

## **Welcome Address by Mayor Zandile Gumede at 3<sup>rd</sup> BRICS Film Festival held in Durban, 21 July 2018**

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**Programme Director,**

Sanibonani,

We are pleased to welcome you to Durban, a first African city to be declared by UNESCO as a city of Literature. This event takes place during month dedicated to our former President Nelson Mandela. President Mandela would have turned 100 years if he was still alive. This is the reason we have declared this year as the centenary celebration of President Madiba and Mama Albertina Sisulu.

The story of Madiba is our story and it has many chapters. We encourage our local and international film makers to tell the story of Madiba and Mama Sisulu.

We are glad to host BRICS Film Festival. The festival takes places after assuming BRICS rotational Chairpersonship for 2018, succeeding the People's Republic of China. The year 2018 completes the first decade of BRICS Summits and in our calendar this year marks the centenary celebration of Nelson Mandela.

Interestingly for us is the fact that The 3rd BRICS Film Festival will be held on our shores during the International Durban Film Festival (DIFF). The coinciding of these events present a great opportunity for people to people relations and business to business collaboration which will enhance our bilateral and economic relations. We see more opportunities for us to grow this industry and for our young and upcoming film makers will be placed at an international pedestal.

It is indeed going to be a productive and exciting programme, where we will get to enjoy the fruits of our hard work in ensuring that local filmmakers are brought into the mainstream of the industry.

EThekweni Municipality or the City of Durban has continued to support the growth of the Durban International Film Festival for many years, through direct funding towards the Festival, as well as through supporting the establishment of the annual Durban Film Mart, Africa's leading Film Finance Forum and Co-Production Market.

Both the Festival and the Market are critical platforms for ensuring that our filmmakers are provided opportunities to showcase their work to the global market place in order for them to realise their highest potential.

We warmly acknowledge the growth in numbers of African Films in the annual festival programme, particularly the increased numbers of Durban made films, which

stands as testament to the growth of the sector and the City's vision of becoming a globally recognised 'Film City'.

Most importantly, we congratulate the organisers of the both film festival for consistently raising the voices of African storytellers and ensuring the world is presented with authentic African narratives. It must never be forgotten that the creative industry is one of the key engines towards achieving economic evolution.

Our investment has indeed proved to be a good move, with notable returns in terms of job creation and telling local stories, while showcasing our beautiful city to the rest of the world.

Such achievements push us to accelerate our plans of Durban Film City Precinct Development worth approximately R7.5 billion, and is earmarked to be a development catalyst for the local film industry.

I wish you all a successful and fruitful 3<sup>rd</sup> BRICS Film Festival.

Siyabonga