

Remarks by Deputy Mayor Fawzia at the celebration of Swami Gounden held at Coastlands Hotel, 05 May 2018

Programme Director,

Leadership of the ANC,

Dignitaries,

Family,

Comrades and friends,

Ladies and gentlemen,

All protocol observed,

Sanibonani,

Today we are here to honour our Swami, his holiness Mr Swaminathan Karuppa Gounden for his life-long and courageous fight against apartheid oppression. He continues to live by the courage of his convictions in his pursuit of equality for all.

He was recently honoured with **The Order of Luthuli** which recognises South African citizens who have contributed to the struggle for democracy, nation-building, building democracy and human rights, justice and peace as well as for the resolution of conflict.

National Orders ceremony to honour those among us who have made outstanding contributions to our country and to the broader global community.

President Cyril Ramaphosa said, "These national orders are a recognition of the many outstanding individuals who defied great odds to make an immense contribution in various spheres of life."

Our freedom and democracy opened windows of opportunity for many to chase their dreams, to excel, to succeed, and in so doing to inspire others to reach beyond what they imagined possible.

Swami Gounden was honoured in ceremony that was dedicated to the memory of former President Nelson Mandela, who, more than any other, embodied the spirit and the intent of these orders.

In its January 8 Statement the NEC called on all of us to be Mandela. In celebrating the order of Luthuli we must intensify our efforts to realise his vision of a united South Africa in which all live in peace with equal rights and opportunities.

We must renew our focus on comrade Mandela's vision of a non-racial society in which the social and economic barriers that have separated black from white are torn down. The ANC has called upon us to redouble our efforts to build a society in which black poverty and white privilege are consigned to the past, replaced by respect, solidarity and non-racial equality.

We must never deviate from Madiba's vision of a non-sexist society in which the oppression and exploitation of women – whether in the

workplace, in communities or in the home – is eradicated. We will work to ensure we achieve comprehensive development of women in all spheres of life so as to ensure that there is equality between women and men. This is the reason we condemn the killing of a young woman at a student resident recently. We cannot allow our young men to butcher our young girls, we all need to stand up.

We need to rekindle Madiba's vision of a democratic society in which all citizens have equal opportunity to determine their own destiny. This will be achieved not only through strengthening the instruments of representative and participatory democracy; but also by ensuring that people have economic opportunities and the ability to make choices about their own lives. We shall work to strengthen organs of civil society, including street committees and other community-based organisations, understanding that they provide the means through which people can participate fully in changing their lives for the better.

As the African National Congress, we need work to restore the confidence of the South African people in a shared vision for radical social and economic transformation. We must do this not just to win the 2019 elections but to win the minds and heart of society as the leader of society. At all times, we need to ensure that we are leading society at all levels and all sectors.

Together we must confront the lack of broad-based economic participation and the social marginalisation of millions of poor and landless people. This must be done because we have political clarity. We have a

deep understanding that, an equitable society is in the interest of all South Africans, whatever their race, gender or social status. We must condemn the stopping of projects in eThekweni, a programme of radical economic transformation doesn't mean disruption. People must learn to engage, we strongly condemn the violence and insults.

Drawing on the wisdom of Madiba, and led by his example, we must all focus all our efforts on improving the lives of all South Africans, especially the poor.

In closing, congratulations to all Cde Swami Gounden. Halala Gounden Halala!

Amandla!!!