



**Keynote Address by Her Worship, Cllr Fawzia Peer
10 July 2017, MUT Business Engagement Dinner at
Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre**

- Programme Director – Mr Sbu Ndaba,
- Chairperson of Council and Council Members,
- Acting Vice-Chancellor – Dr Marcus Ramogale,
- Business Representatives present,
- Academia and Students and workers,
- Distinguished guests, Members of the media,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening and welcome to this wonderful dinner. We want to thank you for attending this evening and we hope that you will not regret coming to this dinner. I trust that you will also enjoy the food prepared for you.

When we campaigned in the 2009 elections, our theme or slogan for our campaign was – “Working together we can do more.” This was because we realized that if we put and redirect our energies towards building our nation – a lot could be achieved. The ANC government went opted to partner with civil society, academia and business in order to build a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist, prosperous nation.

There is still much to do to reach our goals and new challenges have arisen. We have to ensure that we grow the economy to meet the needs of our people squarely. Lasting victory over

poverty and hunger requires the creation of decent work opportunities and sustainable livelihoods.

Education must be at the centre of our efforts to improve the potential of every citizen and enable each one of us to play a productive role in building our nation. The quality of services the government will provide must be improved.

Programme Director,

What I have just recited, was contained in our manifesto of 2009 when we placed education at the apex of our priorities. We realize that through education we will be able to skill our people, sharpen our minds and produce new knowledge. We will not only be producing knowledge but we will find long lasting solutions to some of our problems that we are facing as the nation.

This is the reason we said – together we can do more. Business must invest in education not as an act of charity but as proper investment. You must not only donate shoes but invest by building proper infrastructure. Create competition for school kids and university students in the field of innovation. Business must do a proper investment on education.

Businesses which do not have relationship to the academic community are expected to advance slower pace. They miss out on early access to the latest research results and methodologies and then need more time to put these methods into practice. By being out of touch with a university, its students and young professionals, they become less attractive as prospective employers and often find it more challenging to recruit graduates and commit them for their first 2-3 professional years. It therefore seems much more advantageous for a company to collaborate with the academic

institution than not. I urge business to adopt universities or faculties for the sake of mutual beneficiation.

So what have we been doing as the city and municipality of the people?

As a leading NEPAD City, and an active member of the United Cities and Local Government in Africa, our Municipality has played an important leadership role in the coordination of the learning agenda around strategic planning, sustainable development and urban local governance in cities on the continent.

As a forward thinking City, Durban is one of the few cities in the world to have established its very own institute of learning, eThekweni's Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE), which is steadily establishing itself as a dedicated knowledge management and capacity enhancement vehicle working alongside local practitioners locally and internationally to facilitate the desired outcomes.

Program Director,

In 2013 at the World Congress of the United Cities and Local Governments in Morocco, MILE was nominated to pursue the learning agenda for the entire African continent. So it is very significant that our academic partners work alongside us in ensuring that together, we can support the developmental agenda of our continent.

It is worth noting that in positioning Durban as a learning City, our political and administrative leaders have come to realize the potential value of partnering with the institutions of higher learning and can relate to similar experiences elsewhere of the

economic, social and other benefits for cities that work closely with academia.
Program Director,

Reflecting on the last five years of this strategic partnership, I am deeply encouraged by progress made. This is evidenced in the range of joint programs and collaborative projects that exist between our City's line departments and specific faculties across the partnering institutions, the constructive inputs of academic experts on strategic city projects and the numerous "think tanks" that have been set up – all geared towards ensuring that evidence based research influence our policy making processes. We have a partnership with the MUT as the city through our departments such as Energy, Human Settlement and Skills unit.

A Humer H3.8 2-kW was donated by the eThekweni Energy Office to the Department of Electrical Engineering at MUT to enhance the teaching of wind energy technology and to supplement the department's current capacity in the provisioning of skills for green jobs. The Copper Development Association (CDA) offered to pay for the transport of the wind turbine from the premises of the EThekweni Municipality, its installation at MUT, and its commissioning and handover. The CDA further committed to pay for the training of MUT staff in wind technology systems that will be offered by staff from Stellenbosch University.

We believe that by working together we can do more.

I Thank you!