



**Welcome Address by Mayor, Cllr Zandile Gumede,
on the occasion of
British Airways cocktail dinner function**

- Programme Director,
- Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic corps,
- Captains of industry,
- Our international guests and friends,
- Delegates of the Tourism Indaba,
- Distinguished guests,
- Members of the media,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

Sanibonani!

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to join you all tonight at this most important dinner session.

Programme Director, mine is a very simple task of welcoming all our visitors, especially the British Airways delegation from the United Kingdom – London and other parts of the world and also to welcome all our

esteemed dignitaries.

We are not going to be long, because tonight is a night for you to let your hair down, relax and enjoy some of City's offering in terms of hospitality, entertainment and tourism.

We have decided to host this dinner session as a gesture of our gratitude to all of you for this groundbreaking arrival of the first British Airways direct flight to Durban.

We are also celebrating the fact that Durban has been one of the 19 must-see destinations for 2019, in the recently-released British Airways' annual travel predictions.

Ladies and gentlemen, this inaugural flight signals the start of new and direct trade and tourism route between London and Durban – KwaZulu-Natal.

We are confident that this new route will be a huge success for British Airways because as the City, we have done all the necessary ground work to ensure that it is a sustainable route.

We believe that the work that we have done in marketing Durban to not only London, but the entire United Kingdom region, has begun paying dividends.

Over the years, we have invested in creating partnerships with strong global brands like National Geographics, Discovery Channel, Eurosport, Amambazo and many other strong global brands to market Durban in UK and the entire European region.

The National Geographic campaign allowed us to reach more 500 million households globally and a further 350 million through our partnership with Eurosport.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that it is very same aggressive marketing efforts by both Durban and KwaZulu-Natal that has led to British Airways taking a decision to have a direct flight to Durban.

I would like to thank individuals and entities that were leading source in securing this BA flight direct to Durban, we thank them immensely for their input. In June this year, we led an Investment Mission which saw 45 Businesses attending a mission at their cost with City in their quest of securing inward investment from the UK.

During our mission we had about 85 meeting were successfully in a week. The success of our mission resulted in a return trip where Business and Political leadership met some new Investors over the weekend to further engage.

I am happy to announce that a British food company will soon launch the establishment of a Durban based plant in the South of Durban.

Equally, I want to acknowledge the local trade partners and stakeholders for their continued support. We would not have achieved this feat alone had it not been for your commitment in working with us to make Durban – KwaZulu-Natal a gateway to Africa.

It is such that has been shown by the local industry in working with us to grow tourism and investment promotion that has enabled us to continue to lead.

In our view, this move takes us a step closer to our long-held objective of creating a truly global City that is both investment and tourism friendly.

In our view, these investments will not only change the landscape and make our Durban more appealing to visitors, but it will also provide a conducive environment for investments to thrive.

It is for this reason that we are confident to exclaim that Durban, KwaZulu-Natal is open for business.

In closing, I would like urge you to take some time out and enjoy Durban. Take your time to explore or discover some of our City's hidden gems and world class tourism products.

Our townships have a huge history of national significance and we believe that they tell a story that the world would like to hear.

Areas Inanda Heritage Route has places like Ohlange, where Nelson Mandela casted his first democratic vote and a home of the first ANC President, Dr JL Dube, an oldest liberation movement in Africa.

The same route has places like Ghandi Village, which is a home of Mahatma Ghandi in Durban, this is where he started his struggles for a better and fair society.

Areas like Isithumba at The Valley of 1000 Hills route are other key areas that have a potential to turn around the fortunes of our City and attract tourism.

In our view, this will enable you to truly understand what we mean by saying **Durban Has More**.

Most importantly, in your quest to **discover Durban**, remember to share your experiences with the global community by using the (**#tag**) **Durban Has More**.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are honoured to host you and we are confident that this will be a beginning of many more years of mutually beneficial engagements for the benefit of our respective economies.

I thank you.