



**Opening Remarks and Scene setting during Habitat III
Urban Breakfast, “*Cities for the People*”
by Her Worship, Cllr Zandile Gumede, Mayor of
eThekweni Municipality**

**05 October 2016
Moses Mabhida Stadium**

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- Programme Director and Moderator of the session;
 - UN Habitat and Habitat 3 Secretariat;
 - Chairperson of Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Human Settlement, Honourable Ms Noncawe Mafu;
 - MEC for Local Government and Traditional Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal, Mrs Nomusa Dube-Ncube;
 - Speaker of the Council and Members of the Executive Committee;
 - Fellow Councillors;
 - Deputy Director General from the Department of Human Settlement;
 - City Manager and all government managers present;
 - Representatives from the business community;
 - Representatives from academia;
 - Organised civil society;
 - Distinguished guests;
 - Members of the media;
 - All protocol observed;

On behalf of the City of Durban, I would like to take some time to reflect on the work that has been done in the context of global and continental development agenda.

Through such a reflective process I could not help noting our contribution to the Habitat 3 process within our continent.

Ladies and gentlemen, our Municipality has participated in two Habitat 3 Thematic Sessions – on Abuja, capital city of Nigeria and Pretoria. During these sessions, we made our input especially around safer cities.

Both these sessions allowed us to reflect on our mandate as local government and advocate for improved support to local government since we are the sphere of government that is closest to the people.

I am positive that MEC Dube-Ncube concurs with me that, if people talk of experience with government, they are most likely to be talking about their experience with local government.

It is therefore very important that local government gets actively involved in the development of global, regional and national development commitments and frameworks since these find expression in local space.

Programme Director, This City has been actively involved in national, regional and global space and we will continue to do this. During our inaugural address, I emphasised providing leadership within our City, nationally and globally.

In this regard, we shall continue using our responsibility as Co-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); and Chair of African Forum for Urban Safety (AFUS) to develop capabilities in local government and advocate for improved support.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the end of June 2016, the Municipality in partnership with UN Habitat supported by United Cities and Local Governments in Africa (UCLGA) and national Department of Human Settlements hosted the first African Forum for Urban Safety Learning Exchange.

The learning exchange reviewed lessons from Safer Cities practice as a contribution towards attaining the African Union Vision 2063; and the newly endorsed United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We focused particularly on goal 11 which ***aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable***. Furthermore, this conference was part of the participatory process to Habitat 3 taking place in Quito, Ecuador in about a week from now.

Three weeks ago, we hosted close to one thousand city and regional planners during the 52nd Congress of City and Regional Planners. The theme of the Congress was, "***Cities we have versus the Cities we need***". The congress allowed us to critically look at the draft New Urban Agenda. The inherent question we asked was, *are we developing the cities to address the needs or are we developing the cities to address the wants?*

We are convinced that urbanisation does not only present challenges but it offers us an opportunity to do things differently.

If one looks at the proposals contained in the draft New Urban Agenda which shall become a global framework for urban development post Quito, one only realise that Back to Basics becomes more important. I have looked at the following Habitat 3 issue papers:

- Urban Governance,
- Inclusive cities, and
- Local Economic Development.

Ladies and gentlemen, these three papers talk directly to the points I raised during my inauguration which continues to be very important for our City.

The issue of good, people-centred governance, transparency and accountability are elevated as the foundation for service delivery. Of course there is a need to be inclusive.

Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Human Settlement, Ms Noncawe Mafu, we have carefully considered the theme of this Urban Breakfast, having looked at other Breakfasts held in different cities of the world and on African soil. This Monday, the Urban Breakfast in Lilongwe City Assembly in Malawi focussed on financing urban development.

We then decided that the theme, "***Cities for the People***", offer us an inclusive approach to development since it looks at amongst other things:

- Compact City,
- Walkable and connected City, and
- Mixed use of properties.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my sincere hope that we shall use this Breakfast to openly discuss and debate the Draft New Urban Agenda as we finally prepare for Habitat 3 Conference in Quito.

We will also look at how we are going to lead localisation of the SDG and the New Urban Agenda within our own policy and practice environment.

I would like to conclude by quoting Dr Nelson Mandela from the speech he delivered during the 2005 Make Poverty History Rally when he said, "***Do not look the other way, do not hesitate, recognise that the world is hungry for actions not words, act with courage and vision***".

We too, ladies and gentlemen, have a responsibility to act with courage and vision. With those few words, I welcome you to this Urban Breakfast.

Ngiyabonga kakhulu!