

April 23 2007: Joburg
welcomes SALGA

23 April 2007

A Welcome speech by the executive mayor of Johannesburg at a SALGA dinner hosted by the city of Johannesburg, Helderfontein, Lonehill - Johannesburg.

Programme Director

The Honourable Minister of Public Works: Thoko Didiza

The Honourable MEC for Local Government: Qedani Mahlangu

The Executive Mayors and Speakers

Members of the Mayoral Committees

Fellow Councillors

SALGA National Office Bearers

SALGA National Executive Committee Members

Municipal Managers and Officials

SALGA CEO: Xolile George

SALGA Executive Management Team

Distinguished Guests

Associate Members

Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director on behalf of the Council, the residents and citizens of Johannesburg I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you to the SALGA Conference Dinner hosted by the City of Johannesburg.

We are aware that this Conference could have been held anywhere in the Republic. Thank you for choosing Joburg.

The City of Johannesburg has, since the 1 March 2006 Local Government Elections, re-committed itself to a vision: to build Johannesburg into a World-Class African City.

In order to realise this goal, the Growth and Development Summit which was attended by more than 1500 delegates was held on 12 May 2006 at Nasrec. This significant gathering produced the Growth and Development Strategy Document. The vision statement says:

- *"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".*

In addition, two days ago, on 21 April 2007, the City held its Stakeholder Summit (Budget Preparation / Consultation Process Meeting), attended by more than 2 900 people at Gallagher Estate. The Summit was a culmination of an intensive process of consultation on

the Integrated Development Programme (IDP) and the City's Budget with a range of stakeholders.

Programme Director, both the Budget and the IDP will be tabled before Council on the 23 of May 2007 and debated the following day.

Once that will effect necessary improvements on our five year Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

Through these strategy documents, Programme Director, we are seeking to address the challenges of urbanisation and migration, economic development and job creation, service delivery, poverty, urban renewal and regeneration, globalisation, information technology (digital divide) and other related challenges.

Ours is a Developmental Local Government. We seek to actively use the instrument of Local Government, the municipality, to improve the quality of life of our people.

In Johannesburg we have always endeavoured to position Local Government as an economic role player of significance, as a sphere of government that is committed to economic development, a contributor to wealth and job creation.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are fully aware that it would be very difficult for many amongst us, to resist the temptation to enjoy the splendour, the historic places and endless shopping prospects of the City of Johannesburg. However, as we enjoy ourselves let us not lose sight of the purpose that has brought us to this economic hub of Africa. It is appropriate that we remind ourselves that millions of our people would be awaiting with great anticipation for the outcome of our deliberations in the next three days. We call on you to exercise a balanced approach – buy as much as you can **BUT DO NOT LEAVE THE CONFERENCE CENTRE DURING DELIBERATIONS.**

Programme Director, our deliberations for the next three days must therefore be underpinned by our commitment to improve the quality of life all our people.

On the part of local government we must constantly endeavour to contribute to the national effort by executing the following in an expeditious manner and within stipulated timeframes:

- Speeding up economic development in rural and urban areas and intensifying the rural development and urban programmes.
- Improving the system of monitoring and evaluation to enhance implementation of all projects and programmes.
- Ensuring that our municipal councils fulfil their mandates.
- Forging stronger partnerships across all sectors to deal with the challenges of distributing social grants and fighting crime and corruption.
- Improving our common efforts in the war on poverty, TB, malaria and HIV and Aids.
- Strengthening co-operation across all spheres of government and sectors of our society.

Let me take this opportunity to wish all of us fruitful deliberations and a productive conference.

And once again please allow me to welcome you to Gauteng and the City of Johannesburg.

Without taking any more of your time, may I now present the Minister of Public Works Thoko Didiza. The surname sound very impressive repeat after me
DIDIZA!

Thank you