



**Welcome Address by Her Worship, the Mayor, Cllr
Zandile Gumede on the Occasion of the 17th LIASA
National Conference Mayoral Reception**

**11 October 2016
Durban Art Gallery**

Welcome Address by Mayor Cllr Zandile Gumede at the 17thLIASA National Conference Mayoral
Reception, 11 October 2016

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- Programme Director,
- President of Library and Information Association of South Africa, Ms Segametsi Molawa,
- Fellow Councillors,
- Representatives and members of the Association,
- Representatives from the different spheres of government,
- Municipal Officials,
- Conference delegates,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

Good evening ladies and gentlemen!

Allow me to extend special greetings to our international and national friends - particularly those visiting the award-winning City of Durban for the first time!

You are all welcome. Feel at home in the warmest place to be! May I say, on behalf of eThekweni Municipality and the good people of our City, we are honoured to be hosting yet another national event in our City - the 17th Library and Information Association of South Africa Conference.

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This major conference brings together local, national and international custodians of information and knowledge management.

The library and information sciences field is vitally important in our young democracy. Firstly, it helps us preserve content about our history and struggles in order to continuously educate younger generations about the sacrifices that were made to transform South African into a democratic state.

This field also helps us preserve our heritage to ensure that becoming modern global citizens does not result in the demise of our cultures.

Secondly, one of the most important aspects of the knowledge economy is information.

Therefore, the libraries and information field provides an important platform for all citizens to access a multitude of content necessary in today's knowledge economy.

Libraries collect, organise, preserve and disseminate information, which allows citizens to make informed choices.

From a social point of view, libraries are used as points to distribute educational information for community benefit such as health-related subjects.

As a City, our most crucial resource is our people, their ideas, their talents, their Heritage and lived experiences.

We understand that for us to achieve our vision of being Africa's most Caring and Liveable City by 2030, we will be measured by the extent to which we have invested in our people and their overall development and prosperity.

We believe that for industry in our city to be competitive we require innovative and productive people.

Our focus therefore goes beyond the material needs of the community such as housing, water and electricity but also focuses on the mental growth of our people in order for them to imagine an alternate future for themselves and have the capacity to act to achieve it.

We have made significant investments in Libraries. There are three new libraries in the pipeline, one of which is the Durban Central Library. This will bring the total number of libraries in our city to 99.

Let me take this opportunity to invite you to the Inaugural Essence festival Durban taking place in exactly a month's time. One of the features of this multi-event show will be **Articulate Africa**, a wonderful combination of a Book and an Art-Fair.

ARTiculate Africa seeks to become a leading hub for practitioners in knowledge and artistic production to connect with their audiences and buyers, while engaging in exchanges with their peers to drive continued engagement with these activities within Africa and the African diaspora.

ARTiculate Africa breaks beyond the book in encompassing the ways in which knowledge is produced and consumed on the continent, applying new media and oral history.

The programme will create a platform for writers to connect with their readership through panel discussions, book launches and book signings hosted at the central venue within the International Convention Centre complex.

In addition, there will be a professional component to the stream aims to create a hub for professionals in the book trade to exchange information and best practices through industry talks while creating pan-African linkages through networking and business meetings.

We will also have three Music Concerts from Friday the 11th to Sunday the 13th of November. Tickets to these events are selling fast, and we invite you to book yours without delay.

Finally I would, accordingly, invite you to venture beyond the confines of your conference venue and to experience all that Durban has to offer its visitors until we meet again for the Essence Festival.

Thank you!