



**Address by Her Worship, Mayor Cllr Zandile Gumede  
On the Occasion of the Breakfast Send-off for Ithimba  
Le Afrika**

**13 September 2016  
Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre**

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- Programme Director,
- Members of the eThekweni Executive Committee,
- Fellow Councillors,
- Members of Ithimba Le Afrika,
- Stakeholders and partners,
- Distinguished guests and dignitaries,
- Various artists,
- Members of the media,
- Municipal officials,
- Ladies and gentlemen,
- All protocol observed,

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## **Sanibonani!**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with pleasure that I greet you this morning. We are gathered here to bid farewell to another proudly Durban success story.

Today we send-off our own local and highly talented Acapella group Ithimba Le Afrika. This musical group will be performing at the White House in Washington this week.

EThekweni is proud of Ithimba le Afrika because it is a group of young and energetic men from uMlazi township, situated south of Durban.

I have been informed that this group started as a cast that was doing musical drama in 2008, which later transformed from drama to a gospel music group in the same year.

Ladies and gentlemen, this occasion is the beginning of an exciting journey for our young talented men. This journey is going to put our City on the global competitive music arena.

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Today we pledge our support to the continued growth of Ithimba Le Afrika. In turn, this will contribute to our propelling local music industry and the development of these young people.

We also plead to our business people, civil society and residents of eThekweni to support and rally behind Ithimba Le Afrika as they leave to showcase Durban talent to the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we are partnering with Ithimba Le Afrika in promoting our “Taking Durban to the World” tourism strategy.

I am confident that through this partnership, we will enhance the economy, attracting more events, increasing tourist arrivals and providing a global stage to showcase Durban.

Over the past 22 years, we have witnessed Durban rapidly changing as a tourist destination. There are important factors that have contributed to this phenomenal growth over the

years and this pace has accelerated in the last 6 years – since the Soccer World Cup in 2010.

Today, Durban is the leading local destination in South Africa, and we understand the importance of being a global tourism player. To this end, we are making important inroads into global awareness and recognition.

Also highly important, eThekweni is serious about the development of the creative industry sector. This sector has integrated itself within the economic landscape and its

contribution to the Gross Domestic Product has grown over the past few years.

EThekweni is increasingly gaining recognition as a creative centre, especially within the arts, culture, film and design fields, with innovation playing a major role in each sub-sector.

Programme Director, the power of music should never be underestimated. It is a powerful tool in promoting social cohesion and unity.



Our Municipality promotes arts because it is one of the instrumental drivers of social cohesion.

Plan 6 of our Integrated Development Plan encourages the introduction of interventions in the fields of arts, culture, recreation and heritage to create a socially cohesive City.

Encouraging participation in these sectors will lead to growth for both individuals and communities as well as provide major potential for income opportunities.

Ladies and gentlemen, to prove that the Durban is the recognised globally as a tourism destination of choice and events capital, our City will host the international edition of the Essence Festival from 8 to 13 November 2016.

We look forward to hosting this multi-day entertainment, empowerment and cultural festival. This festival promises to provide a platform for our business people and artists to network, gain valuable information and build relationships with international experts for locals to be globally competitive.

In closing, my message to Ithimba Le Afrika is:

**Nihambe kahle bafana bami!**

**Go and fly the Durban flag high!**

**Spread your wings and make your mark in the musical industry!**

**I am confident that this exciting journey is the beginning of many!**

**Ngiyabonga!**

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