ADDRESS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR CYRIL XABA AT THE UMNGENI-UTHUKELA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND LAUNCH OF LOWER UMKHOMAZI WATER SCHEME, 4 JUNE

- Programme director
- Umngeni-uThukela Water Board Chairperson: Advocate Vusi Khuzwayo
- Zembeni Traditional Authority: INkosi Mqadi, Ndabezitha
- Ugu District Municipality Mayor: Cllr. Sikhumbuzo Mqadi
- Ward 99 Councillor: Cllr. Jane Naidoo
- Esteemed guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning. Sanibona.

We are delighted to be part of this gathering – the Stakeholder Engagement between Umngeni-uThukela Water (UUW) and relevant

stakeholders including local government, Amakhosi and business, among others.

The launch of Phase 2 of the Lower Umkhomazi Project is significant because it shows that there is progress in the work of making sure the people of KwaZulu-Natal have access to clean, drinking water.

For us as eThekwini Municipality, we are happy because the people of the southern regions of our city, and our neighbours in the South Coast, in areas such as Ugu District Municipality, have borne the heavy burden of water scarcity.

Therefore, we will continue to work with the UUW leadership to make sure this critical project progresses with urgency required and with necessary speed so that our communities can regain the dignity they deserve. We say this because we know that water is the lifeblood of communities.

It is true that without a reliable supply of water, households are unable to function, the delivery of quality education is severely disrupted, and industries are paralysed, stifling their ability to create and sustain jobs.

Securing our water infrastructure is not merely a technical necessity, but it is a fundamental prerequisite for meeting the demands of a growing population and ensuring social and economic stability.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have felt the frustrations of residents and businesses losing production days because of water supply challenges. It is our hope that, with the announcement of Phase 2 of this project, we are declaring that those days of chronic water insecurity are coming to an end.

By injecting an additional 100 megalitres of potable water per day into our system, we are permanently reviving hope among communities who had long given up on the dream of reliable water access.

To Amakhosi Asendlunkulu, we recognise that for these major developments to succeed in this province, we need to engage you so that we can get your blessings and guidance. We thank you for your leadership and for allowing these major projects on communal land because the next generation will benefit from a water-secured future.

We commit ourselves to strengthen our collaboration with the traditional leadership so that the investments we make have long-lasting impact and change the lives of our people for the better. As leaders, we must mobilise our communities to protect this infrastructure from vandalism, theft, and sabotage.

In conclusion, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to the Board and Executives of uMngeni-uThukela Water for their unwavering drive to push this project forward. Thank you to the workers who brave the heat, rain, and cold weather to complete this work.

We are of a view that The Lower Umkhomazi Project will stand as a symbol to what is possible when government, community leaders, citizens and the business sector pull in the exact same direction. Let us continue to work together to ensure we leave no community behind as we build a water-secure, prosperous eThekwini Municipality and KwaZulu-Natal.

I thank you