

Meeting with members of the Diplomatic Corps

03 December 2008

**Speech by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg at a meeting with members of the Diplomatic Corps, Johannesburg Civic Theatre, Braamfontein – Johannesburg**

Programme Director

Speaker of Council: Clr Nkele Ntingane

Chief Whip of Council: Clr Bafana Sithole

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Your Excellency, Dean of the Diplomatic Corp and

Ambassador of Libya: Dr Alzubeidi

Your Excellency Dean of the Diplomatic Corp in Johannesburg and

Consul General of Mozambique: Mr Luis da Silva

Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consuls Generals

The City Manager: Mavela Dlamini

Managers and Officials of Council

The Media

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director, on behalf of the City of Johannesburg, it gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to this important occasion.

The month of September 2008 marked the mid-point of the five-year electoral term. As we did in the previous term of office, we published our Mid-Term Report to re-state the commitments cited in the ANC March 2006 Local Government Elections Manifesto, the City's Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) and the five (5) year Integrated Development Plan (IDP). This report is on progress made in the past two and half (2 and 1/2) years. In this report we highlight on achievements made as well as the challenges that we face.

This report provides the City as well as the various stakeholders and researchers with a valuable record.

Programme Director, the City of Johannesburg continues to enjoy and have excellent relationship with many of your towns and cities. In large measure this derives from a special relationship that South Africa enjoys with many of your countries.

Johannesburg, as South Africa's premier City places a very high premium on cultivating and deepening its relationship with other cities. A City of the size and the regional importance of Johannesburg cannot be an island. In order for us to move forward to transform Local Government and deliver services to the citizens in this period of globalisation, we think it is important to establish and maintain sound relationships with other cities and regions of the world.

I have no doubt that through creative partnerships we can share information and expertise, we can learn from each other's experiences and ensure the following:

- Promote trade and investment;

- Promote tourism;
- Cultural exchanges; and
- The deepening of service delivery and quality of life in each of our local communities and neighbourhoods.

Programme Director, we do not seek to enter into twinning arrangements with towns and cities merely for a symbolic purpose. On the contrary, we want to have strong and productive relationships centred on sharing experiences and exchanging best practices and to adapt them to our own specific Johannesburg reality. We are of the view that the same can be done elsewhere.

The ANC's National Conference in Polokwane in December 2007 committed us to a broad range of endeavours over the next five years. On the issues of twinning of provinces, cities and municipalities the Conference agreed that we need to develop a policy on twinning agreements with clear objectives and guidelines.

The City of Johannesburg's partnerships with other municipalities can be divided into two broad categories:

- Sister Cities, where Memoranda of Understanding are signed, which cover broad areas of co-operation, for example, Addis Ababa
- Partner Cities, where an agreement is signed on specific project co-operations on a limited amount of areas and with specific time frames, for example, Val de Marne, in France, on Social Housing and Early Childhood Development.

In the City of Johannesburg, we continue to deepen our relationship with cities such as Addis Ababa, Birmingham, London, New York and Windhoek. We continue to reach out to others and seek to create similar relationships.

Programme Director, these agreements for Johannesburg are far more than mere symbolic gestures. With most of our sister cities we have identified specific projects for co-operation and information sharing. For example, we are sharing information about land and housing development with Addis Ababa; with Windhoek we are pursuing five projects:

- Safety,
- Professional Development,
- Planning and Infrastructure Development,
- Water reticulation, and
- Councillor Development.

The relationship with Birmingham Catch-eye Wise Owl Youth project is meant to address substance abuse among the youth and ensure a library exchange project through book fairs. Urban renewal has also been explored and identified.

The New York City partnership is centred on the areas of safety and tourism:

- On safety - Johannesburg Metro Police Department, Johannesburg Emergency Management Services and the New York Metro Police and the New York Fire Department are identifying more areas of co-operation; and
- On economic development - The Johannesburg Tourism Company is pursuing related opportunities.
- In June 2008, the City of Johannesburg led by the Member of the Mayoral Committee responsible for Health participated in the Annual Summit arranged by the City of New York.

The theme for the Summit was "Public Health and Climate Change: The Urban Policy Connection". The Summit was a positive exchange of experiences amongst local government representatives from more than fifteen (15) cities.

With the City of Matola in Mozambique, we have completed a diagnostic study and also identified areas of synergy, which includes the Emergency Management Services.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in May 2008, you raised issues of concern related to the violent attacks on foreign nationals in particular as well as crime in general.

In this City we keep on talking about "Johannesburg, the inclusive African City" which is a reflection of the fact that our City strives to embrace everyone who lives in it.

Programme Director, I think it is appropriate to apologise and to convey the following:

- The attacks on foreign nationals is something that makes us bow our heads in shame. This is the shame not only to our democracy in South Africa but indeed to the whole of Africa.
- These unfortunate outbreaks threatened to undermine progress made by our continent in forging social cohesion and in the strengthening of the bonds of human solidarity. In fact, in Johannesburg, we have had a long history of peaceful co-existence between South Africans and foreign nationals. For years, we have stayed, worked, played and worshipped together. Ours has been and will continue to be an inclusive City.
- We condemn all criminal activities. We also condemn all violent attacks especially the abuse of women and children, which can never ever be justified.
- We will continue working with organisations of civil society and members of the Diplomatic Corps to address this and other related problems.

In this City we believe that migration like urbanisation cannot be stopped or halted. We need to remain ever vigilant and strive to manage it to the best of our ability at all times. Any credible Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process should address the challenge and opportunities offered by migration.

In the City of Johannesburg, we continue to build an inclusive city where every person, regardless of race, creed or background should feel welcome and at home. We are committed to ensuring that all those who live within our jurisdiction and abide by the country's laws and the City's by-laws live their normal lives.

The City of Johannesburg's Help-Desk for migrants, which was established in April 2007, is one of the most used facilities. The Desk offers a wide range of services, these include:

- Advice on how to access appropriate government services;
- Efforts to co-ordinate the City's support for migrants;
- Assisting refugees with economic opportunities;
- Providing information and accommodating various service providers;
- Examining community networks; and
- Looking at needs of asylum seekers.

Through the Migrant Help-Desk, in the months of October and November 2008, the City facilitated dialogue sessions and seminars throughout the City. The dialogues covered the Izinduna, political organisations, labour unions, women and youth groups, churches, civic

organisations, migrant communities and organisations, community police forums, City departments including JMPD and Councillors.

The Joburg Migration Advisory Committee (JMAC) made up of various government departments, including Chapter Nine institutions and Non Governmental Organisations will be established in 2009.

Programme Director, in the City of Johannesburg we continue to grapple with the issue of crime. Let me assure you that we take all concerns raised very serious and deserving of attention.

On crime this is what we are doing:

- Increasing the number of Closed Circuit Television monitors in the Inner City. (Our use of this surveillance technology within the Inner City has already resulted in a significant reduction in the incidence of crime). We have added more cameras and we will be launching this project on the 10th of December 2008.
- Strengthening our ability to enforce the City's by-laws and looking after seemingly minor issues such as the cutting of overgrown grass and fencing of areas that are considered unsafe.
- Community Policing Forums being put in place to reinforce other efforts.
- Reducing the levels of priority crimes including those that adversely affect business and tourism (through focused surveillance technology).
- Stepping up crime prevention efforts with special attention to the sale of alcohol, drug manufacturing and distribution and firearm control.
- Increasing the visibility of JMPD officers and improving response times.

We will also make provision of one additional vehicle for every three officers. JMPD will employ 1160 officers from July 2008/2009 and by the year 2010 the total figure would have increased to 4 000 officers.

Programme Director, in Johannesburg we are committed to the concept of developmental local government. We are engaged in a continuous struggle to eradicate social inequalities and address the burning issues of poverty, the delivery of basic services and the creation of economic opportunities for our people.

These are not issues that government can tackle on its own and in isolation. This work requires partnerships with organisations of civil society and communities.

Lastly, the Confederations Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup is upon us. We will continue to use the pressure that come with the 2010 Soccer spectacle to deepen the programmes of all our departments and ensure that when the World Cup has come and gone there are legacy projects left behind to improve the quality of life our people.

Please do remember that this World Cup is an African World Cup and we need to work together to ensure it becomes the greatest World Cup ever. We hope that your countries prevail and become part of this World Cup, the greatest ever, with an African flavour.

Ladies and gentlemen, once again, I want to thank you for your continued interest in our City.

I would like to urge you to promote the cause of the City of Johannesburg within your own communities with the same fervour and conviction as you so ably represent your countries within South Africa.

Thank you