

## **Welcome address at SAFA Dinner – Mandela Challenge match dinner held at Durban ICC, 19 November 2018**

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Programme Director,

Minister of Sports, Thokozile Xasa,

MEC Arts, Sports and Recreation, Bongzi Sithole-Molio,

SAFA President, Dr Danny Jordan,

PSL Acting CEO, Ms Manto Madlala,

Distinguished guests,

Sports cluster,

Media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity and welcome you to this gala dinner evening. We are grateful to SAFA and sponsors for ensuring that this event is so elegant and fitting the standard.

As the city we are delighted to host the Nelson Mandela Challenge during his centenary year. If Mandela was alive, he was going to turn one hundred years and this is the reason this year has been declared by the ANC and government as the centenary year of President Mandela and Mama Albertina Sisulu.

We are ready to roll the carpet and welcome thousands of soccer lovers and visitors as Bafana-Bafana takes on Paraguay.

We are humbled and grateful that the South African Football Association (SAFA) for choosing our city to host the Nelson Mandela Challenge for the

first time and in his centenary year. It is an honour that SAFA has chosen this very city which President Mandela chose to cast his first democratic vote.

It is a great honour for our city to celebrate Nelson Mandela with this international friendly match and we know Durban families will come in numbers to pay homage to this South African and global icon whose love for children is well-documented.

Durban continues to be South Africa's playground and we have a reputation of being a leading sporting destination. We have a track record of successfully delivering numerous sporting events on behalf of South Africa and Africa. Over the weekend, we held a cricket match which was successful and number of Festive season events. All these were successful without any incident reported.

Durban has a special magic for Bafana-Bafana and we wish the team well and hope for some Madiba magic as they play! We are also looking forward to a weekend match between Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

Programme Director, as I sit down, I would like to invite all our guests to come back for Durban Summer experience. We have so much to offer and a lot of packages for our visitors. Durban is the best destination for family and friends holiday, we have best facilities that can accommodate children and elderly. We promise a best summer and we will deliver, from the beach to the burg, Umlazi to Umhlanga, Shisanyama to Chatsworth, best cuisine on planet and so much fun.

With those words, I welcome you.

