EXCO REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR MXOLISI KAUNDA, 14 MARCH 2023

- Speaker of Council
- Deputy Mayor
- Whip of Council
- Chairperson of Portfolio Committees
- EXCO Members
- City Manager and Senior Management
- Members of the Media

Good afternoon

It is a distinct honour to be part of today's meeting. We wish to extend the warmest welcome to everyone.

Firstly, we want to express our thanks and appreciated to all the stakeholders who participated in the successful eThekwini Energy Transformation Summit hosted at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli ICC from the

1st to the 2nd of March. This important gathering brought together key players in the energy sector including business, investors, academia, civil society organisations and government.

Tasked with finding environmentally sustainable ways of securing energy supply for the city and charting a roadmap for meaningful transformation of the energy sector, the summit provided a platform for both the private sector and government to explore areas of partnership.

As the leadership of the city, our position is clear and is in line with our vision to create an enabling environment for all our residents to actively participate in the economy of the city.

Therefore, it is our view that resolutions taken at the eThekwini Energy Transformation Summit, not only address the energy supply challenges, but also create much-needed business and employment opportunities for the city and province. We have no doubt that if we all work together and focus on a common goal of making a better life for all, eThekwini will be a shining example for the whole country.

Ladies and gentlemen, eThekwini Municipality remains one of the main contributors to the high HIV/AIDS and TB prevalence in the province. Since both these diseases are preventable, we continue to seek new ways and strategies to create awareness about prevention and treatment.

During a recent eThekwini District AIDS Council meeting chaired by the mayor, we learned that the issue of teenage pregnancy and Gender-Based Violence continue to contribute to the spread of HIV. We want to strengthen our educational campaigns encouraging young people to make wise choices and empowering them with information that promotes healthy lifestyles.

Colleagues, we must state that we are worried about the criminal gangs that hijack and rob health workers who are in the forefront of the HIV/AIDS fight. Criminals seem to have identified some of these dedicated health workers as easy targets and they threaten to disrupt our efforts to defeat HIV/AIDS. We would like to plead with councilors, community activists and police to work with us to address this issue.

Lastly, having become a signatory in January this year of the “Fast-Track Cities Sevilla Declaration on the Centrality of Communities in Urban HIV Responses”, we joined other world cities in the commitment to end HIV by 2030. However, we must emphasise that in order to achieve this goal, we need everyone to play their part and commit to making a meaningful contribution towards an AIDS-free generation.

Ladies and gentlemen, our Siyahlola Campaign is key in ensuring we are able to account for the service delivery promises we make to our people. Therefore, we will continue to visit projects and sites where the city has committed resources to make sure the residents get value for money.

Since March is National Water Month, we will be spending more time in assessing the progress on water and sanitation infrastructure projects that are currently being implemented by the municipality. While we are repairing and upgrading this infrastructure, we urge our residents to play their part in conserving water and report burst pipes or water leaks as well as illegal connections.

With these remarks, let me welcome you all to this meeting and we look forward to a constructive engagement.

I thank you