS PART of Human Right's Month, Knysna Municipality calls on all residents to come together in thought and reflection on Human Rights Day (21 March) under the national theme "South Africa United against Racism."

Mayor Georlene Wolmarans says "During a time when South Africa has seen racial tensions rise, specifically on university campuses resulting in protests and violence, it is essential that we take time to reflect on the positive progress we've made in regards to human rights over the 22 years of democracy in our country.

"With recent rhetoric that has focused mainly on what sets us apart from each other; I implore one and all to rather focus on our similarities - on those common threads, as encapsulated in the Bill of Rights, that make us the same: equality, to love and be loved, to provide for our nearest and dearest, to live a life worth living, to be free from oppression and discrimination, and be safeguarded by the rule of law.

"For me, this goes beyond mere tolerance but extends to compassion where we can place ourselves in others' shoes and in doing so treat each other with acknowledgment and respect."

South Africa celebrates Human Rights' Day on 21 March in remembrance of the Sharpeville Massacre of 21 March 1960 when the police of the Apartheid regime opened fire, without orders, on a crowd that gathered in protest to the racist Pass Laws. During this incident, 69 unarmed men, women and children lost their lives with countless more sustaining injuries.

"In Knysna we face a common struggle at the moment, "continues Mayor Wolmarans, "We are all subjugated to possible water shortages in near future. The most viable solution to address the situation is for all residents to think not only about conserving water, but how not doing so would impact their fellow human beings."

Apart from the historic aspects of Human Rights Day, the looming water shortages in Knysna could have a direct impact on the rights and dignity of our residents.

"The right to sufficient food and water forms part of our Bill of Rights, says Mayor Wolmarans, "I can think of no better way to celebrate Human Rights Day than by ensuring through cooperation, compassion and conservation that everyone has access to water. Please consider your fellow residents and continue to treat water as the precious, life-giving resource it is."

In achieving this end, please adhere to the water restrictions that are in place and follow the guidelines to preserve water as stipulated in Knysna's Water Awareness Campaign. To report water leaks, phone 044 302 6331.

**ENDS**

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