



**REMARKS BY HER WORSHIP CLLR ZANDILE GUMEDE AT THE  
8<sup>TH</sup> SA AIDS CONFERENCE GALA DINNER  
JUNE 13, 2017  
Durban International Convention Centre**

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Programme Director,  
Special guests,  
All protocol observed,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Sanibonani,  
Good evening

Thank you for making us a part of this worthy function and; of course for choosing Durban again. This morning, we welcomed 3000 delegates to the 8<sup>th</sup> bi-annual South African Aids Conference under the theme: **A long Walk to Prevention: Every Voice Counts**. And so once again, it is a privilege to be standing here tonight. We are not going to be long, I am sure you had successful deliberations during the day.

It is no secret that South Africa once came under threat of the HIV/AIDs outbreak and over the years we have made great improvement in

attempts to tackle the HIV epidemic. As we have stated that South Africa have the biggest HIV treatment programme in the world, now largely funded from our own South African resources. Thank you Msholoz!

Programme director,

This conference serves a platform for experts to bring their heads together and share their research findings so that epidemiologists can correlate their findings.

As we celebrate the month of June, which is our National Youth month, I should think that we should take this opportunity to address youth related issues and ills which eventually lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS. It is unfortunate that young people and more especially our young women continue to be infected by HIV.

EThekweni Municipality recently launched the Youth Month Programme which was greatly attended by the youth.

Programme director,

Our youth development programme will look into issues such as business opportunities for the youth, sports, skills programmes, art and other sectors. We hope to tackle social ills such as the abuse of drugs and of course HIV/AIDSs.

We need to play our role in building an AIDS free generation. We need to fight the so called “ama-Blessers” and drug lords who want to ruin our future country leaders. We as the city, are pledging to be on the forefront.

As OR Tambo once said, “The children of any nation are its future. A country, a movement, a person that does not value its youth and children does not deserve its future.”

Programme director,

In closing, I was informed that for the first time, the conference has two conference chairs, to handle the size of the conference and to make it more effective for the delegates.

In this year’s conference, there is also a huge youth component, and we welcome the young people who are going to be the next frontline fighters against this menace.

On a lighter and more relaxed note, I hope you all take the time to enjoy this wonderful city of Durban and even though we are amidst the winter season, you can still enjoy our warm subtropical climate and the African Indian cuisine. We have more to offer outside this venue – I invite you to celebrate Durban with us.

Once again, welcome to the city of Durban!

Thank you.

