

Unveiling of the 2010 FIFA World Cup trophy

05 June 2010

Speech by the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Clr Amos Masondo, on the occasion of the unveiling of the 2010 FIFA World Cup trophy, Elkah Stadium, Soweto – Johannesburg

Programme Director

The Honourable Minister of Water & Environmental Affairs: Ms Buyelwa Sonjica

Honourable Premier: Ms Nomvula Mokonyane

Speaker of Council: Clr Nkele Ntingane

Chief Whip of Council: Clr Nonceba Molwele

MEC of Sport, Arts & Culture: Ms Nelisiwe Moerane

Coca-Cola South Africa Business President: Mr Bill Egbe

MMC for Community Development: Clr Bafana Sithole

Members of the Mayoral Committee

Pikitup Board Chairperson: Phumla Radebe

Managers and Officials of Council

Representative of Coca-Cola

Representatives FIFA

Representatives of LOC

Distinguished Guests

The Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director, is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to share this day with you and be part of this very important occasions – the World Cup Trophy and the celebration of the Environment Day.

Programme Director, when South Africa was awarded the honour to host the FIFA World Cup in May 2004, the countdown began. The years then turned into months; months into weeks, weeks into days; and today we are a mere three (3) days away from the biggest sporting spectacle on the globe.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup trophy is here. It has travelled from continent to continent, across countries, towns and cities. It is finally here, in South Africa, in Gauteng, in Johannesburg, in Soweto, in Dlamini. This solid-gold trophy is the iconic symbol of the beautiful game in its global context.

So, when the captain of the winning team receives this Trophy on the 11th of July at Soccer City – it will be a culmination of a remarkable journey that brought South Africans from all spheres and backgrounds together, like no other sporting event has done before. The 32 teams that will be competing have managed to bring the world together and inspired unparalleled levels of competition.

We see it in the display of the South African flag across our City and country – in offices, restaurants, shops, schools, houses, on vehicles, literally everywhere. We can feel it. It is here. The world cup is with us.

People have braved a chilly winter morning. They want to see the Trophy up close. Some want to capture on camera this once-in-a-lifetime moment.

Programme Director, let us again remind ourselves that this is a journey that started off at the FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, in September 2009. It then travelled across the African continent, later, across the world, touching down in 86 countries, covering more than 130 000 kilometres.

Quite fittingly it made its first stop in South Africa at the Houghton Residence of Nelson Mandela, the most renowned Johannesburg resident and South Africa's icon.

Of course, we will do well to remember, that one of the reasons why we won the bid is because Nelson Mandela in person, engaged in vigorous campaigning for the country to host this biggest sporting event.

Programme Director, now that the Trophy is back in Johannesburg, we are looking forward to it taking a very short drive to Soccer City. Here it will remain on display until the winner of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, is declared.

On behalf of the City of Johannesburg its residents and citizens I would like to take this opportunity to thank Coca-Cola – the organisers of the World Cup Trophy Tour. We thank Coca Cola for its initiative to take the Trophy around the world and, especially, for bringing it to our City. Coca-Cola's commitment to sports development at grassroots level is somewhat generally well-known. As part of this commitment we are looking forward to the staging of a youth tournament in which players from 18 African countries will demonstrate their football skills and talent.

This Trophy represents the dreams of all of the world's top players. But it also serves as an inspiration for the next generation of players to work hard to represent their countries at the highest level.

It is a well-known fact, that only a few Heads of State and the captains of victorious World Cup teams are allowed to touch this beautiful Trophy.

I have no doubt that amongst us today walking here at Dlamini Multi-Purpose Centre, looking at the World Cup Trophy, is a young boy who will be inspired by this historic event, and who will one day, in the not too distant future, lift the Trophy as captain of a victorious South African team.

At a moment like this, we should take this opportunity to salute our legends, both those living and those who have since passed on, for playing the beautiful game of football even under the most difficult and trying conditions. What comes to mind are teams like: Avalon Athletics, Durban Aces, Witbank Black Aces, Blackpool, Moroka Swallows, Pimville United Brothers, Orlando Pirates, Chiefs and many others. What comes to mind are players like: Kalamazoo Mokone, Difference Mbanya, Chippa Moloi, Bernard Hartze known as "Dancing Shoes", Carlton Moloi, Sugar Ray Xulu, Master Pieces "Modimo Wa Bolo" Moripe, Maria Maria, Johnny Magwegwe Mokoena, Ndoda Venter, Dharam Mohan, Ace Mgedeza, Blessing "Killer" Mgidi and many others.

Programme Director, I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all our guests that would make this City their home in the following month or so. I wish all the teams well in their endeavours – and – may the best team win.

May the best team win!

Ke nako!

Thank you