

Introductory Address by Chairperson: MPAC, Councillor Thabane Luthuli on the occasion of the Launch of the Vuma 103 FM Imbizo Talk Series, at the ICC – 23 August 2018

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Distinguished colleagues, and guests, I am especially delighted to welcome you to the City and to The Vuma 103 Imbizo Talk Series. VUMA 103FM radio, broadcasts from eThekwini and covers a large audience within KZN. Together with eThekwini's service delivery programmes and promising initiatives by such laudable organisations as Vuma 103 FM, the 20th Mercer's Quality of Living Report, has once again voted eThekwini as the most liveable city in South Africa, for the fourth year in a row.

As the city continues to make a positive impact on the lives of our residents, the Vuma 103 Imbizo is being launched this evening, to discuss and debate various issues of relevance to our communities.

One of the apex issues affecting our communities is the concern of Violence against women and children, which is on the rise.

Ladies and gentlemen, statistics paint a dire picture with a recently released Optimus Study on child sexual abuse and maltreatment, finding that one in every three young South Africans, has experienced some sort of sexual abuse by the age of 17.

Statistics for 2016/2017 as supplied by the Department of Health indicate that nationally, about 55 000 cases of sexual assault were reported with about 11 466 being from KwaZulu-Natal. There are also reports that 3 women are murdered a day by their partners in South Africa. It has come to us, that at least 46 per cent of cases where women are assaulted by their partners, the men involved also abuse the children living with the woman.

It is most appropriate therefore, as this Imbizo talk series was to be launched in the women's month of August, it was vital

that we come together to discuss violence against women and children, in all its forms and manifestations.

This evening's panel discussions comes at what I very much hope, is a societal tipping point around how we're going to proceed and progress in combatting violence against women and children. It is the responsibility of all organisations and civil society to spring into action. This panel discussion takes a catalytic approach that goes beyond stating that government, social services and the general community need to protect those vulnerable, to such abuse and violence.

So let us seize the opportunity provided by this Imbizo, and make it a moment of real change. Let us translate this hope into action that prevents violence against women and especially girls from happening, and ultimately eradicate it from society.

Vuma 103 FM must surely be complimented for this Imbizo talk series, and for having many prominent guests on the panel tonight, from many polarising sectors. Many of whom are

from Government and Political Leadership who will engage. So this evening, it gives me great pleasure to welcome the guest of honour of the Vuma 103 FM Imbizo launch, the Honourable Premier of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mr Willies Mchunu.

Ladies and gentlemen, Premier Mchunu, was previously the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the Department of Transport, Community Safety, and Liaison in the province, and is the current and 7th Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

As Premier of the Province and with a deep concern for the well-being of the citizens of the KZN Province, Mr Willies Mchunu is at the forefront of the KZN Moral Regeneration Program. In this regard and to his credit:

- The Premier has set up the Moerane Commission. The Moerane Commission was tasked to investigate a spate of political killings in the Province.

- He continues to address business dealings of informal traders to allay fears of xenophobia in Durban's townships.
- Mr Mchunu Presides over the special KZN Provincial Prayer programme for peace in the Province.
- The Premier leads the Real Men Don't Rape - provincial program against gender based violence.

The Honourable Premier champions many other social cohesion and moral regeneration programs of repute in the province.

Ladies and gentlemen, with the greatest pleasure, I now hand you over to the Guest of Honour of the Vuma 103 FM Talk Series inaugural dialogue, the honourable KZN Premier, Mr Willies Mchunu.

Thank you.

