

**Welcoming Remarks by Her Worship, Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr
Zandile Gumede, SA OPEN of Surfing**

Programme Director,

Organisers,

Sponsors,

Surfing

Media present,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sanibonani,

Let me take this opportunity on behalf of the Mayor of eThekweni and welcome you to this warm and wonderful city of Durban. I am so glad to have all of you here to this evening occasion. I am not going to take long because this evening function is not about speeches.

We thank you for choosing Durban to host this event. You would have not chosen any other city besides us – because we offer the best in terms of the weather. We only have one season – which is summer all year.

Durban is home to the most promising surfers and consistent waves in the country. Regular swells and favourable wind directions are in abundance as well as a variety of reef, point and beach breaks. Competition is definitely aggressive and localism may be an issue if you're inexperienced surfer hitting the main breaks. Durban consistently churns out great surfers and leads the pack when it comes to tournaments around the country.

Recently we held the Comrade Marathon which was a success and we are going to be having many other events that will place this city on the map.

As eThekweni Municipality we are excited that we will be hosting our first International rugby match to take place at Moses Mabhida Stadium on youth day weekend.

We are glad to be hosting events during the youth month closer to the schools holidays.

EThekweni is happy to host the international tournament. Moses Mabhida Stadium is a world-class facility and eThekweni prides itself of hosting major international events that will help to place us on the world stage. This is an opportunity to showcase our iconic Moses Mabhida Stadium as a multi-purpose facility.

We have other upcoming big sporting events to look forward to which includes:

- Vodacom Durban July – A horse racing event
- Standard Ironmen 70.3
- Nedbank Cup Final
- Sharks vs Bulls

We want to challenge the organisers and sponsors in the memory of the youth that died in 1976 on June 16. Please invest in youth development in sports. We want to see more youth making money from these beautiful oceans. Sports should be celebrated by all for all. We want to see more Africans getting involved in such beautiful sport. I understand this is going to be long journey but it must begin this year.

With those few words, I welcome you. Feel at home and enjoy this wonderful city of Durban. Go out and experience our food, facilities and our warm wonderful people.

Siyabonga!