



**Speech by Mayor Zandile Gumede, at Hilton Schools Expo
22 May 2017
Hilton Hotel**

Programme Director -
Mr Markus Fritz – Hotel GM
Christine Ndlovu – Director of Operations
Special guests,
Abafundi nothisha,
Abazali abakhona,
Ladies and Gentleman,
Good evening – sanibonani,

A warm welcome to all of you, thank you for coming to grace ua this wonderful morning. This event takes place during the Africa month and child protection month. We have learnt of a number of incidents about people who are killing our young girls. We say this must end and the police must arrest all those who are killing our girls. We strongly condemn this Satanism. I think it is important to use every public platform to condemn these criminals and also to warn parents to be extra careful.

Hilton will be selecting young girls for its program but these girls must be protected all the time. They must also feel safe when they go to school or their work place. It is very important.

Next month is an important month in our calendar, the youth month. We as the city, we will be hosting a number of activities for young people. We will be encouraging youth to take up opportunities that are available in the hospitality industry. We call on teh private sector to have more programs targeting the youth not only for the month of June but it must be a long term. I have said it before that Durban will now have less events but it will have programs, we want a long term impact. We want to have events like the one today, something that will assist you in the future.

I will not do justice if I only focus on hospitality without linking it to the tourism industry. This event takes place after Durban KZN has been announced as the host city for Indaba Expo, for the next five years. These are exciting news for all of us, especially those who want to do business in the tourism industry. Ofcourse some of you are not interested in business but want to have tourism related jobs like in the hospitality sector.

Tourism has become a vital part of our regional economy and the Municipality is prioritizing a lot of investment and resource's into tourism and especially into building a strong global travel brand and identity for our city. Durban is being discovered by global travellers looking for new and different cultural experiences combined with the excitement of nature and wildlife.

The recent research done by PWC found that the tourism industry continues to be one of the fastest-growing and most vibrant sectors of Africa's economy. In spite of recent challenges, in South Africa and contraction of the global economy, the sector has significant potential to create jobs, uplift inclusive economic growth across the continent, and reduce poverty.

Africa is steadily developing into one of the world's greatest regions for travel. Africa has a lot to offer in the tourism market things such as – history & heritage, culture & tradition, wildlife, natural beauty, and many things.

Choosing a career in the Hospitality industry will increase your prospects of getting a job in South Africa. I would like to encourage you to get a qualification in the hospitality industry and take opportunities that exist in the field. I want you to look at a range of courses not just travel and tourism but try cooking, event management, public relations, photography whilst focusing on hospitality and tourism.

According to statistics by Tourism Satellite Account which was published in December 2016, noted that in 2015, 1 in 22 employed individuals were working in the tourism industry.

The total number of people employed in the tourism industry in 2015 came in above 700 000 with 20% of jobs concentrated in the food and beverage segment and 19% in accommodation.

Programme Director,

We are grateful to the Hilton Hotel Group, a company that has recognised that investment in training is not a burden but an investment to the country's development.

The Hilton Group has also indicated its enthusiasm to be part of our Women in Tourism initiative. This serves to position women in the workplace. Addressing the long term challenges of women participation requires proactive planning. Focus on young women interested and entering the sector is necessary and critical. We would like to thank you for allowing the participation of an NPO called Project ENZA. This partnership will open opportunities for young girls who are likely to take hospitality careers in future. Even if they were to choose different careers, but their exposure through "Take a girl child to Work" will have a positive contribution in their lives.

We encourage investment in humanity by business. This is one of the reasons as the Mayor and Chairperson of ANC in eThekweni I have a Foundation that I run which is focusing on investment in Ubuntu.

The objectives of the Foundation are focusing on many things, amongst those are:

- Education, including skills and life skills development;
- Youth development;
- Agricultural programmes
- Community representation structures development;
- Access to health and medical facilities and treatment;

We hope we will have partnership with organisations such as yours and others. I believe that if we work together a lot can be achieved.

Programme Director,

I would like to meet these kids in the near future working in this hotel or any other hospitality establishment. I want to take food and desserts that will be cooked by you. Drink wine that will be produced by you and sleep in a hotel or lodge that is managed by some of you. The opportunities are many as you have seen for yourself in this function. The worst thing that could ever happen is to see you in jail or even worse using drugs. Instead of tasting new drugs, have a new recipe and try a different dessert. Try and experience good food instead of trying to eat poison such as the one found in drugs. Drugs are killing our youth and our future, we urge you to use your energies by doing something that is positive.

I love you and I wish you well with all your future ambitions. Remember it is possible black child. I was once a domestic worker and I am now a Mayor of

eThekwini. With all the opportunities, stop making excuses and Go out there
Win. Nothing is impossible if you have dreams and a vision for your life.

With those few words, I thank you!