



**Welcoming Remarks by Her Worship, Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr Zandile Gumede, at the Press Conference – with SA ‘A’ team coach Johan Ackermann**

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Programme Director,  
Acting DCM Philip Sithole,  
SA “A” Team coach – Johan Ackermann,  
Head of Moses Mabhida – Mr Vusi Mazibuko,  
Media present,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Sanibonani,

I would like to thank you for attending this press conference which is to officially announce the Springboks vs. French Barbarians match scheduled to take place at Moses Mabhida Stadium on Friday , 16 June.

I want to use this opportunity to congratulate the winners of the Comrade Marathon that was held on Sunday. The triumph of Bongumusa Mthembu in the ‘up’ run from Durban to Pietermaritzburg/Umsunduzi, is a remarkable achievement in a race known for testing one’s endurance and strength.

We are very happy for Mthembu that in the month where we celebrate the youth, he has won this title on behalf of the young. He is an inspiration to youth that endurance pays off. Ukubekezela kuyasiza.

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

This match will be taking place on the Youth Day weekend which we will be celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the founding of SAYCO – a youth civil organization that fought against apartheid. We will also be commemorating the youth of 1976 that died on our streets fighting for freedom. In honouring their spirit, we encourage youth involvement in sports and we trust that more programs such as the **The Cell-C Sharks** outreach that is taking rugby sports to townships.

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.

Moses Mabhida is well known for its iconic ‘arch of triumph’ structure and has been matched with other defined landmarks. This stadium is named after a liberation struggle hero – Comrade Moses Mabhida.

As the city, we are hoping to create a long-term partnership with the rugby sport and we seek to overtime be seen as **‘the’** rugby venue.

To the South African “A” Team we are very proud of you as our South African Team. Sports really unites people that’s why we are having The Barbarians today to play against you.

As part of our celebrations for the Youth month, there is an organised friendly meeting between the French Barbarians and young South Africans from high school and primary schools of our Umlazi Township on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June from 10 am to 12pm. As the mayor, I will also be present at the Alliance française of Durban to welcome the “Baa Baa’s on the same day.

We wish the South African ‘A’ Team the best of luck as they will ‘rough it up’ in what is expected to be one of the biggest clash offs of the year against the French Baa Baa’s (Barbarians). This match will be one of two international rugby games to be held at non-traditional rugby venues, the other to be a test match (SA vs France, hosted by the Sharks on Saturday, June 17.

We are certain that Durbanites will come out in numbers to support our SA “A” Team

We are hoping that the relationship we have started with SA Rugby will grow. We have other upcoming big sporting events to look forward to which includes:

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

Moses Mabhida is the ultimate South African playground and we look forward to playing host to other rugby matches in this magnitude. Sports continues to play a crucial role in uniting our nation and forging of the spirit of Ubuntu. We are extremely proud as Moses Mabhida Stadium to be hosting our first international rugby match and are welcoming new audiences to our stadium.

I thank you.