

**Welcome Address by Cllr. Ntando Khuzwayo on the occasion of the Global Business Roundtable's "Women of Character" KZN Launch, on 31 August 2018 at the Elangeni Hotel, Durban.**

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- Program Directors
- The Global Business Round Table
- Hilda Pheto : GBR WOC –RSA Chair
- GBR Durban Chairperson: Philile Chonco
- KZN First Lady and Speaker: Mrs Mchunu
- Honourable Members from National and Provincial Government
- Distinguished guests and Colleagues
- Facilitators, Speakers and Members of Academia
- Pastors and Spiritual Leaders
- GBR Choir and Performing Artists
- Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocols observed.

Good morning.

In this Women's Month 2018, it is indeed a special honour, to welcome you to the Global Business Roundtable's, KZN Women of Character Launch.

Additionally, it gives me great pleasure to welcome guests from the rest of Africa, and to welcome with special acknowledgement, government officials from national, and our provincial departments.

As our honoured guests, I welcome you to the Greenest, most caring and liveable city, in South Africa.

Program Director, eThekweni has been winning many awards for a great many things, and I am exceptionally excited, that we have been once again recognised and awarded for being the most caring, liveable, and the Greenest city in the country.

The City has been evaluated considering many attributes, most especially, the quality of the city's leadership, institutional arrangements presentation, and the city's leading community empowerment programmes.

Therefore ladies and gentlemen, last year when GBR executives approached the Municipality to partner the launch of their Durban Chapter, the Municipality in recognition of the organisations sterling contribution to society through its community empowerment programs, we could not refuse.

This particular KZN- Women in Character launch, fittingly themed, "Arise and Shine", epitomises this wonderful synergy. Like eThekwini, amongst its numerous upliftment initiatives, the Global Business Round table, advances the National Democratic Revolution by empowering youth and especially women, to participate in the mainstream economy.

Program Director, there are 1.3 billion people in the world today, who live in extreme poverty. It is no co-incidence that between 50 to 70 % of these people, just happen to be women! Does this mean poverty is sexist? No! Gender dominance has been designed by patriarchy..... for patriarchy, and that is sexist!

Ladies and gentlemen, fighting the discrimination against women is about dislodging patriarchy from its perch, and one of the ways this can be achieved, is through media and communication, just like we doing right now.

The eThekwini Municipality on its side, has promulgated policies to narrow the gender gap as the need for woman's education, financial independence, social security, and changing gender roles, has never been more important. This is still a task that remains, in the whole world. We still have a long way to go before men and women, are on an equal footing.

Program Director, the scheduled broad discussions among the participants of this launch, underlines the necessity to continue the debate with regard to several topics, which are of crucial importance in women's struggle ahead.

In closing, I would therefore like to congratulate the Global Business Roundtable which has branches in over 80 countries in the world, for the launch of this promising women empowerment initiative in KZN. On behalf of the city, I wish this extraordinary organisation, every success in the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I welcome you once again, I wish all participants an enjoyable conference, and fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.