



Welcoming Address by Cllr Siphso Kaunda at the occasion of KZN Economic Council held at Public Works office, Durban – 05 April 2018

Programme Director,

Honourable Premier of KZN, Mr Willies Mchunu,

MEC for Economic Development, Mr Sihle Zikalala,

Senior Government Officials present,

Business representatives,

Labour representatives,

Civil society representatives,

Captains of industry,

Academia,

Media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Sanibonani, we would like to take this opportunity and welcome you to this beautiful and wonderful city of eThekweni. We thank you for bringing this important gathering to our city, which is an economic hub KwaZulu-Natal.

Before we make any further remarks on behalf of the Mayor and people of eThekweni, we would like to pay tribute to a fallen struggle stalwart, Mama Nomzamo Winfred – Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, the mother of our nation. It is important that we have a sense of occasion, as we mourn this mother who inspired many to face the brutality of apartheid.

Mama Winnie was stood by her people through our the struggle. She is one of the struggle leaders whom we will always celebrate. She is a reminder that freedom was not free, it was achieved through the blood and sweat of many. We would like to appreciate our government for giving her a dignified farewell. Mama was a national and international hero and that how we chose to remember her.

As eThekweni we have also organised a series of memorial services in honour of Mama Madikizela-Mandela and numerous activities. We believe that she deserves such and being led by a woman Mayor, we find it befitting for us to celebrate the life of Mama during the year of Tata Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu.

Programme Director,

I am glad that we here few days after our city was rated as the most liveable city in South Africa last week. On the same week, Durban was also named by **Brand SA**, as the most improved image.

We are on the right track, we are positive and optimistic about our today and tomorrow. We believe that it possible that in the year of President Nelson Mandela. Lastly, the rating agencies known as Global Credit Ratings - a review was conducted and resulted in an upgrade of the Municipality's Long-term national scale credit rating by one notch from **AA** to **AA+**.

Last week the mayor tabled a 2018/2019 Medium Term budget sitting at **R45.8 billion** which has been developed with an overall planning framework and includes programmes and projects to achieve the city's strategic objectives. Through this budget we hope to use it to achieve the inclusive economic growth which will benefit millions of our residents and the province at large.

We also welcome the decision by Moody's Investor Research Services to confirm South Africa's credit rating at investment grade and to change our outlook from negative to stable.

This decision by Moody's affirms the work of the ANC-led government, together with our social partners, to implement measures aimed at recovery of the South African economy as well as sustaining the ongoing positive mood.

Similar to the national projections, the KZN economic outlook is also on an upward trajectory but expected to grow by 1.2% and 1.3% in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

The key sectors contributing to KZN's economy, particularly in job creation and poverty alleviation, are: manufacturing, construction, transport, finance, tourism and others. The turnaround in the economies of our trading partners will benefit KZN, since we contribute meaningfully to the South African GDP.

We believe that this occasion of KwaZulu-Natal Economic Council – which is a collective comprising representatives of organised labour, the business sector, government and civic organisations – will discuss how the province can fast track its goal of achieving a competitive and equitably transformed economy that creates jobs.

It is important that we all work together in order to take this province and nation forward. We must do it in the name of women and youth who have lost hope. We must do it for women, widows and discouraged graduates. Lets do it for Mama Winnie, Mama Dorothy Nyembe and Mama Florence Mkhize. The struggle continues

You are all welcomed.