



**MINISTRY: PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X902, Pretoria, 0001 Tel: (012) 334 0705 Fax: (012) 326 4478
Private Bag X9123, Cape Town, 8000, Tel: (021) 462 1441, Fax: (021) 461 0851

**MEDIA STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO
THE OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA.**

26 January 2001

Embargo: 15H30

A number of National Ministers met today to review progress in dealing with the outbreak of Cholera in various parts of the country as well as to discuss details of mobilising the National Disaster Management System.

The National Disaster Management System allows role-players from all spheres of Government to exchange information and pool their resources for a coordinated response to outbreaks of this nature, and to provide the necessary support for the provinces affected and threatened by the disease.

Since the spread of Cholera had been anticipated as a result of people traveling during the festive season, a coordinated program has already been put in place to support provinces affected by the outbreak to prevent and combat disease.

However, the Cholera outbreak requires the involvement of all South Africans. In addition, within the spirit of cooperative governance, all relevant Government departments - the Department of Health, the Department of Provincial and Local Government, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, the Department of Education, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the Department of Land Affairs, the Department of Agriculture and the National Disaster Management System - will in a structured and coordinated way support the local

structures who are in the front line in managing the Cholera outbreak in all affected provinces.

Mobilising the National Disaster Management System will provide the coordination of resources as well as a national mechanism to engage the provincial and local governments and their relatively extensive resources and knowledge in a more structured way.

The Ministers expressed appreciation for the effective manner in which the outbreaks have been managed by the health structures, particularly the low fatality rate among those affected by the disease.

They also committed themselves to strengthening and expediting a water and sanitation strategy, which is running parallel to the health strategy.

The principle underpinning the strategy is to enable all people to have access to safe water and to step up the sanitation program in the short term.

While speeding up the long-term program to provide water and sanitation systems, we further plan to mobilise all sectors of society using the many offers of assistance we have received from private companies and NGOs such as Operation Hunger. We will ask the Joint Operation Centers to coordinate their assistance in a structured way and to get the maximum impact from their involvement.

Contact: Fred Barron
082 456 7545

Thami Mchunu
082 806 6575