

Alexandra Renewal Programme Review Summit

17 April 2008

Speech by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, CLR Amos Masondo, on the occasion of the Alexandra Renewal Programme Review Summit – Alexandra Library, Alexandra township – Johannesburg

Programme Director

MEC for Housing: Nomvula Mokonyane

MMC for Housing: Clr Strike Ralegoma

Councillors

Managers and Officials of Council

Members of various civil society organizations

Distinguished Guests

The Greater Alexandra Community

Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director, this gathering takes place a few months before the National and Provincial elections scheduled to probably take place not later than April 2009. This year marks the 14th year since the democratic breakthrough that occurred on 27th of April 1994. This community through the various democratic structures of the liberation movement played no small role in the National Democratic Revolution.

- The City is 122 years old
- Total population is 3.7 million and an average growth rate of 3.5% per annum
- Matriculants grew from 850 000 (2001) to 1,1million (2006)
- Graduates grew from 138 000 (2001) to 156 000 (2006)
- Responsible for 16% growth of GDP and employs 12% of national work force

It is also important not to forget where we come from and the challenges we have had to grapple with:

- The Sandton's boycott against equalisation of rates;
- The reduction of political fragmentation from 13 to 7 to 5 and ultimately to 1
- The financial crisis due to:
 - Low payment levels;
 - Inability to borrow;
 - Historical loans; and
 - Poor financial management and reporting

Many of us would agree that in the 1009s, very few individuals, if any, would have predicted the remarkable turnaround in this City that we see today.

The victories we have scored and the progress we have made should not lull us into a false sense of triumphalism. There are many challenges that require urgent attention. Included amongst these are the following:

- Urbanisation and Migration
- Growing the economy and job creation
- Growing the economy and job creation

- Service delivery
- HIV and AIDS
- Climate Change and alternative energy
- Globalisation

In this City, we have a plan. Through the Growth and Development Strategy which was adopted at Nasrec on 12th of May 2006, and our Integrated Development Plan (2006 – 2011), we seek to transform Johannesburg into a City of the Future.

Our GDS Vision Statement reads as follows:

"In future, Johannesburg will continue to lead as South Africa's primary business City, a dynamic centre of production, innovation, trade, finance and services. This will be a City of opportunity, where the benefits of balanced economic growth will be shared in a way that enables all residents to gain access to the ladder of prosperity, and where the poor, vulnerable and the excluded will be supported out of poverty to realise upward social mobility. The result will be a more equitable and spatially integrated City, very different from the divided City of the past. In this World-Class African City for all, everyone will be able to enjoy decent accommodation, excellent services, the highest standard and safety, access to participatory governance, and quality community life in sustainable neighbourhoods and vibrant urban spaces".

Today we gather at this venue to review the work that has been done in Alexandra Township in the past 7 years. In order for us to do so effectively, we need to answer the following questions:

- What is the Urban Renewal Programme (nationally)?
- What are the objectives of the Alexandra Renewal Programme
- Who are the beneficiaries?
- Who does what in the Urban Renewal Programme?
- Have our goals been visionary and courageous enough?
- How far are we from attaining these goals?

The Urban Renewal Programme is a Presidential initiative that was announced by President Thabo Mbeki during his State of the Nation Address in the year 2001. This idea sought to galvanise various stakeholders to focus their energy and resources on the country's poorest urban and rural communities.

The areas identified included the following:

NODE	MUNICIPALITY / PROVINCE
Alexandra	Johannesburg, Gauteng
Galeshewe	Sol Plaatjie (Kimberley), Northern Cape
Inanda & KwaMashu	Ethekwini, KwaZulu Natal
Khayelitsha & Mitchells Plain	Cape Town, Western Cape

Mdantsane	Buffalo City, Eastern Cape
Motherwell	Nelson Mandela, Eastern Cape

The Urban Renewal Programme is a response to urban decay and degeneration, apartheid systematic removals from the so-called white spot, poverty, heightened repression, densification, and environmental degradation. The programme seeks to, amongst other things, ensure investment and development, service delivery and normalisation of the neighbourhood.

Since 2001, extensive capital investment has been made to improve the following:

- Bulk water and bulk sanitation services
- Improvements of primary health care facilities;
- Development and upgrading of sport and recreation facilities;
- Development of parks and open spaces;
- Upgrading of the roads and storm-water network;
- Cleaning up of the Jukskei River and building bridges;
- Removal of shacks and reclaiming school grounds and space;
- Environmental upgrade and greening
- Implementation of the electrical master plan; and
- Housing

The City is committed to de-densification of Alexandra Township and the securing and development of additional land for this purpose. We will also be working very closely with the local economic development projects through the Joburg Council's Economic Development Unit.

The City will continue to fast-track developments such as work that needs to be done on the Helen Joseph and M1 Hostels, Stjwetla land reclamation and formalisation where applicable, re-roofing of the "bonded" houses and persuade by offering relevant incentive (not money) to the local landlords to relocate and release crowded pieces of land, characterised by forms of anarchy, for orderly development.

We need to deepen and broaden participation by all the stakeholders. The Government working alone and in isolation will not be able to address complex challenges that face this community. What we need is a partnership that seeks to ensure that we work together and complement one another.

In conclusion, we are building a city of opportunity where the benefits of balanced economic growth will be shared in a way that enables all residents to gain access to the ladder of prosperity and where the poor, vulnerable and excluded will be supported out of poverty to realise upward social mobility.

Thank you.