

Speech by Honourable Councillor Madlala of eThekweni on the occasion of UKZN's 5th Southern African Solar Energy Conference at Blue Waters Hotel on 25 June 2018

- Program Director
- The University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
- The University of Natal's Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellors
- The Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies, Stellenbosch University
- Distinguished International and National Keynote Speakers, Presenters, Academics and Business in Renewable energy.
- Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocol observed.

Good morning.

On behalf the Honourable Mayor of Durban who is also the C40 President for Africa, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all, to this 5th Annual Southern African Solar Conference.

Special greetings to our International guests. Welcome to South Africa and to the golden shores of Durban, a city that is evolving into a global centre of climate action, and as one of many international berths for sustainable development. We are a caring city and I do hope you feel at home with us.

Ladies and gentlemen, this conference is being hosted by the University of Kwa- Zulu Natal and the theme of this year's conference, focuses on solar energy in all its formations. The conference is South Africa's foremost

gathering to technical experts and academics in the field of Solar Energy research and development.

Program Director, Solar energy holds enormous potential for fossil-fuel dependent countries to move towards sustainable power generation practices. And as Dr Brooks of the host University correctly points out, “This is particularly true in our own country.”

In line with South Africa’s and the United Nations policies and directives, together with other accords, we at eThekweni Municipality continue to demonstrate and seek ways to mitigate effects of climate change by using new and sustainable technologies.

Ladies and gentlemen, by 2030, through the Municipalities DCC Strategy and the RE Flagship programme, our objective is to draw 40 % of our electricity supply from renewable energy sources.

As part of this programme:

- The Municipality has implemented viable small-scale renewable energy generation such as micro hydro, rooftop solar photovoltaic and anaerobic digesters within municipal assets.
- We have created an enabling environment for local energy generation that allows for connection of local generators to the grid.
- eThekweni has introduced rebates and incentives to encourage electricity users to implement renewable energy technologies.
- The Municipality has developed a Sustainable Energy Sector Development Plan to advance the sustainable energy sector of the green economy within Durban.
- We have dedicated institutional structures and capacity within the Municipality that can support the uptake of renewable energy.

Program Director, the Municipalities small –scale renewable energy generation is aimed at promoting the use of embedded roof top solar PV generation in eThekweni and establishing examples for the private sector and other Municipalities to follow.

This project will allow the Municipality to get first-hand experience in understanding the barriers to PV and also allow the Municipality to test its own policies and practices.

Program Director, we are therefore eager and excited this conference aims to stimulate renewed interest in solar energy technologies, whether thermal or photovoltaic, and to support the growing solar energy industry in Southern Africa by providing a platform where participants can interact and build productive research networks. We will take the outcomes of this conference just like all industry leaders, to stimulate and add to our own knowledge base.

Ladies and gentlemen, sharing their expertise on this subject matter, specialist keynote speakers and presenters from Academia and industry, both locally and internationally, will provide insightful discourse and interaction over the next few days.

I therefore wish to thank the University of Kwa –Zulu Natal for hosting this important conference and for the kind collaboration of the University of Stellenbosch to make this event possible.

In closing, and as I welcome you, I wish all participants a successful conference.

Thank you.