

ADDRESS BY CLR MONDLI GUNGUBELE, EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF EKURHULENI, AT THE ORDINARY SITTING OF COUNCIL, GERMISTON COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 31 January 2012

DELIVERY OF THE SPEECH

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam Speaker, Clr Patricia Kumalo

Chief Whip of Council, Clr Robert Mashego

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Chairpersons of various Council Committees

Leader of the Opposition

Leaders of other Political Parties

Honourable Fellow Councillors

City Manager, Mr Khaya Ngema and our Senior Management Team

The Leadership of Business and Trade Unions SAMWU and IMATU

Leaders and Representatives of Broader Civil Society

Residents of Ekurhuleni

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let me start by offering our sincere apologies to this Honourable Council for our role in the rescheduling of this sitting from the initially planned date of January 26th to today. The circumstances that necessitated the postponement were beyond our control. Going forward, we are determined that similar situations will be handled differently. I do wish to place on record, though, the view that it would be unreasonable to rule out completely the possibility we could still come to Council to make similar requests. In such cases we know we can continue to count on the maturity, goodwill and understanding of members of this Council.

Next let me congratulate Madam Speaker and the leadership of this Council on the filling of critical positions, especially that of Secretary of Council. In this regard, I wish to welcome Ms Manana Moloi and her colleagues to the family of Ekurhuleni. Personally, I am versed with Ms Moloi's skills, experience and expertise; which is why I have not the slightest doubt that with her in charge our experimentation with the Separation of Powers system is in capable hands.

Madam Speaker;

I now wish to align myself with your tribute to the Class of 2011 and, specifically, the learners, educators and administrators of schools in our metropolitan area, who have performed extremely well. Indeed, they have made us proud, all of them without exception. To this end, this year we have decided to assist one hundred and ten students access higher education and training. Twenty-seven of them will be entering higher education for the first time, and the rest are spread across the second to the fourth years of study.

Amongst the schools in attendance at this Council, as well as those not here, there are certain cases that stand out and warrant singling out. Here I have in mind

Zitikeeni Secondary School in Tembisa, which in 2011 was the best performing of all priority schools in Gauteng.

Katlehong High School is another, for it was this same school that only two years ago was one of the worst performing in Gauteng, with a pass rate of 39%. During 2011, the school achieved a 75% Grade 12 pass rate, making it one of the top five performing priority secondary schools in the region.

Balmoral College in Boksburg has produced an inspirational story for us in 2011. The school provided an enabling learning environment for Tino Sibanda, who achieved six distinctions in subjects that included Maths and Science. Tino has no parents – his father passed away in 2007, and he was abandoned by his mother. In order to achieve as he did, he had to overcome many challenges and unfavourable living conditions. He was always at school on time, and even tutored other learners in Mathematics and Science.

And then there is Benoni High School, which achieved a 100% Grade 12 pass rate in 2011. That was the 38th year in a row that the school had done so. That achievement is not the only thing that makes Benoni High School stand out. Today, I wish only to cite two other reasons.

Firstly, Benoni High is the only school in South Africa, and one of only four in Africa, that enjoys the prestigious Oxbridge accreditation. Secondly, the School literally lives by the saying 'a healthy mind in a healthy body'. As a result, the school is as much an achiever on the sporting field as it is in the classroom.

The achievements of the School can be attributed to its leadership, and in particular its current headmaster. Earlier this year, we had occasion to pay the School a visit, and in the process were impressed at the commitment to quality and excellence that this son of the soil continues to demonstrate. His influence goes beyond the school premises, onto the surrounding communities. As a Municipality, we are proud to be associated with this patriot, and as Executive Mayor I have no qualms in paying tribute to Mr Jake Ceronio, who while a member of this Council, occupied the Opposition benches.

The role that Jake Ceronio plays in education resonates with that of the founding President-General of the South African Native National Congress, the precursor to the African National Congress, the Rev Dr John Langalibalele Dube. If you Googled him, you will find that Wikipedia says of him, he was a "South African essayist, philosopher, educator, politician, publisher, editor, novelist and poet".

Dube founded the Ohlange High School in 1901. A highly accomplished individual in his own right, during his life the Rev Dr Dube interacted with such internationally renowned heavy hitters as Mahatma Ghandi and the American author, Booker T. Washington. As a result of his incredible energy and industriousness, Dube earned the nickname Mafukuzela. Yet, his guiding principle in life was to 'hasten slowly'. Many in the current generation can do themselves a huge favour by learning from this approach to life.

Prominent former pupils of the Ohlange High School include former Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Councillors;

We have been trying our best to 'hasten slowly' since our electoral mandate was renewed in May 2011. As such, we are today tabling three reports for the scrutiny of the Council and our people in communities because they constitute a record of progress in improving their lives.

The first of these reports is our mid-year performance review.

The report demonstrates clearly that our people are continuing to derive economic benefit from initiatives of the Municipality. For instance, in the first six months of the current financial year, we have created more than three thousand jobs, established twenty-five successful and sustainable SMMEs, and established another twenty-five cooperatives through the Cooperatives Incentive Scheme. 172 young people have been placed on learnerships through our initiatives.

Our efforts for the broadening of access to facilities continue to bear fruit. As a result of these, 100% of targeted business points, households in formal areas, households in informal areas and indigent households have access to a basic level of refuse removal. 4 650 of new electrical supply connections to previously un-serviced areas have been completed. 43 052 indigent households have benefited from an additional 3kl of water and sanitation.

Soon we shall be tabling a draft Informal Settlements Management Plan for adoption by this Council. The Plan sets out targets and timeframes for the relocation, upgrading or servicing of informal settlements across the metro. It is against provisions of the Plan that in the past six months, five of the prioritized informal settlements were provided with access to sustainable and cost-effective basic water service.

14 646 people who were diagnosed HIV positive in the past six months have been initiated on the Metro's Antiretroviral Therapy programme. We have constructed three new health facilities. Five hundred rental housing units have been completed, adding to the stock in the management of our Ekurhuleni Development Company. Virtually all 740 houses that were damaged as a result of the tornado that hit Duduza in October 2011 have been repaired, and the ones that were razed to the ground have been rebuilt.

The EMPD has conducted 391 operations jointly with the SAPS, and 359 targeted operations on its own.

The greening of Ekurhuleni is underway, as a result of which we have planted 10 000 trees in the past six months.

Thirty-five of our libraries have introduced services that support the visually impaired, and we are on course to extend the service in all. In addition, all our libraries have internet access, which communities have access to.

In line with the commitment made on 24 November 2011, we have successfully convened Mayoral Imbizo sessions in nineteen of the twenty Customer Care Areas of the Metro. The one Mayoral Imbizo was called off due to poor attendance. The Mayoral Imbizo programme has further highlighted the need for us to look at other, innovative ways of ensuring active public participation in and feedback on the Municipality's activities.

This year we shall be intensifying our Service Delivery Fridays programme, through which we have thus far managed to determine situations with potential to fester due to unhappiness with service delivery-related grievances.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Councillors;

The second report we are tabling pertains to the proposed adjustment budgets. We table this report in line with Section 28 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, which provides that we should do so after undergoing rigorous analysis and assessment of spending thus far. We have followed the requisite guidelines and reviewed plans towards successful implementation of the SDBIP by financial year end. Where necessary, we have revised priorities.

The third report we are tabling is the one about which the Office of the Auditor-General has already addressed this Council – the audit report of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality for the 2010/2011 financial year.

It is now public knowledge, and it gives me great pleasure to report that once again we have received a clean bill of financial health from the Auditor-General for the 2010/2011 financial year. This unqualified audit opinion contains certain matters of emphasis though. These revolve around Supply Chain Management lapses, ICT and Human Resources-related concerns, few housekeeping issues in respect of performance, as well as long-term liquidity concerns due to water and electricity losses, as well as high debt being written off.

It suffices to report that the Mayoral Committee has directed the senior management of the City to come up with a comprehensive plan that not only

responds to these matters of emphasis, but also sets timeframes by which we anticipate to have resolved them.

Madam Speaker;

There is an African proverb that goes “until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter’.

I am recalling this proverb because I now wish to go back to the organisation of the Rev Dr JL Dube, which turned a hundred years old on 8 January 2012: the party which became the leadership of choice of all South Africans in their struggle to rid the country of apartheid. As we recall the hundred years of the ANC’s existence, it is apt that we accept and acknowledge the role played by other organisations over the years in giving meaning and character to the centennial celebrations.

This past Friday, 27 January 2012, UNISA Deputy Registrar, Prof Tinyiko Maluleke opined that the history of the ANC would be incomplete if it did not incorporate that of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and the broad Black Consciousness Movement. I would like to add to the list a broad spectrum of church and other religious formations, human rights organisations, traditional leaders, the Black Sash and many women’s organisations, trade unions and the civic movement. The important point to remember is that many of these formations were constituted of white, freedom-loving South Africans, and their commitment to a just and free society was never in doubt.

As we celebrate hundred years of unbroken struggles for freedom and equality, it is important to express heartfelt gratitude to all without exception who contributed to this eventuality, regardless of the magnitude of their contribution.

Madam Speaker,

It is the most enduring ideals of brotherhood and sisterhood that have accounted for the ANC surviving to become the oldest and most resilient liberation movement on the African continent. Those ideals are contained in its historic mission.

The ANC was founded primarily to defend and advance the rights of the African people in particular, and all South Africans in general. In the course of fulfilling this historic aim, the ANC emerged to lead the struggle of all democratic and patriotic forces to destroy the apartheid state and replace it with a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. The construction of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society in South Africa remains, to this day, our fundamental goal.

It is no surprise that the historic mission and fundamental goal of our people's struggle have found their way into the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, arguably one of the world's best constitutions.

Membership of the ANC has and continues to be voluntary. During the darkest apartheid days, they joined because of their commitment to the course of liberation, not because they stood to benefit. To this end, the ANC did not lead the anti-apartheid struggle in order that its card-carrying members would loot the coffers of the state. With all that in mind, therefore, I believe Honourable

Councillors share my viewpoint that fraud, corruption, maladministration, nepotism and related maladies are un-ANC phenomena. These practices should be scorned at because they go against hundred years of the struggle for equality, human rights and defence of the defenceless.

As we drive the point home, let us agree that fraud and corruption are symptoms of a system characterised by lawlessness. By its very nature, lawlessness can only result in the law of the jungle, where only the fittest survive. So, if we turn a blind eye to these downright criminal activities, we are effectively laying a fertile ground to the end of civilisation as we know it. We dare not waiver in our endeavours to fight and conquer these maladies.

The leaders who gathered in that church in Waaihoek in 1912 to found the SANNC were an advanced detachment that enjoyed the respect of their peers. They set the tone for a leadership that over an entire century has been guided by very simple ideals that include humility and humanity. They founded the ANC under conditions of oppression, discrimination and relative deprivation. Yet, they projected a future society in which all enjoyed equal rights.

Organisationally, it was not always smooth sailing though. Over the years, the ANC endured internal strife, and underwent trials and tribulations. It experienced division, instability, dishonesty, infiltration and betrayal. Some of its best minds walked out when they could not align themselves to its dynamic nature and the changes it was undergoing, as did Robert Sobukwe and his followers in the late 1950s, who went on to form the PAC. The membership of some, notably Tennyson Makiwane and his Gang of Eight, was terminated due to irreconcilable differences.

For the greater part though, the 100 year-old ANC has been a very proud movement; a trailblazer and a beacon of hope and prosperity for all humanity.

The ANC of JL Dube epitomised unity, peace, humility and internationalism. Dube's humility and commitment to unity of the organisation can best be attributed to the fact that when he was not re-elected President-General in 1917, he did not break away to form his own organisation. Instead, he accepted the lesser role of President of the ANC in then Natal.

As I have already said, JL Dube saw the value of interacting with international figures very early on. He shared Mahatma Gandhi's moderate stance to fighting injustice. He founded the Ohlange Institute following a visit to the United States and meeting with Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. That visit and meeting made him buy into the educational vision that centred on empowerment of the individual learner.

Madam Speaker and Honourable Councillors;

The unity, peace, humility and internationalist nature of the ANC has persisted to this day. All subsequent presidents have gone on to make their own contributions in that regard.

For instance, Dr Pixley ka isaka Seme, one of the founder members and President-General from 1930 to 1936, was a scholar of international note. His 'I am an African' speech, delivered in 1906, received worldwide acclaim and, to this day, continues to be quoted by international scholars and practitioners of political science.

Inkosi Albert Luthuli, the ninth President-General who served from 1952 until his death in 1967, was the first African to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, to the chagrin of apartheid South Africa. The then Minister of Interior went as far as to suggest that Luthuli did not deserve the honour, to which Luthuli retorted with humility in his acceptance speech that he was in total agreement, because the Peace Prize was an 'undeserved' honour and recognition for work he undertook without expecting any reward.

Such was his humility that he went on to downplay his personal role in the struggle, and instead elevated the situation of all oppressed South Africans while at the same time carrying the torch for non-racialism and democracy.

His exact words were: "I therefore regard this award as a recognition of the sacrifice made by many of all races, particularly the African people, who have endured and suffered so much for so long. It can only be on behalf of the people of South Africa, all the people of South Africa, especially the freedom-loving people, that I accept this award, that I acknowledge this honour". Such humility is uncommon amongst many people, even leaders, today.

As a leader though, Inkosi Luthuli was not the type to shy away from responsibility. Hence, he went on to say in that Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech: "For my part, I am deeply conscious of the added responsibility which this award entails. I have the feeling that I have been made answerable for the future of the people of South Africa, for if there is no peace for the majority of them there is no peace for any one. As I said, it is idle to speak of peace anywhere where there are people still suffering under oppression."

OR Tambo may have not received the Nobel Peace Prize himself, but it was through his humility and tireless efforts that the ANC went on to enjoy the unqualified support and respect of the international community. It was under Tambo's stewardship that the international profile of the struggle for South Africa's liberation gained unparalleled prominence. The ANC earned its observer status at the United Nations as a result of OR Tambo's untiring efforts.

The ANC's exposition of the virtues of racial and gender harmony have been demonstrated throughout the years. The 'Three Doctors Pact' of 1947, signed between Drs Xuma, Dadoo and Naicker of the ANC, Transvaal and Indian Congresses respectively, was the first of its type under the circumstances. The Pact recorded the commitment of Africans, Muslims and Hindus to a future that guaranteed equality and rights of all.

The 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings was an expression of outrage and indignation at the disregard for the rights of especially Africans. Yet, it was organised under the auspices of a broad spectrum of organisations, across the racial divide.

Madam Speaker and Fellow South Africans;

It is a rich legacy that we of the current generation of members and leaders of the ANC have been bequeathed. We are called upon to emulate the founding fathers who, even though the majority amongst them were privileged in their individual rights, decided to stand up and be counted in the interests of those who lacked both the voice and means to do so themselves. They led by example, and very early on decided to lead the way to ethnic and racial harmony.

It is to the generation of the Lembede-led ANC Youth League of 1944 and beyond that we pay tribute, because if they had not taken the initiative to radicalise the ANC mother body then, there is no saying by how long the struggle for liberation could have been extended.

It is to the leadership of the banned ANC, in exile and in jail, that we must emulate the virtues of patience, tolerance and forgiveness. If they had been bitter and vengeful, our country could potentially have been destroyed.

None other than Nelson Mandela, who during the 1960s, especially in the period following the formation of MK, had been highly critical of Inkosi Albert Luthuli's anti-armed struggle stance, came out of prison in 1990 to implore all patriots to embrace peace in a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. Indeed, Madiba went on to exemplify these ideals while President of democratic South Africa and afterwards. It is on account of these ideals that he is an icon that continues to be respected and celebrated internationally.

Madam Speaker;

Let me conclude my centenary tribute by repeating this: it is un-ANC to perpetuate corruption, maladministration, nepotism and mediocrity. Throughout its history, the ANC has shunned and rejected these practices. It cannot be that we tolerate them now that we have achieved our liberation.

In 2012 and in memory of all those who have contributed to the hundred years of the people's anti-apartheid struggle, we in Ekurhuleni are called upon to keep our eyes firmly on that fundamental goal of national and economic emancipation.

We know we cannot do it alone, hence we have invited other people who are more objective by virtue of their experience and exposure, to help us do exactly that. These people form part of our recently constituted Growth and Development Strategy Review Reference Group. In this regard, I wish to acknowledge all sixteen eminent persons, for having agreed to volunteer their time and expertise in the service of this metro.

I wish also to particularly single out the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Reference Group, Dr Sydney Mufamadi and Ms Phindile Nzimande respectively. We have entrusted them with bringing out the best in all members, and they have already shown that our confidence was not misplaced.

As I have already said, the management of the Metro is going to develop a plan in for the timeous resolution of the matters of emphasis contained in the Auditor-General's 2010/2011 audit report on the metro.

There remains room for improvement in terms of achievements of the first six months of the current financial year. That is why we have directed departments to prepare plans that will help us speed up service delivery beyond what has been achieved thus far.

Even if we do not always have good news to convey to our people, we are going to continue our interactions with them. Our Service Delivery Fridays will continue unabated. Our metro-wide Mayoral Imbizo programme will gain additional momentum. And, we will also be exploiting community participation opportunities presented by the social media.

We have received with thanks the National Council of Provinces' commendation of our community participation initiatives. If anything, we view that as confirmation that our efforts have been noticed. It is also a clear challenge for us to work even harder to work with and serve our communities better.

I wish you all God's speed in 2012. Let us continue to challenge one another to positively serve our people. That way, our Metro area can only become a better place in which to learn, live and work. I can think of no better tribute to the hundred years of the people's struggle than that.

I thank you all.