

**Main address by Mayor Zandile Gumede at the Durban Tourism
Send-Off breakfast**

Programme Director,

Members of EXCO,

Councillors,

Senior Managers,

Captains of the music industry,

Our artists,

Media,

Sanibonani,

We would like to thank you for coming to this send-off event organised to celebrate our young artists who will be flying our Durban flag at the BET awards ceremony.

We want to take this opportunity and congratulate our artist for being nominated in these awards. Congratulations to Nasty C and Babes Wodumo, as they embark on their international stage. Out of the African Category of 8 artists TWO are from Durban.

The 2017 BET Awards will be held on June 25, 2017, at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. The ceremony celebrates mass achievements in black entertainment and honors music, sports, television, and movies. We are proud to be associated with black excellence.

As we celebrate the youth month, we need to continue to celebrate young people who make us proud. They remain an inspiration to those who are still trying to climb the ladder in this industry.

In Durban we celebrate excellence in many categories such as sports, business, entertainment, arts and others. We are the home of the Sharks and Black Mambazo. They continue to fly our flag high where they go – they go with us.

To us to have Durban brands making an impact in the international stages means that this will enhance our brand awareness globally and help drive conversions. Most importantly, the USA is one of Durban's key source markets in terms of inbound tourists and therefore this speaks directly to the objectives of our visitor marketing strategy; which aims at creating brand awareness and driving conversions.

Having a vibrant entertainment industry in Durban directly feeds into a booming tourism and hospitality economy. This is in response to a call by national government to invest in 'low-hanging fruits' like the tourism and hospitality sector in order to grow our economies. This is due to the fact that this sector has a direct and immediate impact into growing the economy.

Over the years Durban Tourism has have managed to make billions of revenue into the economy of the City through events and strategic partnerships. Since the beginning of the 2013/2014 financial year, Durban Tourism has identified and partnered with various events that

have yielded the utmost return on investment . This return on investment has been evident through the increased visitor numbers into the City, the continued promotion of the City as the best events and tourism destination through the respective events' marketing strategy and increased local citizen participation.

Furthermore, the events in the City have paved the way to introduce township businesses to the Tourism mainstream. The Event used as a catalyst gave way to side events, pre and post activations in the townships and black owned businesses benefitted from these events. Sales in the township increased in 2016 based on the City's activations by approximately 90%. In 2016 the direct spend only on events was R 1 billion and the contribution towards the City's GDP based on 2016 events was approximately R 2.2 billion. The local artist sing a lot about their townships which creates a positive impacts in terms of township and domestic tourism.

Most importantly, we have seen a very positive response from the private sector through their investment in infrastructure. Examples of this include projects like the Oceans Umhlanga, revamping of Hilton and Suncoast, Kings Estate in north of Durban and many others that will change the landscape of the City and grow tourism.

Music and film continues to play a role in promoting of Durban.

Whenever an American movie is playing they will show you the Statue of Liberty and an American flag. What we want as the city is that our artist

must begin to show our Moses Mabhida arch in their videos and our beaches including uShaka Marine world.

This morning we want to congratulations to you two. You are our children and as you abroad, tell the world about Durban. Tell the world about South Africa. Tell the world to come and visit Durban. Make us proud because we are proud of you!

#Don't quit !

#Banomona!

#Qhubekani and make us proud!