



**Address by Her Worship, the Mayor, Cllr Zandile Gumede
Launch of Youth Employability Indaba and Career Expo
- 29 March 2018 -
Venue: Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre**

- Programme Director, Alex Mthiyane,
- Members of the Executive Committee,
- Councillors especially the Young Councillors,
- City Manager, Siphon Nzuza,
- Deputy City Managers and Senior Managers present today,
- Chief Executive Officer of ICC
- Representatives from Independent Newspapers,
- Chief Executive Officer of Maritime Cluster,
- Municipal officials,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

I greet you all,

Sanibonani, we would like to thank you for attending this wonderful programme targeting young people.

We have gathered here because we all know only too well the depth and extent of youth unemployment in this country. Addressing the problem of youth unemployment is central to the achievement of the 2030 NDP target

of 6% unemployment, as youth accounts for more than 60% of the unemployed in South Africa.

The latest unemployment statistics from StatsSA report shows that South Africa's unemployment rate declined to 26.7% in the fourth quarter last year from 27.7% in the previous quarter. This indicates that we are 12.7% percentage points from the National Development Plan (NDP) target for 2020.

The report further says that although there are 37.5-million people of working age between 15 and 64 in South Africa; 15.5 million people are not economically active, including students, homemakers, the disabled and those too young or too old. There are 2.4-million who are also discouraged and are not looking for work.

The unemployment rate among the youth is higher irrespective of educational level, but those with less than matric were more likely to experience serious challenges when seeking employment. Of the 10.3-million young people aged between 15 and 24 years, 3.1-million were not in employment, education or training.

This is the reason we all need to work together and find solutions for millions of youth who are unemployed. Government alone cannot solve that; this is not a problem for us in South Africa but a global headache.

Despite the annual increase in the education enrolment both at basic and tertiary levels, millions of young people face bleak employment opportunities.

The prospects of significantly denting youth unemployment are low due to the decline in the labour absorption capacity in the formal sector.

We know that millions of young people do not complete school and many that do, do not have the skills that our economy needs.

We know about the extreme difficulties that poor black South Africans experience in finding employment.

Without access to networks, without information about opportunities, without exposure to the world of work, even those with further education often struggle to bridge the gap between learning and earning.

This is the reason that led us to coming up with this project of Youth Employability Indaba and Career Expo. We want to become part of the solution. In the year of President Mandela and Albertina Sisulu we are saying lets us radically address youth unemployment.

Through this event, we will be calling on parents, teachers, students, business, and civil society to come together in order to assist young people. We are targeting youth that is in schools and in higher education, we are targeting unemployed youth and the youth that has given up.

This event will be about hope and renewal for young people. It will about us taking care of our youth. As President OR Tambo taught us, a nation that does not care about its youth does not deserve its future.

This my commitment to the youth development through creating job opportunities and encouraging the youth from an early childhood development phase, to choose subjects and courses that will benefit them in the future.

We must all work hard to ensure that we achieve comprehensive development of youth because we want to create empowered young citizens.

I truly understand that youth we should provide work and skills opportunities to the unemployed youth and significantly increase access to employment, training and skills development. This will enable our young citizens to

become socially and economically empowered and further address the Employment Equity strategy and Youth Development imperatives.

KwaZulu-Natal has a population of 11 million people of which 4 million are between the ages of 15 and 34 years old. Of the 4 million youth, approximately 1.1 million are high school students whilst the remaining 2.9 million are out of school with most looking for career opportunities. Most of the youth will flock to Durban for opportunities and we as the city we have role to play in creating a conducive environment for them to prosper. Durban is the place of their dreams, hope and future. The other reason is that Durban continues to be the most liveable place and the quality of life in Durban is high.

You will find that the majority of our youth come from schools and have limited or no access to information on possible careers choices and the entry requirements for tertiary institutions. Furthermore, access to bursaries, apprenticeships, jobs opportunities are limited and these school leavers are often not aware about companies and institutions that provide information on bursaries and internships.

In eThekweni Municipality, we have programmes which are designed to uplift and change lives of the youth. Through Human Settlements, Engineering and eThekweni Transport Authority Cluster and Trading Services Cluster we have implemented Science, Technology, Engineering, Accounting and Mathematics (STEAM) initiatives.

This project was created as an outreach for disadvantaged schools, a platform for growth, empowerment and skills development in eThekweni Municipality Area and the KwaZulu-Natal province.

The programme also aims to groom future leaders in all relevant STEAM sectors and eradicate the dire shortage of Engineering, Mathematics and Science students.

I applaud the efforts and sterling work for employees who are dedicating their time to reach out schools in rural areas to improve the learner's performance in Science, Technology, Engineering, Accounting and Mathematics.

Programme Director, we are inviting key leadership from National, Provincial, Captains of Industries and Business leaders to support us in our endeavour to empower future leaders.

I would like to encourage teachers and parents to ensure that young people attend the Youth Employability Indaba and Career Expo because amongst other things they will be able to:

- Learn about the different career options and sectors in South Africa,
- Empowered themselves to develop the skills required to become entrepreneurs,
- Explore opportunities to become socially and economically empowered,
- Have access to information on graduate recruitment, employment opportunities, bursaries, internships, learner ships etc.
- Get undergraduate application forms from tertiary institutions,

Through the eThekweni Municipal Academy, we assist graduates acquire adequate, appropriate and quality workplace skills that will allow them to enter the labour market, increase their employability and gain enough knowledge to start-up businesses. It is important to build a nation of productive young people and help them gain proper skills through being in the workplace.

The Youth Office in the Office of the Mayor has programmes designed for youth and their participation will be required in order to make these programme an astounding success.

1. **Youth Mayoral Cup** - is schedule for April this is part of promoting sports in the City while discouraging social ills amongst youth,
2. **Young Women Seminar/Phakama Mbokodo** - will be held on April to address challenges faced youth, inspire interested youth who aspires to become entrepreneurs, employment opportunities and political issues affecting them,
3. **Social Ills Campaign** - will be held in the middle of April to dissuade youth them focusing on substance abuse as an example, we will host an opportunities walk to showcase available opportunities for the city for young people this is scheduled for mid-April,
4. **eThekwini Youth Talent Show** - will be held towards the end of May to showcase and promote talent as means of creating employment and keeping the youth away from substance abuse,
5. **Career Expo** – will be held per in South, West, North and Central to continuously showcase existing opportunities that exist for youth in schools, universities and unemployed.
6. **I Am Able Campaign** - will be held in the middle of May in recognition of people with disabilities this is aimed at empowering and educating them specifically on opportunities available in the Municipality. Programme Director, allow me to digress and express my gratitude regarding the strides that has been made by the Municipality to employ people with disabilities at all levels. To date about we have 1.20 percent of people with disabilities, hopefully we will be close to 2 percent, which we are required to have in the Municipality.

Programme Director, youth empowerment remains the core agenda of eThekwini Municipality as the City believes that increasing the participation

of youth in the economy will enhance competitiveness and growth of our City.

I thank you!!!!