RECEPTION REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR CYRIL XABA AT THE CIGFARO PRESIDENT'S FUNCTION, 7 OCTOBER 2025

- Programme Director
- All Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors present
- The President of CIGFARO, Dr Emmanuel Ngcobo
- Executive Committee of CIGFARO
- CIGFARO Regional Chairpersons, and all CIGFARO members
- Distinguished guests, especially our international visitors
- Exhibitors
- All officials, ladies and gentlemen

Good evening

A warm welcome to everyone to our City and to the CIGFARO President's function. We are very excited ho host you and we trust that you are going to enjoy your evening.

This is not an event of long speeches because we had that opportunity in the morning when we opened the conference.

We must hasten to mention that we are a city that is hard at work – rebuilding from a series of catastrophic events including the recurring flood disasters.

We are happy that our rebuilding efforts are beginning to yield positive results. I am sure you have all noticed some improvements around city as a result of our focused turnaround efforts. You have arrived in a city that is clean with improved safety. Thanks to our bold inner-city regeneration programme which has seen all service delivery units and other spheres of government working together to transform our CBD.

Through this programme, we have been able to improve infrastructure, safety, and cleanliness – creatin a vibrant and liveable urban space.

Catalytic projects like Rivertown, the Marina, and Centrum developments are reshaping the inner city, supported by incentives to encourage

businesses back into the CBD. These efforts are designed to make Durban not just a city to visit, but also a place to invest, live, work and play.

Of course, I would like to invite you to come back to Durban during the festive season. I want to assure you that when you come back, you will find all our tourism attractions including beaches and swimming pools fully operational. Currently, we have 21 out of 23 bathing beaches that are open and safe for swimming. This speaks volumes about the work we are doing to repair and upgrade our water and sanitation infrastructure.

As I have indicated that we are a city at work, we continue to be stable both politically and administratively despite the fact that we are a coalition government. We remain financially sound as demonstrated by the fact that in the previous financial year, we were able to exceed our revenue collection target by close to R1 billion.

A few weeks ago, I was in Moscow attending the BRICS Future Urban Forum and our city received an innovation award on climate action for the

development of the Westown Smart City. We attribute this award to our several initiatives to drive the smart city agenda.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to congratulate in advance all those who will be receiving awards this evening. Your commitment to excellence is an inspiration to all of us. Let it be our collective goal across all municipalities, government departments and entities to strive for clean audits and good governance.

I strongly believe that CIGFARO has a vital role to play in helping all of us to achieve this goal.

May this evening stimulate new partnerships, fresh ideas, and professional connections that will drive improvements in public financial management across South Africa.

Once again, welcome to our beautiful city of Durban and enjoy the evening.

I thank you