



Welcome Address by His Worship, the Mayor Cllr James Nxumalo on the Occasion of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation March and Concert

**16 July 2016
Kingsmead Stadium**

- Programme Director,
- Members of the eThekweni Executive Committee,
- Fellow Councillors,
- Representatives of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation,
- Representatives of the provincial and local AIDS Council,
- Speakers in different topics,
- Our partners and stakeholders,
- Non-Governmental HIV/IAIDS Organisations and Civil Society,
- HIV/AIDS Activists,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

Ladies and gentlemen, Durban is a City that is known for its all year-round summer season. In keeping with the season, I warmly welcome to our City. We are proud to host the AIDS Healthcare Foundation march and concert two days before the start of the 21st International AIDS Conference.

Programme Director, let me begin my address by thanking the AIDS Healthcare Foundation for the work they do in global communities that are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

As a result, AHF has become one of the largest non-profit HIV/AIDS organisation in the world which provides medical services to more than 650 thousand clients in 36 countries, including Africa.

Programme Director, government and its stakeholders have made significant progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS in our communities.

Today, those who need treatment have access to ARVs through the government programme, the life expectancy has increased to about 61 years and children born with HIV infection are now less than 2 percent.

However, there is still a high rate of new HIV infections which is still a concern to government. This means that our prevention efforts are not working particularly amongst adolescent girls and young women where it is estimated that approximately 2400 girls in South Africa are infected with HIV every week.

Our Municipality, working together with other spheres of government, is committed to reducing HIV and TB infections. In fact, the global community has a vision to eradicate AIDS by 2030. Much emphasis must be put on the 90-90-90 targets by 2020 which is one of the ways we can realise our global vision.

This means that:

For the first 90, we want 90% of all HIV positive persons to know that they are HIV positive because the only way an HIV positive person can get treatment is by having a test and knowing that they are positive.

The second 90 means we must put all people who need treatment on ARVs and make sure that 90% of them stay on treatment for a lifetime. Let us support our friends and relatives who are on treatment so that they can take their medication as they should.

The third 90 is saying that for people who are on ARV, the health care providers must provide good health care and the persons on ARV must take treatment every day as they have been told so that the virus in their systems can reach such a low level that it becomes undetectable when the test is conducted. This is what we call viral suppression.

If we do all of the three 90's well, transmission of infections will reduce drastically and we will come to a point where we have very few new infections.

Our Municipality is proud to work with the AIDS Healthcare Foundation and to be part of a moving global community that is determined to eradicate AIDS by 2030.

Let us rally behind the AIDS Conference so that we make a lasting positive impact in global communities affected and infected by HIV and AIDS.

Thank you!