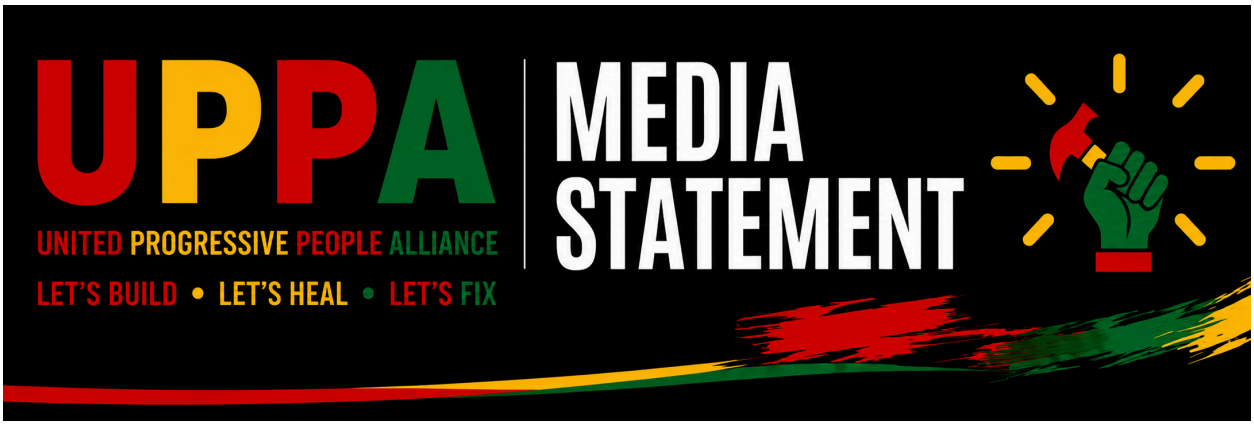


Media statement

UPPA STANDS WITH KNYSNA'S TAXI INDUSTRY AND THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP OUR ECONOMY MOVING

1 November 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The United Progressive People Alliance (UPPA) stands firmly with Knysna's local taxi industry and recognises its fundamental contribution to the lives of residents and the functioning of our economy.

We acknowledge Uncedo, Knysna Taxi Association, Garden Route Taxi Association, CODETA and all other associations and operators serving our communities. We recognise the owners, drivers and workers who sustain this industry, together with the commuters whose daily lives depend on it.

Every day, taxis carry workers to their places of employment, learners to school, residents to healthcare and families to shops and essential services. Businesses depend on employees arriving at work. Households depend on access to income and necessities. The taxi industry makes these connections possible and deserves meaningful recognition in the development of Knysna.

As an expression of goodwill and respect, UPPA will donate two head of cattle in recognition of the local taxi industry and its contribution to our communities.

The choice of this donation carries cultural meaning. In many African traditions, cattle hold a significant place in expressions of respect, hospitality, goodwill and the strengthening of relationships. This gesture honours those traditions and their place within Knysna's diverse community.

UPPA believes that we must preserve our traditions, pass them to future generations and respect the heritage of others. A truly non-racial South Africa must give every person equal dignity and every community the freedom to contribute its language, history and traditions to our shared future. Our diversity must strengthen our sense of belonging to one country.

Our recognition of the taxi industry extends to its importance as a foundation of black ownership and enterprise. Meaningful economic transformation requires opportunities for people to own businesses, develop skills, employ others and build lasting livelihoods. Local entrepreneurs must have a meaningful stake in Knysna's prosperity.

Sharp fuel price increases place additional pressure on taxi operators and commuters. Operators must meet rising costs while passengers must still be able to afford the journey to work, school and essential services. These pressures require serious engagement with the industry and practical attention to the conditions under which it operates.

The taxi industry also shares in the fortunes of the wider local economy. When tourism suffers, the consequences reach workers, transport operators, traders and suppliers. When municipal infrastructure deteriorates, the additional costs are carried by businesses and households. Protecting local livelihoods therefore requires a municipality capable of performing its responsibilities.

We are all aware of the instability in Knysna's municipal leadership, the critical vacancies and the continued reliance on acting appointments, including in the municipal manager's office. These weaknesses affect the municipality's ability to plan, maintain infrastructure and respond consistently to residents.

The coalition of established parties has failed to provide the stable, capable municipal government that Knysna needs. Political experience carries an obligation to deliver. The parties entrusted with this municipality must account for the condition of its administration and the services on which our people depend.

Knysna must be able to attract, retain and support skilled professionals. Critical positions must be filled transparently, on the basis of competence and integrity. Public resources must be managed carefully and directed towards the needs of the people.

Yesterday, UPPA intervened in Ward 11 to grade a road in response to residents' needs. That intervention speaks directly to the importance of dependable access within our communities.

An ambulance must be able to reach a resident in distress. Police must be able to respond when a household calls for help. Fire and rescue vehicles need access when lives and homes are at risk. Delivery vehicles must be able to bring food, building materials and other necessities into the community.

A badly deteriorated road can delay these services, make journeys more difficult and place an additional burden on residents. For a person waiting for emergency medical assistance, every avoidable delay matters. Families should be able to call for help with confidence that the vehicles providing that help can reach them.

Those same road conditions affect taxis transporting passengers, workers travelling to their jobs and businesses serving the community. A usable road is a matter of public safety, access to essential services and economic participation.

Our intervention in Ward 11 reflects UPPA's ongoing commitment to practical action. The municipality remains responsible for providing sustained maintenance, proper drainage and durable infrastructure. Residents are entitled to a clear programme of work and accountability for its delivery.

This understanding informs the model UPPA is bringing to Knysna: direct engagement with communities and economic sectors, practical interventions responding to identified needs, and a sustained effort to restore competent government.

Our support for residents to train as security officers is another practical first step. We want residents to acquire useful skills, improve their employment prospects and contribute responsibly to the safety of the places in which they live and work.

Through professional training, lawful security work and cooperation with the police and recognised community safety structures, residents can contribute an additional layer of protection for communities and businesses. Proud, patriotic residents with skills and opportunities have an important role to play in protecting their communities and helping them prosper.

This forms part of our broader work to connect skills development, community safety, local enterprise and economic recovery.

UPPA welcomes established businesses and new investors who want to contribute to Knysna's future. We will actively pursue investment by cultivating the conditions that allow businesses to operate with confidence: reliable services, maintained roads, safer communities, clean administration and predictable, lawful decisions.

We want investment that creates employment, develops skills, supports local suppliers and expands opportunities for residents. We will work to strengthen the local economy while opening the way for new enterprise and growth.

The taxi industry must have a meaningful voice in this work. Our engagement will include the conditions of roads and ranks, lighting, sanitation, commuter safety and the practical obstacles facing operators. We will continue engaging other sectors whose experience and contribution are essential to rebuilding Knysna.

Respect must be demonstrated through sustained attention to people's needs. Cultural recognition must be accompanied by practical work. Economic development must create opportunities in which local people can participate.

Knysna's future must be built with the people who keep it moving, serve its communities and sustain its businesses every day.

UPPA is committed to a Knysna where our traditions are respected, our communities are safer, our public resources are protected and our economy creates opportunities for the people who call this town home.

Let's build. Let's fix. Let's heal.

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