



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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A City of Johannesburg Speech by Executive Mayor, Cllr Mpho Phalatse

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Building Joburg is not easy, but we are determined to do so with your help

***Note to Editors:** The following remarks were delivered by Joburg Executive Mayor, Cllr Mpho Phalatse, at Bühler Group's 50th anniversary, at the Sandton Convention Centre.*

Your Excellencies

Bühler Group Executives

Esteemed Guests,

History is remarkable in its ability to teach us, by reminding us how far we have come and where we are; and equally showing us of the journey we must still embark on in order to better ourselves, as well as the people and world around us.

The same can be said about politics and governance, in that I cannot lead Johannesburg on behalf of its close to 6-million residents without the context of history and its accompanying factors.

We do not even need to look at Johannesburg's entire 136 history to contextualise my role and purpose for the City. We need not even look at the last 50-years or even the last 30 or 20 years, to realise that as much as we can record progress, there is still so much to be done for the development and prosperity of Johannesburg, a task the Council, Multi-Party Government and City Administration cannot tackle on its own.

When I was sworn in as the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg some 115 days ago, on 22 November 2021, I was met with a mammoth task.

As a starting point, given the outcome of the election, it was not a simple task constituting my 10-member Mayoral Committee, as this process required consultation and a broad understanding that we are not serving the whims or interests of our political parties, therefore in

governing we must carry a level of maturity that focuses our efforts on building a Johannesburg that we can be proud of.

In many ways, we had to put our manifestos aside in order to present the people of Johannesburg with a new and joint blueprint for the City. Before we could even start planning, we had to establish mutual respect and commit to honesty. If we could not agree to these fundamental values, the relationship would be doomed. It is important to remind ourselves where we began.

With mutual respect and honesty, we set out to identify the City's problems and how we could make a lasting impact immediately, and over the medium and long term.

This, esteemed guests, brings us to the Golden Start for Johannesburg.

The Golden Start is the springboard of service delivery for the Multi-Party Government during this period of transition. I talk about a period of transition because we are working with an inherited budget that we adopted prior to the elections.

We must nonetheless govern despite the context in which we do so.

In our deliberations as the Multi-Party Government, we adopted seven priorities that would guide our service delivery outcomes for the rest of the financial year ending in June.

While the seven areas of priority will guide us during our term in office, we committed to laying a firm foundation or getting the basics of service delivery right.

The seven areas of focus are:

1. A **City that gets basics right**, where there is clean water and a sanitary environment for every community. We must create and maintain public spaces for all to enjoy.
2. A **safe and secure City** through dedicated partnerships, the use of technology, and investment in our safety and security resources. We must be tough on crime and its causes.
3. A **caring City** that takes care of vulnerable residents such as the LGBTQIA+ community, women, children and people with disabilities. We will make sure there is improved healthcare, drug recovery process programme, support for homeless residents, food security programmes, and dignified old age homes.
4. A **business-friendly City**, by creating an environment for economic growth so that entrepreneurs and businesses can invest and create the jobs that will continue to make Joburg the City of Golden Opportunities. We want to bring jobs and investment to the local economy.
5. An **inclusive City**, where every corner of Joburg is place where residents have all the amenities, they need to live a quality life with access to housing and job opportunities.

6. A **well-run City**, making Joburg a centre of clean, honest government that puts residents first, spends money wisely and is a pleasure to deal with. We must make quality customer service a standard practice.
7. A **smart City**, where we push boundaries by making the most of the talent and innovation available both inside and outside of the government. We must maximise the use of technology to empower residents and to find solutions to Joburg's most pressing issues.

As we continue to rollout our priorities, we want the international community and business to invest in our project of building a City of Opportunities.

We are currently working on an Energy Indaba, as a signal to local and foreign investors, that reliable energy is non-negotiable. How can we expect businesses to grow and create jobs if the basic infrastructure is not in place?

We want to gradually move towards an era where we are no longer solely dependent on Eskom. We want to employ an energy mix that moves us away from coal and empower Independent Power Producers. The City of Johannesburg is ready to map a future that does not feature rolling blackouts that have a dire effect on our economy.

Subsequent to that, the City will be convening a Business Collaboration Summit, so the City, business and investors can formalise relationships in strategic areas of focus, especially an investment in our capital projects.

Despite being Mayor for a mere 115-days, and having a fully constituted Mayoral Committee, we have already done some good:

- Operation Buya Mthetho (Bring Back the Law) has been reinstated as a law enforcement campaign to restore order and uphold by-laws. It has also incorporated the revenue collection campaign to collect an outstanding R38-billion owed to the City by municipal account holders. Without the necessary monetary resources, our service delivery priorities cannot be fully realised.

Next week Friday, I will be joining our Joburg Water, City Power and Revenue Teams in disconnecting delinquent ratepayers.

In this regard we have set the target of collecting R4-billion per month.

Concurrently the Debt Rehabilitation Programme has been reinstituted. We acknowledge that residents and business have been impacted by the pandemic and we are trying to meet them halfway.

- 1,800 JMPD Officers have been deployed across the City's business nodes to prevent and tackle crime when it happens. Our women and men in blue have also been deployed during peak traffic times to manage traffic flow.

- Transport and associated Entities are embarking on a successful Region-by-Region blitz to fill potholes, fix traffic lights and other Transport functions. We have also partnered with Dial Direct and Discovery Insure to accelerate the identification and filling of potholes.
- 39 of the Cities are administering COVID-19 vaccines. In this light, we are determined to see the end of the State of Disaster and see all events, conferences, tourism and other economic activity operating at full steam.
- In record time, we have managed to appoint the boards of the Municipal-Owned Entities, which in the main, are critical to service delivery.
- We managed to pass the Adjustment Budget which looked at shovel-ready capital projects, and programmes supporting the City's vulnerable groups.

Next month, I will be delivering my first State of the City Address on behalf of the Multi-Party Government, and the following month the MMC for Finance, Cllr Julie Suddaby, will deliver the City's Budget Speech.

These two events will signal the Multi-Party Government's full control of the City's affairs.

Furthermore, we are determined to stabilise the affairs of the City and accelerate service delivery; and integral to this is appointing a capable City Manager, who will support the Multi-Party Government's service delivery programmes.

While we call upon you to invest in this beautiful mega-city, we must also be clear in stating that there is a zero-tolerance approach to corruption. We are closing the tap of corruption and we are removing the men and women who facilitate corruption.

Esteemed guests, in closing, I would like to wish Bühler Group a happy 50th anniversary, and I welcome your continued business operations in Johannesburg. Businesses like yours have an important role to play in the building of a City of Opportunities.

Thank you!

ENDS

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