ADDRESS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR MXOLISI KAUNDA DURING THE WELCOMING OF ZAKES BANTWINI AT THE KING SHAKA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 16 FEBRUARY 2023

- Programme Director, Mapule Ngobese
- Member of the Executive Committee and Chairperson of ECOD, Cllr Thembo Ntuli
- All Councillors Present
- The leadership of the Cultural and Creative Industries Federation of South Africa
- Our hero, Zakes Bantwini
- All Creatives Present
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon

Today we stand here beaming excitement and delight as we welcome home the Grammy Award winning musical genius and producer extraordinaire Zakhele “Zakes Bantwini” Madida.

Zakhele, Nomcebo Zikode and Wouter Keller made us proud when they scooped the award for the Best Global Music Performance in the Global Music category for their hit *Bayethe* two week ago in Los Angeles.

Their win comes hot on heels of another historic win by another son of the Province and our City Nathi “Black Coffee” Maphumulo who won his first ever Grammy in the Best Dance/Electronic Album category last year.

As the City of Durban, we are proud that the trio is following on the footsteps of another KwaZulu-Natal all-male choral group, Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

Performing since 1960, the group has racked up 16 Grammy Award nominations - going on to clinch the trophy five times.

Councillor Ntuli and the CCIFSA we can’t over emphasise the importance of recognizing and rewarding our performing artists while they are still alive. On Friday night we witnessed the senseless killing of the South African rapper Kiernan “AKA” Forbes and his friend Tebello 'Tibz'

Motsoane while they were outside a popular Durban restaurant on Florida Road.

We call on the law enforcement agencies to speed up the investigation and bring those responsible to book. We also retaliate our call on community members who might have witnessed the incident to come forward and share the information with the police.

The inhuman killing of AKA and Tibz in our popular nightlife street should not deter people from visiting Florida Road as we have beefed up the presence of the police in the area.

Programme Director, freedom of our residents is threatened each time a person is killed or robbed. We implore the police to be firm and to act decisively in rooting out rouge elements that are behind the killing of innocent people.

Once again, we want to take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Forbes and the Motsoane families, friends, and fans

for this great loss. Our thoughts are with the Forbes and the Motsoane families during this difficult time.

Coming back to today's business, we want to say that this win is not only for us as South Africans, but the entire African continent. What is even more exciting is that the two from the winning trio are born and raised in our beautiful city of Durban.

We are delighted that our very own are recognized at Global stage. This will inspire many young and upcoming artist to excel in this field.

As government, we continue to recognise the importance of arts and culture not only in promoting unity and social cohesion in our communities, but also in growing our economy and creating jobs. It is for this reason that we have formed a strong partnership with the creative industry in eThekwini and we have developed a joint programme to support and grow the sector.

Once again, let me congratulate you and wish you all the best in your music career.

I thank you!