



## **SPEAKING NOTES FOR EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR. KABELO GWAMANDA**

SITE VISIT TO KLIPTOWN, SOWETO WITH DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER

06 March 2024

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Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen  
Permanent Secretary, Jeppe Tranhol-Mikkelsen  
Special Advisor, Karen Clement  
Deputy Head of Africa Policy, Casper Stenger Jensen  
Ministerial Secretary, Louise Borchsenius Jensen  
Press Chief, Victor Boysen  
Special Consultant in Africa Policy, Louise Marie Lunn Haubro  
Ambassador Elsebeth Søndergaard  
City Advisor, Kristoffer Ronde Møller  
Water Programme Advisor, Tine Anbaek  
Programme Officer, Akhona Xotyeni  
Intern, Christine Deletaille  
MMC Lubabalo Magwentshu  
MMC Jack Sekwaila  
MMC Kenny Kunene  
MDs  
Executive Directors  
Officials from all CoJ departments and Entities

Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you and your delegation to the City of Johannesburg, particularly to Soweto which serves to strengthen relations between our two countries and between Johannesburg and Copenhagen.

I would like to emphasize the fact that Johannesburg acknowledges with appreciation that Sector Cooperation is an important part of Danish foreign and development policy and contributes to building strong partnerships.

Strategic Sector Cooperation is indeed a central element in Denmark's commitment and in the green strategic partnership which was formally signed by Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and President Ramaphosa in February 2022.

The City has noted with appreciation that Denmark is involved in five Strategic Sector Cooperation Projects in SA, all of which are financed by the development framework - energy, water, sustainable urban development, food & agriculture.

At the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the City of Copenhagen and the City of Johannesburg started a dialogue in 2023 about a possible Strategic Sector Cooperation on climate, water and energy efficiency.

This dialogue ultimately resulted in a courtesy call between myself and Ambassador Elsebeth Søndergaard, Ambassador of Denmark in South Africa in September 2023, where we agreed that Copenhagen and Johannesburg should formally sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

The two cities have since entered into an agreement to start a long-term partnership with a focus on green transition, including management of water resources and energy efficiency.

This is an important MoU as it expresses the mutual interest to deepen and strengthen the ties of friendship, collaboration, and cooperation, in order to promote a socially just green transition and to contribute to sustainable and green growth and resilient development in line with the Green Strategic Partnership between Johannesburg and Copenhagen.

The City of Johannesburg and Copenhagen recognize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the 2030 Agenda, as guiding anchors for the plans, programs and projects that are carried out in their cities.

It is important to recognize the importance of decentralized international cooperation as a fundamental tool to enhance the capacities of local governments and provide solutions to the challenges faced by communities through the effective exchange of knowledge and experiences; and the MoU between Johannesburg and Copenhagen serves decentralized international cooperation to the betterment of residents in the two cities.

I am particularly pleased that both Cities as members of international global networks of cities such as C40 and ICLEI will utilize the new Memorandum of Understanding to share knowledge and learnings from their cooperation and EISD will be the implementing Department & custodian of the Action Plan and programmes, of which we are confident that they will do well on behalf of other departments.

Soweto has been identified as a focus area, hence this momentous launch here today

The South Western Township renownedly known as Soweto (where some of us were born and bred) is a vibrant and historically significant City located in the sprawling suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. This iconic township has a fascinating history, rich culture, and a

palpable sense of community. Soweto rose to prominence during the apartheid era as a hotbed of political activism and resistance.

Soweto was created in the 1930s to accommodate the massive influx of black Africans into the city during the apartheid era.

With its bustling streets, colourful markets, lively music scene, and a population of over 2 million people, Soweto is truly a city that never sleeps. It is a melting pot of different cultures, languages, and traditions, reflecting the diversity of South Africa as a whole. Soweto is one of the largest townships in South Africa and the continent.

Despite its significant potential, Soweto is constrained by a number of challenges including an inactive property market, a population/job density mismatch and land use entropy, effects of climate change, amongst others. Soweto is an area that requires much needed intervention and strategic direction and the recently signed MoU will go a long way in assisting to address these challenges.

During the site visit as we walk about, you will have an opportunity to see the everyday challenges that the residents face and also simultaneously see the interventions that the City is engaging in to ensure that service delivery filters to the ground, although a lot has been done to deliver services, there is still room for improvement and the City is confident that the Strategic Sector Cooperation availed through the MoU will assist in achieving the Mayoral Priorities.

I thank you.