

**OPENING ADDRESS BY GAUTENG PREMIER AND CO-PRESIDENT OF THE METROPOLIS, DAVID MAKHURA ON THE OCCASION OF OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2018 METROPOLIS ANNUAL MEETING. SANDTON CONVENTION CENTRE, JOHANNESBURG.**

**27<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Honourable Andries Nel;  
Acting President of Metropolis and Mayor of the City of Berlin, Michael Muller and fellow Co-Presidents;  
President of the South African Local Government Association and the United Cities and Local Governments, Cllr parks Tau;  
Secretary General of the Metropolis, Mr Octavi De La Varga;  
Secretary General of the United Cities and Local Government in Africa, Mr Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi;  
Mayors and Governors of Metropolitan Cities and City-Regions;  
Members of the Gauteng Executive Council;  
Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Leaders of Business and Civil Society;  
Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen:

Sanibonani. Dumelang. Jambo. Good morning. Bonjour.

It is my distinct pleasure and singular honour to welcome you all to the Metropolis 2018 Annual Meeting held here in Gauteng province, in our beautiful country of South Africa, in the mother continent of Africa.

Welcome back home to the Cradle of Humankind. This is your place of origin.

It was at the 12<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Montreal, Canada in June 2017, where Gauteng expressed a keen interest to host the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Metropolis in Johannesburg, on behalf of Africa. This the second Metropolis Meeting to take place in South Africa. The first one was hosted by President Parks Tau when he was the Mayor of Johannesburg in 2013.

We have come together as the mayors and governors of some of the world's largest metropolitan local and regional governments to explore ways and share experiences on how to build 'inclusive metropolitan cities and city-regions'.

We come Asia, the Middle East, Europe, North America and South America. Major African cities and regions are also very well represented.

Why is this meeting of mayors and governors of large metropolitan cities and urban regions is of paramount importance for the future of humankind?

There are three reasons.

The first reason is that we live in a time in which **rapid urbanisation is one the dominant mega trends** of this century.

More than **fifty per cent of the world population** – translating into more than half of the global population – live in cities. Already, 60% of South Africans live in cities.

By 2050, 70% of the world's population will live in cities and urban regions. Most (90%) of this rapid urbanisation will be taking place in Africa and Asia. Already, 60% of South Africa's population live in cities.

It is therefore important that cities and city-regions prepare properly to think about the implications and consequences of the **rapid urbanisation** on the quality of life citizens and the quality of governance that will be required. I will return to this matter later.

The second reason why this meeting leaders of major cities and city-regions is important is that **cities and city-regions have also become the major engines of the global and national economies**. Today, cities account for 80% of the global GDP. Cities and city-regions have assumed greater significance in the structural transformation of most national economies.

The 2018 State of the African Cities Report makes a poignant point that among the many factors that influence the geography of investment such as sound financial markets, open trade, mobile phone subscriptions, internet bandwidth and reliable supply of electricity, large urban population and agglomeration is the most significant in attracting foreign direct investment.

All cities and city-regions need to understand the economic geography of investment and undertake deliberate planning to enhance their attractiveness as hubs of inclusive growth, innovation, productivity, connectivity, employment, cultural diversity, knowledge and infrastructure.

The third reason behind the behind the significance of this Metropolis Annual Meeting has to do with the theme of inclusive cities and city-regions.

Why did we have choose the theme of ‘inclusion, inclusivity and inclusiveness’?

We certainly also meet in an era of great exclusions and rising inequality. While urbanisation offers city residents opportunity for a better life, many cities and city-regions have become spaces that also feature violent crime; urban poverty and hunger; lack of security of tenure; acute inequality between the rich and poor; economic marginalisation of the majority; spatial exclusion and injustice on the basis of race, gender, age, class, religion and place of origin.

As leaders of sub-national governments at city and regional level, we have to choose whether we want to build cities and city-regions characterised by the twin evils fear and hatred as well as exclusion and inequality or we want to build cities that embrace inclusivity, equity and diversity.

We have a responsibility turn our cities and city-regions into hubs of inclusive growth and sustainable development which offer a good quality of life to citizens.

We in Africa and Asia have a particularly daunting task to ensure that cities take the centre stage in the structural transformation of Africa. The urban promise of a better life can be realised in Africa.

## **INCLUSIVE CITIES AND CITY-REGIONS ARE PART OF THE DREAM FOR A BETTER AFRICA AND BETTER WORLD**

Africa can only realise its full potential if African leaders understand and support the growth of African cities and their potential contribution to Africa’s transformation, modernisation and industrialisation.

It is important to place cities as the main locomotives of the regeneration, renewal and sustainable development of Africa.

The African Union Agenda 2063, The Africa We Want, will only be realized if local and regional governments are well-governed and thriving centers of innovation and industrialization.

This Metropolis Annual Meeting will give African cities and city-regions an opportunity to influence global dialogue important issues such as the New Urban Agenda and Africa's unique form of urbanisation; rapid technological change and Africa's prospects in the fourth industrial revolution; youth and women empowerment; access to quality education and health; as well as the need for localisation of the sustainable development goals.

African Cities and urban centres attract mainly those that are better educated, creative, innovative, entrepreneurial, ambitious, impatient and youthful. It is this energy and impatience of city dwellers which makes the work of governing the city more difficult.

Sub-Saharan Africa is undergoing the largest wave of urban growth in history. Since the beginning of the century, Sub-Saharan Africa's urban population grew by more than 200 million people. Today 430 million people or 38% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa lives in cities.

We also know that Africa's population is expected to reach 2 billion people by 2050; 70% of which will be below the age of 30 and an overwhelming majority of which will be living in cities. Our current reality is that Africa's cities are becoming dynamic urban centres of new innovations, smart industrialisation and entrepreneurship.

These cities and mega cities are driving Africa's new industrial revolution; that is clean, green and ecologically sustainable. They are leading the charge towards the kind of Africa we want; an Africa rising together with her people.

Scholars of urban ecosystems would agree that the key driver of urban migration is the urban promise – the promise of a better life offered by cities and urban ecosystems of agglomeration of consumers, cluster of firms, skilled labour, infrastructure, innovation and opportunities.

Urbanisation brings opportunities that need to be harnessed and challenges that need to be overcome. Without effective planning and provision of adequate infrastructure, the urban promise can turn into a nightmare of urban squalor, poverty, inequality and crime, the common features of many urban centres in the developing world.

The "Africa Rising" narrative has focused narrowly on two issues the size of the African middle class and the GDP growth of the fastest growing economies on our continent. The Urban Transition as a transformative

force and the potential role of African cities have not been appreciated and appraised.

I have been an outspoken critic of the “Africa Rising” narrative because it undermines the role of African cities in Africa’s structural transformation, regeneration and renewal.

If it is true that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the African century as argued by former President Thabo Mbeki, then this African century will be made possible through a distinct contribution of a critical mass of African cities which are becoming growth points and economic development nodes of different regions of the continent.

Ladies and gentlemen, we live in a time in which African cities are also trying to assert their role in shaping the destiny of our continent. From Cape to Cairo; Accra to Addis Ababa; Lagos to Luanda; Abidjan to eThekweni; Libreville to Dar eSalaam; Nairobi to Maputo; Kigali to Windhoek; Johannesburg to Juba; Tunis to Tshwane; Gaborone to Rabat; Kinshasa to Conakry; Khartoum to Kampala; Brazzaville to Bamako; the streets of our cities are buzzing with hope, innovation, ambition, diversity and entrepreneurship.

These African cities are not only economic entities, they are also dynamic cultural and intellectual spaces which have a huge potential to promote social cohesion and social integration amongst the diverse Afropolitans.

African cities and regional governments must fight for their space in the African body politic. They must be well organised and well governed. We need strong and ethical leadership in our regional and city governments. They need constitutional powers and a sustainable source of funding.

We have to deal with the challenge of inadequate infrastructure, poor urban planning, financial viability and environmental sustainability of our cities.

We know that African cities are playing a national role in managing the challenges and urbanisation and yet, they are not adequately funded in line with their contribution to the GDP of their countries.

For African cities to offer opportunities to citizens, they have to be well funded and well governed so that they don’t turn into slums and hubs of

crime, unemployment, inequality, informality, environmental degradation and urban poverty.

In particular, African capital cities and city regions need to be at the centre of shaping a uniquely African New Urban Agenda. They have to localise and give practical contextual meaning to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

## **THE CHALLENGES OF URBANISATION IN THE GAUTENG CITY REGION**

The Gauteng City-Region represents the best promise and the worst problems of urbanisation in Africa. Gauteng province contributes more than one-third to South Africa's GDP and is the seventh largest economy in Africa and is a City-Region with world-class infrastructure, rich cultural diversity, vibrant youthful population and its crowded streets are humming with business.

We also have our own great exclusions that we are struggling to overcome. The legacy of apartheid spatial planning, the economic marginalisation of Black people and social exclusion of women and youth are some of the realities that face city and regional governors on a daily basis as we strive to construct a new post-apartheid society.

The collapse of apartheid has tripled the rate of urban migration. Gauteng has to contend with the reality that more than 200 000 people move into our province every year. This places enormous pressure on municipalities and provincial government departments in terms of service delivery and infrastructure development, with particular reference to education, healthcare and housing.

As the most industrialised city region in Sub-Saharan Africa, Gauteng has all the hallmarks of urban ecosystems in the developing world. Although we have invested lots of resources in infrastructure, the backlog remains huge due to rapid urbanisation.

For instance, despite the fact that we have built more than 1.2 million houses (30% of the national housing stock) since 1994, we are back to the backlog of 1 million houses.

This requires that significant investment in the maintenance of infrastructure and development of new one through what we call mega

infrastructure projects in housing, public transport, water, energy, sanitation, broadband, industrial parks, schools and health facilities.

Our cities are major drivers of growth and employment in our national economy. For instance the City of Joburg contributes 15% to national GDP, Tshwane 9% and Ekurhuleni 7%. Our province is home to 24% of South Africa's population.

Our vision remains that of building Gauteng into an integrated, inclusive and globally competitive City Region; a smart province with an innovation-driven and knowledge-based economy fuelled by ecologically sustainable industries; an activist, accountable, responsive and clean government and an active citizenry.

Let us join many progressive national, regional and city governments of the world to drive an agenda for an inclusive, sustainable and equitable future.

## **Conclusion**

Let me conclude by talking about Nelson Mandela's dream for a better Africa and a better world.

Ladies and gentlemen, It is not a mistake that this Annual Meeting takes place here in the country and continent of President Nelson Mandela, in a year when the world celebrates his centenary.

As Africans and progressive people of the world, we are proud to be the children of Nelson Mandela and the custodians of his proud and enduring legacy and to share it with the rest of the world.

It was Nelson Mandela himself who said the following in his 1998 farewell speech to the United Nations General Assembly:

*I will continue to hope that Africa's Renaissance will strike deep roots and blossom forever, without regard to the changing seasons. Were all these hopes to translate into a realisable dream and not a nightmare to torment the soul of the aged, then will I, indeed, have peace and tranquillity. Then would history and billions throughout the world proclaim that it was right that we dreamt and that we toiled to give life to a workable dream."*

Our commitment to build more inclusive and sustainable cities and city-regions is a dedication to the spirit of Nelson Mandela.

We will succeed in building inclusive cities and societies where, to borrow Nelson Mandela's words, no one is denied freedom; no one is turned into a refugee; no one is condemned to go hungry and no one is stripped of their human dignity.

When others choose exclusion and marginalisation of Black people, women, youth, LGBTI, hatred of migrants, we choose cities that embrace inclusivity, diversity and sustainability.

I wish the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Metropolis success on this path.

Thank you. Merci buku. Asante sana. Rho livhuwa. Ha khensa swinene.