



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY HER WORSHIP, CLLR ZANDILE
GUMEDE (DEPUTY PRESIDENT) AT SALGA KZN WORKSHOP**

Programme Director or Facilitator,

Provincial Chairperson,

Councillors,

Officials present,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All protocol observed,

We would like to thank you for inviting us to this important workshop of SALGA. We appreciate the opportunity to interact with you this morning ahead of Mandela Day during the men's month.

Last week Friday, we held a powerful march which was organised by the office of the Premier, Mr Wilies Mchunu. The march was our public declaration of war against women and children abuse. Besithi sekwanele, enough is enough! I think it is important that we re-emphasise that we are against women and children abuse. During this men's month, we want to encourage men to lead this campaign against women's abuse.

So tomorrow is a special day, it is a Mandela's birthday and President Zuma has encouraged us to use this day by giving 67 minutes servicing people. We are encouraged to take care of the poor and vulnerable in our communities. If you will be in Durban, I invite you to join us for 67 minutes and make a contribution.

Programme Director,

Coming back to today's meeting, we want to thank SALGA for organising this induction on issues of environment. Albert Einstein once said that (I quote) **"The environment is everything that isn't me."**

The issues of environment are located within the Bill of Rights because of our solid commitment to recognizing the rights of future generations.

South Africa is one of the few countries around the globe where environmental rights are constitutionally protected – thanks to the policy instruments put in place by the African National Congress (ANC).

In its Conference held in Mangaung, the ANC defines a developmental state as "sustainable utilization of natural endowments and the protection and regeneration of the environment as an inheritance of current and future generations."

The ANC is by its very nature a party wherein environmental rights and environmental justice have long been recognized as cornerstones for building an inclusive, sustainable society and future.

Environment plays an important role in the lives of individuals and our communities. The environment is essential for human survival, well-being, cultural diversity and economic prosperity. It is important that everything the municipality does, regardless of its category, must be done in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Therefore, local government plays a vital part in the protection of the environment, although this is often not acknowledged or given the emphasis that it should be given.

Climate change presents the biggest threat to our continued existence but also our best opportunity to pursue a sustainable, equitable and comfortable future. The impacts of climate change are projected to be greatest in the cities of the global south. Southern Africa can expect an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including extreme temperatures and unpredictable seasonal weather

patterns. Coastal communities will need to adapt to sea-level-rise and coastal flooding. There is a high risk that climate change could undermine Africa's development gains, exacerbate poverty and trigger global migration from impacts like heat waves, drought and failed agricultural production. We will need to adapt to these impacts, in a way that meets the needs of our people and the environment through low carbon development.

The recent ratification of the Paris Agreement has brought significant opportunities to address the issue of climate change whilst meeting our development needs. The climate change battle will be won or lost in the small to medium sized cities of the global south as populations grow and development unfolds. It will be important for us to drive this development in a direction that meets our needs and is based upon sustainable pathways. As African leaders, we need to understand the challenges associated with climate change and also identify the opportunities in the international arena, through partnerships and capacity building, to stimulate climate action locally.

EThekweni Municipality has crafted a reputation as being a global leader in climate change adaptation through its community- ecosystem-based adaptation programmes. The city's climate change work received a boost when we hosted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's 17th Conference of the Parties, or COP17, in 2011. Increasingly, developed western cities are realising the value of our Durban Metropolitan Open Space System, or D'MOSS as it provides protection from climate change impacts. For example, wetlands in D'MOSS provides flood protection during extreme rainfall events and forests provide a cool canopy cover during heat spells. Cities like London and Paris are now trying to recover natural spaces from their concrete landscapes to realise these benefits.

Through our participation in global networks, as vice-Chair representing Africa in the C40, we will strive to ensure that the African voice is heard and our collective needs are met. Through the implementation of projects like the Durban Adaptation Charter, which we will hear about in the next presentation, we will be able to craft a closer working relationship with each other for an integrated climate change response.

In this respect, Durban has led the establishment of the Central KwaZulu-Natal Climate Change Compact (CKZNCCC). The Compact is a partnership between eThekweni, Msunduzi and our neighbouring district and local municipalities where we have agreed to work towards an integrated city region response to climate change where we share resources and technical support. Importantly, our Compact is supported by research to guide adaptation action, and it links to our National Government through the Cities Resilience Forum.

We are in the process of establishing similar Compacts in Mozambique and Tanzania, because we understand that climate change will require a collective response where we leave nobody behind.

In closing, I call on you to work together in creating a sustainable environment for future generations. I hope this workshop will be able to equip us to do better in our own spaces. Most importantly, that we will be able to share our experiences in dealing with challenges.