

## Soweto Marathon media briefing

02 November 2010

Statement by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Clr Amos Masondo, on the occasion of the 2010 Soweto Marathon media briefing, Metro Centre, Mayoral Parlour, Braamfontein – Johannesburg

Programme Director

MMC for Community Development: Clr Bafana Sithole

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Fellow Councillors

City Manager: Mr Mavela Dlamini

Administrator of Athletics South Africa: Mr Ray Mali

Managers and Officials of Council

Athletic South Africa Officials

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The City of Johannesburg is, once again, proud to support this great annual sporting event. The Soweto Marathon will be held on Sunday, the 07th of November 2010. The race will start at MTN Expo Centre at Nasrec at 06h00 in the morning and finish at the same point at 12h30. Let me take this opportunity to welcome all the athletes and runners, the supporters and spectators to this unique and exciting occasion.

The starting times for the race are as follows:

42,2 km at 06h00,

10 km wheelchair runners at 06h20,

10 km at 06h30,

10 km runners (with a temporary licence at 06h40); and

5 km runners at 08h00.

Well known athletes and personalities have entered for the 42,2 km race. These will be coming from the rest of Africa and other parts of the world.

The participants will be competing for the following prizes:

R100 000 for the first women to finish the race; and

R100 000 for the first man to finish the race.

There is a good reason why this race has become known as "the People's Race" - amongst participants, residents and the media. Not only does it cater for the entire spectrum of the racing fraternity – from the elite performers to athletes with disability – but the route also takes competitors into the heart of Soweto, a human settlement that is a symbol of hope. A place of great history. The yearly positive experience of support that athletes receive from residents adds a unique spirit and atmosphere to this occasion.

The Soweto Marathon is an exceptional sporting event. It also helps to draw attention to the following:

The homes of Bishop Tutu, President Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Zephania Mothupeng and many similar political luminaries and community leaders.

The sporting greats like Kaizer Motaung, Jomo Sono, Chippa Moloi, Irvin Khoza and others; and

The history of our struggle which includes, amongst others, the June 16 Soweto Students Uprisings as well as many places of historical significance such as Regina Mundi Catholic Church and the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication in Kliptown.

This race is also a social and cultural celebration for both the participants and the hundreds of spectators. Thousands of people from local communities line the route annually to cheer the runners on.

The route will take participants past some of the most esteemed sites. Down Vilakazi Street, home to our two illustrious Nobel Peace Prize Winners, President Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu. Past the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication, Hector Pieterse Museum, Morris Isaacson High School and Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.

But for both runners and spectators the race also provides an opportunity to see a new Soweto and its growth over time. This includes:

The tarred roads;

The modern new shopping centres such as Maponya Mall, Jabulani Mall and the precinct, which also includes the Soweto Theatre and a new hospital;

The Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit network as well as the newly built N17, a link to the highway; and Orlando Stadium and the FNB or Soccer City stadium.

As in previous years, the City will actively support the marathon through the provision of services such as traffic control, emergency management, environmental health and other related services.

Through this event, we seek to promote healthy habits such as exercise, leisure activity and sport.

We would like to acknowledge that the organisers and the sponsors have over the years done an excellent job. For this, they deserve credit and recognition.

It is pleasing to note that two new sponsors have come on board this year, namely Europcar and the Lotto. Our congratulations go to Athletics South Africa, the Central Gauteng Athletics especially to Mr Ray Mali, who is currently serving as the interim Administrator of ASA for his unflinching efforts to keep this race and the sport of track and field going during a difficult period.

We have no doubt in our mind that the thousands of runners and spectators who form part of this event will share in an unforgettable experience. Let us make Sunday the 7th of November 2010 a day to remember.

Thank you.

Tribute by the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Amos Masondo, on the occasion of the memorial and unveiling of a tombstone in honour of the late mayor of the Southern Metropolitan Local Council (SMLC), Comrade Sophie Masite, ST Paul's Anglican Church, Ipelegeng Centre, White City - Soweto - Johannesburg