



WELCOMING REMARKS – AFRIWATER CONFERENCE & WORLD WATER DAY

Delivered by Cllr Fawzia Peer, Deputy Mayor of eThekweni Municipality

March 22, 2017

Durban ICC, Cocktail Evening Function

The Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Willies Mchunu,
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers from South Africa and other member states,
The President of the African Development Bank,
Representatives of UN Water and Women for Water Partnership and all international agencies,
Members of the Diplomatic corps,
Esteemed delegates and guests,
Diplomatic Corps,
Members of the Civil Society,
Technocrats and Academics,
Councillors and Government officials,
Members of the Media,
All Protocol Observed,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Sanibonani,

It is with great pleasure to welcome you this tonight to the World Water Day Celebration and the AfriWater Conference and Exhibition.

I will try and not be long. The President has already spoken and our task will simple be to welcome you to tonight's occasion. Tonight is about celebrating the World Water Day. It is befitting for me to repeat the quote that was used by His Excellency, President Zuma – when he recalled the words of the Twentieth Century poet W.H. Auden who said:

"Thousands have lived without love, not one without water".

We must celebrate progress and make a difference by creating an awareness and coming up with suitable solutions to eradicate this water pandemic the world is facing.

As the city of Durban, we have pulled our best resources to ensure that you have a most productive conference and be able to deal with the water issues at hand. Our vision is to be the most liveable and caring city in Africa by 2030 and yes, we want to be sustainable. Durban has for a third consecutive year, been ranked the top South African City with the highest quality of life in the international Mercer's 19th Quality of Living survey.

This proves that our Municipality has one of Africa's best service delivery programmes and continues to make a positive impact in the lives of its residents. We are humbled and encouraged to do even better.

Programme Director,

This conference has come at a critical time when parts of the country were still grappling with drought. We are still praying for more rain whilst preaching our gospel of saving water to the millions of our citizens. This gathering will allow our African countries and cities to build partnerships and create information sharing platforms on ways to deal with challenges in the water sector. It will also assist our City in dealing with water loss which is between 35 percent and 40 percent.

As Durban, we actively provide our citizens with up to date information on the issue of water, and continue to encourage them to save water. We have plans and a comprehensive strategy on water harvesting. Our vision is to provide world class water and sanitation services to the citizens of eThekweni Municipality by 2030.

We too have our very own Durban Water recycling project, in May 2001 we commissioned South Africa's first recycling plant. This plant is located on the south of Durban which is expected to clean around 4.7million liters of domestic and industrial waste water to a near portable standard and will free up enough sufficient drinking water for approximately 300 000 people.

We have organized tours for delegates to visit this site and other sites within the city and neighbouring municipalities. We hope this will be exciting for you. We will be participating in discussions through our delegates and we hope this we will come out more empowered.

Distinguished guests,

We would like to wish you a successful conference and we hope that our Durban magic will make this conference historic. We would like to invite delegates to enjoy our city during breaks and we have an exciting line-up of cultural events tonight. We want you to celebrate our human rights with us.

Durban is Africa's events capital and is the destination of choice for a variety of International, National and Local Events, which are draw cards for global and African tourists into South Africa. Our city has a reputation and a proven track record of successfully hosting of major global events and this is a standard we are determined to maintain.

I encourage all of you to take some time out to explore some the offerings of the City's tourism and hospitality products and experiences. We have some of the world class facilities and we are confident that all our visitors will have a memorable time during their stay in Durban.

With those few words, welcome to Durban, the warmest place to be!