



United Cities and Local Governments
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis
Ciudades y Gobiernos Locales Unidos



MAYORS DRAFT SPEECH:

Prepared for eThekweni Mayor, Hon Cllr James Nxumalo

The Mayor will be responsible for presenting a short WELCOME ADDRESS at the UCLG Urban Strategic Planning Commission's international learning exchange. His input should be around TEN minutes and should set the scene for the three day learning exchange.

Also attached is the latest programme, AND a copy of delegates who have been invited, so that the Mayor could acknowledge delegates (which we have already in the speech), and get a sense of who is attending.

Can start reading or talking from this point onwards) – as the mayor prefers (and can change as required).....

Programme Director, Honourable Mayors, Councillors, Representatives from the UCLG and UCLGA, Metropolis, CEO of SALGA, officials from the AFD, Cities Alliance, the World Bank, United Nations, SACN and International Networks, members of the donor community, local government associations, agencies, and development practitioners, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to extend a very warm welcome from eThekweni Municipality and the City of Durban to everyone present.

It is indeed a proud and humbling moment for my City to host such a conference and may I add an event that will always be special to me as its one of my very first mayoral duties (not so much a duty but a pleasure to me) since my inauguration one week ago.

Cities all over the world are increasingly being recognised for the role they play in creating jobs, places for doing business, access to housing opportunities, services, health, transport, culture and learning just to mention a few import functions of cities. Apart from the formal role of cities, cities also offer invisible spaces and hidden opportunities, for the poor, the disenfranchised and the hopeful.

It is also a now a well recognised fact that urbanization is particularly evident in cities in Africa, Latin America and Asia. This phenomenal growth in urbanization is accompanied by various opportunities and challenges, climate change and associated disasters, growing informality, unemployment, lack of basic services. Cities also offer spaces, services and thresholds for small medium and micro enterprises, tourism, industry, headquarters for corporates and big multinationals, growth and diversity opportunities just to mention a few.

It is in this context that an organization like United Cities for Local Government (UCLG) and UCLGA (United Cities for Local Government Africa) are important unifying voices and representation of local government and its people.

The UCLG's **members represent over half of the world's total population. UCLG has membership from over a 1000 cities** across 95 countries. 112 Local Government Associations (LGAs) are members of UCLG, representing almost every existing LGA in the world.

This learning exchange on Strategic Planning “fostering learning of the global south” is the work undertaken by a sub-commission of UCLG - The Urban Strategic Planning Commission. This Commission responds to the growing need of creating spaces for policy direction, discussion, exchange, partnerships and mentoring. The Committee on Strategic Urban Planning is chaired by Miguel Lifschitz, Mayor of Rosario and the Deputy Chair: Dr Sutcliffe – City Manager of eThekweni. To the Committee and Chairpersons - congratulations on making this event possible.

For those delegates who may not be familiar with the work of the UCLG - Urban Strategic Planning Commission it focuses on :

- Strategically positioning cities in the global planning agenda.
- Specifically it promotes powers and resources and tools to enable effective and efficient decentralized local government.
- To date it has published a key resource – the Policy Paper on Urban Strategic Planning that was adopted by the UCLG world bodies during the congress in Mexico in December last year .
- Support several strategic planning initiatives for various Cities, exchange events like this one and mentoring initiatives between cities and local government associations.

It is my view that never in the history of the world is strategic planning as important as it is today, given the key challenges such as climate change and urban sustainability, our global financial meltdown, service delivery backlogs especially in the developing world, etc.

Urban Strategic Planning is a key tool that can help us envision a more sustainable future and allow us to design realistic and implementable plans to get there over short and long term time horizons.

I want to use this opportunity today to make the case for strong political leadership in cities to champion urban planning. If you look at successful cities like Curitiba, Porto Alegre; Rosario, Medellin, Vancouver, Bergen, or Casablanca to mention a few. The role of the Mayor has been instrumental in providing direction, vision and leadership. Let these outstanding examples of political leadership and commitment influence Africa. As politicians **YES WE CAN think and commit to longer term plans beyond the duration of our elected term** to safe guard the future for many generations to come. In eThekweni we also look well in advance to the mandatory 5 year plans, we have our Long Term Development Plan - created through the process and power of Imagining Durban in 2060.

As the previous Speaker in the eThekweni Metro Council, I have championed the strategic planning process that we call Integrated Development Planning or IDPs in South Africa. It is my understanding from practice that a key ingredient to the success or failure in planning and implementing a strategic plan revolves around vision, commitment, inclusivity and transparency, some of the themes and experiences you will be exploring in the learning event over the next 3 days!.

I am particularly encouraged about the theme of the event: which focuses on collaboration in the global south

You will all no doubt be aware of our government's partnership with BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA and CHINA... this is an important emerging economic bloc that has already become a force to be reckoned with. You will notice the presence of many Brazillian cities at this learning event. This is not because they just like Durban and here to witness the remarkable infrastructure we put in to host the 2010 World Cup, but because of the rich lessons the Brazilian Cities offer. Brazil is one of the first countries to achieve some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as housing, transport, poverty alleviation (it has incorporated 40 million Brazilians citizens that were poor). And now as cities, it is up to us to follow suite, and rather than compete, to collaborate and cooperate.

It is in this context that as the Mayor I am also pleased to announce and acknowledge the Municipal Institute of Learning – MILE, which is a model of sharing and learning between practioners by practioners (as a city despite our constraints on resources we think it's important we keep our city open for sharing and learning) and MILE is one such initiative. We are committed to the

process of city mentorships and mutual learning and technical support. We are pleased to announce our partnership with Mzuzu City Council who eThekweni will be assisting in preparing their strategic vision. I remain hopeful that after this event we will have more of such partnerships.

I wish you all the best in your deliberations and hope you can join us tonight at the MAYORAL CIVIC RECEPTION which will take place at the Moses Mabhida Stadium.