



**Keynote Address by Her Worship, Cllr Fawzia Peer
22 June 2017
Durban**

- Programme Director
- Organisers,
- Senior educators,
- Sponsors and Donors,
- Representatives from Department of Education,
- Governing Bodies,
- Representatives from organized Trade Unions,
- Learners representatives,
- Members of the media,
- Teachers and parents,
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Sanibonani nonke !

We would like to take this opportunity and welcome you to this warm and beautiful city of ours. We are proud to be with you this evening especially in an event that is associated with education. Education is key to our success as a nation and individuals. This is one of the reasons we made education an apex priority.

Programme Director,

This is the year to celebrate 100 years since the birth of President OR Tambo. If he was alive, he would have turned 100 years. The most interesting thing about President OR Tambo is that he was one of the bright African minds. He made history by being one the first two Africans to pass JC examination with a first class in 1936.

When he matriculated in 1938 he also passed with first class as one of the top learners in South Africa. The ANC has always encouraged Africans to study and in this government we will always do the same. I encourage learners to be like President OR Tambo.

President Tambo was also a Math and Science teacher. He graduated with a B.Sc. degree in Mathematics and Physics from Fort Hare University. He later enrolled for a diploma in higher education although he could not complete it after he was expelled for his political activism. He taught Physics and Mathematics for five years.

Later on, he completed his post-graduate degree in Law and went to open the first black-owned legal practice in Johannesburg with his friend and fellow comrade, President Nelson Mandela, the first President of a free and democratic South Africa. He also worked with Antony Lembede from uMbumbulu, South of Durban.

There is a lot that we could learn from the life and times of President OR Tambo as students and teachers.

Programme Director,

President Jacob Zuma described **Education as “ the ladder out of poverty and economic stagnation.”**

The ANC declared education an apex priority in 2009. We are very serious about education. It is our primary weapon in the struggle for economic transformation, and in the quest for a better life for our people, especially the poor. It is for this reason that education gets the biggest slice of the national budget.

Programme Director,

Education is not a mandate of local government but we believe that education is important hence we have many projects that are aimed at uplifting our communities. We also benefit from education by getting skilled workers such as engineers, plumbers including our administrators. We will continue to plough in education because we are building a nation.

Programme Director,

Education is also a right that was fought for by the class of 1976 and other generations including the now so called #FEESmustFALL class. Education is an essential gateway to other human rights as it promotes individual freedom and harvests important development benefits.

As part of eThekweni Municipality's Skills Development Unit, we run a Teachers Support Programme which is aimed at Life Science and Mathematics Educators especially with regards to new or unfamiliar sections of the curriculum, assist educators and improve the ability of educators to develop and apply continuous assessments and strategies

We value education as this ANC led Municipality.

This is why we call on the private sector to invest in education and educators. The private sector must focus more on Public Schools. It must plough millions in these schools. However, it doesn't assist to build a state of the art computer lab in a school with unskilled teachers. You must equally support training and empowerment of all teachers.

We support this initiative and we have been empowered by different previous speakers. We will take some of the suggestions that have been presented to us. We are a government with an ear. We hear when you talk. Some of us will form part of the ANC policy conference, we hope to influence policies on issues of education.

We believe that when we work together with teachers a lot more can be achieved. We want this radical economic transformation and radical improved education outcome. We believe this is possible if we hold hands.

In closing, I want to touch on some few issues that continues to affect us in this sector and in society in general.

Programme Director,

The problem of teenage pregnancies continues, indicating that we are failing somewhere as parents and teachers, in guiding and teaching our youth.

We also still have serious cases of crime in our schools such as gang violence, drug use and alcohol abuse. We also have cases of bullying in some schools which have a negative impact on our children.

We must not give up and must continue working together to eliminate these social ills and protect our children.

Let us continue to guide them and lead them on the right path, working with them. We must build a better future for our children together.

Let me also take this opportunity to appreciate and acknowledge the hard work done by all stakeholders in education.

Working together we can do more in bettering the lives of our young people. June is a youth month and 2017 is the year of OR Tambo. President Tambo said – “A nation that doesn’t care about youth, doesn’t care deserve its future.”

Business, civil society and government must come together in order to achieve radical improvements in educational system.

Siyabonga.