

**ADDRESS TO COUNCIL BY CLR MONDLI GUNGUBELE,  
EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF EKURHULENI,  
GERMISTON COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 31 JULY 2014**

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Madame Speaker, Cllr Patricia Kumalo;

Chief Whip of Council; Cllr Robert Mashigo;

Members of the Mayoral Committee;

Leaders of Political Parties;

Honourable Councillors;

City Manager – Mr Khaya Ngema;

Leaders of Business;

Leaders of the Labour Movement and Organs of Civil Society;

Members of the Media;

Residents of Ekurhuleni;

***Genoeg is Genoeg*** – this is the message with which I deliberately thought I should kick-start this address. All of us have been privy to the shocking and heinous incident that left 4-year-old Taegrin Morris of Delmore Park dead.

This 'Prince of Peace' as nicknamed by the Premier of Gauteng Honourable David Makhura at the funeral on Saturday, has become synonymous with a campaign led by the Municipality and endorsed by the Province which aims to rid our communities of, among others, all forms of crime, drugs and substance abuse. Taegrin may have left us too soon but one thing is for sure; his death has marked the beginning of the transformation of Reiger Park. The community has come out in support of our campaign to drive criminals out of their area. They clearly demonstrated their commitment on Sunday when they participated in the arrest of a 24-year-old man who allegedly raped a 14-year-old girl in the area a few days ago.

***Genoeg is Genoeg*** is not only about crime and drugs, but also about the general socio-economic development of our minority communities. The Premier has made it clear that the time of overlooking minority communities when it comes to development is over. Indeed I wish to echo his sentiments and say **enough is enough**.

Our economic and social programmes must begin to incorporate all our communities. This is a government of the people and all our people must benefit from us.

## Madame Speaker

Let me share my excitement at the fact that the long awaited **Prasa/Gibela** rolling stock project is finally taking off. The project was officially launched yesterday and we can expect dust and cranes by February next year. The first train is expected to hit the rails by late 2016 if everything goes according to plan.

While we, like the rest of the country, have every reason to be concerned about the stubborn unemployment rate which has hit a six-year high at 25.5% according to Stats SA, at least as Ekurhuleni we have got something to smile about. The rolling stock project is expected to create about 30 000 direct and indirect jobs. This is a major acupuncture project which will result in a massive economic boom in the Eastern part of Ekurhuleni.

**Fact: We** are a manufacturing hub; **We** are the logistics hub; **We** are the railway hub; and **We** are home to one of the world's busiest airports – the O.R. Tambo International Airport.

The economy is about movement. It is about the connection between suppliers and customers. We have the relevant

characteristics and infrastructure. I dare say that looking at Ekurhuleni's prowess we are the future of the province and the country at large in so far as economic growth is concerned. Ours now is to demonstrate our state readiness for the **NEW** Ekurhuleni.

### **Fellow Councillors**

As I continue to be the bearer of good news, another piece of positive news to share with you is the fact that once again the Municipality's credit rating has demonstrated good and healthy financial performance. According to rating company Moody's Investor Service, the City of Ekurhuleni's credit rating reflects a *"... relatively large and diversified economic base, strong liquidity and traditionally conservative approach to financial management"*.

The report continues to reflect our historically moderate debt levels and liquidity position relative to those of rated peers. Ekurhuleni has been rated at the high end of the range of South African Metros and other municipalities at Aa3.za/P-1. Loosely translated – **we are the best**.

Madam Speaker, if you are good you are good. Allow me to share some more good news. The City of Ekurhuleni and Cape Town were recently recognized by Salga as top municipalities in terms of functionality, water quality, effluent quality, audit reports, finances and asset management – thus putting us on top of the water delivery league Charter in the country.

The National Water Services Operational Performance League is a benchmarking initiative by SALGA involving 152 Water Services Authorities. This achievement does not come as a surprise though because our City has been very consistent in terms of producing the best drinking water in the country. In this regard we have been receiving the Blue Drop Award status for four years in a row from the Department of Water Affairs. The quality of our drinking water has been hovering between 95% and 98.95% in this period.

We therefore have every reason to pride ourselves for the consistency in the provision and management of our water resources. Indeed we are doing our best for the community of Ekurhuleni.

## **Fellow Councillors**

The Metro has a vision for a high quality public transport service that will improve the lives of our people – hence the adoption of

the Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network (IRPTN) as a legacy project. The project seeks to introduce new public transport services that are reliable, safe and affordable. These must ultimately integrate new bus networks with existing bus services, and revitalize the rail network and existing mini-bus taxi routes in order to assist our commuters to move seamlessly within the Metro.

In this regard, I wish to update the house that there is great progress that has been made to date. Last Thursday myself, MEC Ishmael Vadi and MMC Thumbu Mahlangu took a tour of the construction of the first route for the BRT. We were generally satisfied with the work being done.

Thus far, a total of 10kms of Non-Motorised Transport infrastructure, which is pedestrian walkways and cyclist paths, have already been constructed in Kempton Park, Tembisa and Rondebult. Seven lay-bys for loading and offloading passengers have also been constructed along the complementary routes, providing for safer roads. We have since appointed two Contractors for the construction to the value R270 Million.

In line with our commitment to broaden municipal services to our communities, we recently opened the state of the art Zonkizizwe Fire Station. The station which is in the middle of the township cost this city about R20 million and has been well received by the people, some of whom have been victims of fire incidents in recent years. We remain steadfast in our resolve to continue rolling out government services to all our communities in Ekurhuleni.

### **Fellow Councillors**

Today marks the end of Mandela Month. I know that a lot of good work was undertaken as the whole country made an extra effort to touch the lives of the less fortunate. Credit must go to all councillors and departments for their great commitment to the course. However, I wish to remind this august house that the Mandela programme must be a year-long one because many of our people remain unemployed and live below the bread line. It was Tata himself who said: ***“We can never be free if others are still in chains.”***

As we close the curtain on Mandela Month today, tomorrow we welcome Women’s Month. August occupies a special significance

in the consciousness of our nation. It is that time of the year where we give more prominence than any other months to the resilience, courageousness and steadfastness of women - the torchbearers of our dreams and aspirations!

It is a momentous opportunity of introspection and reflection on the struggles, pain and sacrifices of the mothers of our nation. More importantly it is also an occasion to acknowledge the tenacity and celebrate the noble causes of women in politics, society and the economy.

Women have traversed a long, tortuous and very painful journey in their unwavering struggle to restore their rightful place in our society. That journey is far from over even though major advances have been made since 1994 to prioritize the interest of women and the girl child in this democratic dispensation.

This being woman's month, it is profoundly significant that we pay tribute to the extraordinary role women have played in ushering us into a democratic dispensation. As a city we have lined up various initiatives to celebrate women. These include workshops, exhibitions and campaigns. Details of these will be made available on the City's website soon.

Towards closure, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the South African Communist Party (SACP) on its 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary milestone. The **Party**, as it is popularly known in political cycles was formed in 1921 with the coming together of the International Socialist League and other underground organizations. It shot to prominence in 1922 when it led the armed rand rebellion by white mineworkers. The SACP is one of the strategic tripartite alliance partners of the ruling ANC and remains pivotal in fighting capitalist tendencies in the country. Among its members were some of the country's most respected liberation struggle stalwarts including the late President Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo, Ruth First and Chris Hani.

**In closing**, I wish to add my voice to the chorus of congratulating new Bafana Bafana coach Ephraim Shakes Mashaba on his appointment. Mashaba's understanding of local football and wealth of experience in the beautiful game could prove to be what the doctor has ordered to turn the fortunes of local football around. I wish him all the best and appeal to all us as South Africans to support him and the team going forward

***Wathint' Abafazi! Wathint' Imbokodo. I thank you***

