

Mayor Zandile Gumede – delivering a Keynote Address at the Fraud Awareness Seminar held at Durban Exhibition Centre, 13 November 2018

Programme Director,
Chairperson of MPAC – Cllr Thabani Luthuli,
Chairperson of Ethics – Cllr Mhloshane Richard Hlophe,
Head of CIIU- Mr Mbuso Ngcobo,
Captains of the industry,
Distinguished guests,
Municipal officials,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Sanibonani,

Allow me to welcome all of you to this important seminar on Combatting Fraud and Corruption. EThekweni is pleased to host you as we commemorate International Fraud Awareness Week, celebrated globally in November to minimize the impact of fraud by promoting anti-fraud awareness and education campaigns.

This event takes place during our festive season, it is a busiest season for our city. We have numerous events happening this week and I would like to indicate that I will also be attending another gathering. As the chairperson of C40 Africa and Deputy President of SALGA, I have been invited to attend a meeting of all Mayors which is discussing climate change.

Programme Director, I am very pleased by the attendance and I think such gathering must be opened to public. It is a wonderful opportunity to create awareness and educate public about fraud. If we don't educate our society about fraud and corruption we will end up becoming like other countries where fraud and corruption is part of the system. People must not treat it as a norm that they must buy cool drink for police officer in order to pass their driving license.

We must root the culture of corruption in our society. Nobody must bribe or pay an official to get government contract. When I came in as a Mayor I ran a campaign telling the public that Jobs are not for Sale, Municipality tenders are not for sale. Nobody must be forced or bribed to award a tender to a particular individual. The economic situation is difficult for everyone. People are looking for business and job opportunities. They are vulnerable, they can be tempted to pay a bribe to get a favour. Our message is clear, no to corruption and bribery.

Since our election into the public office, leading this city, we have always respected the will of the people and treated our election as an honour that is a reflection of the trust placed on ourselves by the public. Therefore, as elected officials, we have constitutional and personal obligation to act in ways that meet the public trust by exercising judgement and making decisions that will put the interests of the public ahead of our own personal interest. This requires exercising the highest integrity to ensure that their conduct is beyond reproach. Fighting crime, fraud and corruption is

one of the key priorities in order to gain and maintain the public confidence on our institutions and systems.

As politicians, we understand our space. People can make unfounded accusations to throw a mud at you just to rubbish your good name. This has become a norm in South Africa and media is being used to tarnish the names of politicians and to an extent Africans. We understand that there is a wrong perception of trying to project successful black people or powerful politicians as corrupt. This is the reason we approach courts and press ombudsmen to clear our names. Unfortunately, such apologies do not end of the front pages.

This is the reason we welcome and support the Zondo Commission on State Capture. People get an opportunity to answer for themselves. Those who make accusations are afforded opportunity to present compelling evidence to prove their statements. This is a sign that our democracy is healthy. This is a clear message from the ANC to society to say – we are fighting corruption and corrupt individuals irrespective of who it is.

Our fight for corruption is clear it has no agenda for purging. It has no agenda for defending certain individuals. It is more about clean governance and protecting our resources. We are regaining the confidence of the public.

Programme Director,

We are cognisant with that fact that fraud and corruption undermines the value, vision and mission of our Municipality. We have a dedicated Unit within our Municipality called City Integrity and Investigations Unit (**CIU**). The purpose of the Unit is solely intended to tackle the fraud, corruption and maladministration that is hampering the service delivery within the Municipality.

The CIU receives allegations and complaints relating to fraud, corruption and maladministration directly from the complainants and whistle-blowers. We urge the public together with Municipal officials to report any suspicions of fraud, corruption and maladministration to the CIU. This Unit assists in ensuring that fraud and corruption is rooted out within eThekweni Municipality.

We further encourage the public to report to other established independent institutions such as chapter nine institutions, which support and strengthen constitutional democracy in South Africa. These institutions are independent, and subject only to the Constitution and the law, and they are impartial and exercise their powers and perform their functions without fear, favour or prejudice.

We support chapter nine institutions and we will always present ourselves like we did during the Commission that was investigating the state of our gravesites. This is our commitment to the constitution and clean governance. This is the reason that I had to cancel my trip when there was an alleged intimidation of Auditor General staff. We came out strongly in public and condemned it.

Programme Director,

It must be noted that eThekweni Municipality was the first to establish a Disciplinary Board which deals with cases pertaining to financial misconduct. The functioning of the Disciplinary Board is aimed at effectively and promptly curbing fraudulent activities, corruption and maladministration.

We are committed to a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, corruption and maladministration. We are serious about running a clean Municipality and therefore, we are treating all allegations pertaining to fraud, corruption and maladministration as a priority.

We envisage being the most vigilant and effective anti-fraud and corruption Municipality in South Africa. Fraud and corruption steals and deprives our peoples of much-needed quality services and it undermines the integrity of our Municipality.

I therefore take this opportunity to wish you all a very successful and fruitful Seminar as we move into the greater part of the day. Corruption robs us all therefore we need to double our efforts to win the war against fraud and corruption because it is also part of the war on poverty. Please report any incidences to 0800 20 20 20.

MASILWE NENKOHAKALO KUMASIPALA WETHU.