



**Welcome Address by Her Worship, the Mayor
Cllr Zandile Gumede on the Occasion of the Women
Economic Empowerment Summit**

**28 August 2016 – 08h30
Conference Centre of the Department of Public Works –
Mayville**

Welcome Address by Mayor Cllr Zandile Gumede at the Women Economic Empowerment Summit, 27 August 2016

Page 1

- Programme Director,
- MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr Sihle Zikalala,
- Chairperson of the Businesswomen's Association of South Africa, Ms Mpume Langa,
- Captains of Industry,
- Speakers in different topics,
- Stakeholders and partners,
- Summit delegates,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

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When President Jacob Zuma launched the Status of Women in the South Africa Economy report in 2015, he said the inclusion of women in the economy must take centre stage.

Ladies and gentlemen, I agree with this approach that puts women at the centre of our economic development strategy. Allow me to welcome you to eThekweni and to this important occasion. In our City, we are committed to creating the space for women to succeed economically.

Our Municipality has heeded to the call made by our President through various programmes that aim to empower our women especially in business. It is also important to make sure that when we empower women in the economy we also focus on sectors that are usually dominated by men.

I am pleased that we are hosting this Summit today because the discussion of liberating women should never come to an end. When women lead businesses they will ensure that jobs are created, skills are nurtured and communities are developed.

The economic empowerment and inclusivity of women can contribute to eradicating the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality facing our country.

Programme Director, when women are empowered they become independent and they develop to grow their own successes.

Women, if given the opportunity and relevant training, can emerge as powerful drivers of change and contributors to the economy.

For the 2016/17 financial year, we have allocated R1.1 million to women empowerment programmes. These programmes equip women to play a vital role in the economic development of the City. We also have the various success stories to prove it.

In the past three financial years, eThekweni Municipality has awarded over 2000 contracts to Women Owned Business Enterprises worth over R4 billion across different fields such as construction and engineering.

Going forward, to continue driving skills development, our City will provide three months information and communications technology training for 120 women starting from this month. This will offer computer skills lessons in order to initiate innovation and growth among businesses.

We understand that the full participation of women is necessary to long-term, sustainable economic growth and social progression in the City.

I am confident that our Municipality will continue to support and invest in women empowerment programmes and provide them with the relevant skills and support.

“Malibongwe igama lamakhosikazi. Wathinta abafazi wathinta Imbokodo!”

“Together advancing women’s power in KwaZulu-Natal.”

Thank you!

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Page 8