



**Speech by eThekweni Municipality, Councillor
Mpume Sithole on the occasion of the Dialogue on
Gender Based Violence Engulfing Tertiary
Institutions at Luthuli Hall, City Hall on 21
September 2018 @ 09h00**

Programme Director.

Representatives from the Provincial Gender Machinery

Representatives from the Religious Sector

Chairperson of the Albinism Society Mr Maxwell Thabethe

Members of Civil Society

Lecturers and Officials from our neighbouring three tertiary
institutions

Honourable Guests

Students from UKZ, DUT and Mangosuthu

I greet you all.

I am Councillor Mpume Sithole standing in for Her Worship the Mayor, Councillor Zandile Gumede who could not be with us due to other official commitments. Mine is to welcome you to this dialogue. We as EThekweni Municipality are humbled by your presence. We understand that this is a very busy time at tertiary institutions but you decided to drop everything and heed our call. We fully comprehend that we alone as political leadership cannot address the social ills that we are engulfing us a country and as a city without the support and partnership with civil society and institutions like yours. We political leaders and academics share the same goal of grooming a well-rounded adult that will positively contribute to nation building. Students are our future leaders which places a huge responsibility on us to ensure that we instill morals and values in them, promote social cohesion as well as improve gender relations amongst them.

I would like to clarify the framework which informs our programmes as the City. South Africa is part of the United Nations. United Nations analysed common problems that various countries

have and came up with what was called Millennium Development Goals. These goals aimed at ensuring that the countries that are part of the United Nations work together as team in improving the lives of people with common and standard set of goals. In 2017 Millennium Development Goals were replaced by Sustainable Development Goals. From Sustainable Development Goals then there is National Development Plan. From the National Development Plan we then draft our Integrated Development plan. All these three plans from different tiers of Government have to be aligned. Today's programme is based on Sustainable Development Goals (SDP) number four, five and sixteen. SDP 4 talks about Quality Education. You as students cannot receive quality education if you are vulnerable to violence. Safety in institutions of higher learning is a primary issue. Goal five talks about Gender equality. If power relations in our society are not balanced between males and females that poses a threat on women as that puts their safety at risk. Goal sixteen talks about peace, justice and strong institutions. Currently we can't claim that peace and justice prevails in our institutions. We also can't claim that we have strong institutions. It is therefore our responsibility as signatories to the Sustainable Development Goals that we take the issue of safety in tertiary institutions as a crucial one.

After a five year period we as a country will have to report back on how far we have gone in achieving these goals. Of course we are bound by these goals, but moreover we are parents who care, we are civil society members who have an obligation to make this world a better place for the future generations. We therefore cannot wait for universities alone to come up with a strategy to fight this scourge.

Furthermore, as EThekweni Municipality our vision is to make Durban the most liveable city by 2030. For Durban to be the most liveable city we, as local government need to ensure that all our citizens are safe. We do not yet have a solution of the problems facing female students in particular, what we are doing today is a situational analysis of the safety of female students in institutions of higher learning. Currently what we know about the vulnerability of our students is what we read from the papers. Today we want to get students who experience this violence first hand to put us in the picture for us as the Municipality in partnership with the three institutions to come up with an intervention plan.

As EThekweni Municipality we understand that everyone is susceptible to violence in tertiary institutions, however today our main focus will be on violence directed at female students. We are humbled by the presence of the few males in our midst. Our approach has always been liberal when it comes to issues of gender relations. This approach challenges laws that govern the country as being oppressive than directing anger and hatred at individuals. Briefly, we embrace the good men that are in our societies and appreciate the good work that they do in changing attitudes of other men who are patriarchal in their approach.

In conclusion I would like to welcome you and wish you the best in your deliberations today.