SPEECH BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR, CLLR CYRIL XABA AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF DR. S.D. GUMBI, 20 JULY 2025

- Programme Director,
- KwaZulu-Natal Premier: Honourable Thami Ntuli
- Members of the Gumbi family,
- Dr TM Sithole of the God's Army
- Rev. Selby Khumalo of the Apostolic Faith Mission
- All religious leaders,
- Distinguished guests,
- Fellow mourners

I greet you all this afternoon with a heavy heart, yet with immense gratitude for the opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the life of a true servant of God and a patriot, Dr. S.D. Gumbi.

We are reminded today of the words in 2 Timothy 4:7 which say: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." These words capture the life and legacy of Dr. Gumbi so beautifully. He fought the

good fight, not just in ministry but in community development, in mentoring others, in standing for righteousness, and in championing justice and compassion.

It is in moments like these that we are reminded of the important role the church plays in helping government fulfil its mandate. The church is a trusted voice in communities, especially in times of crises. It reaches people at the grassroots, offers healing where government cannot reach, and upholds the moral fibre of society.

As government we rely on this partnership, grounded in shared values of compassion, justice, and human dignity. Dr Gumbi exemplified that partnership.

Dr. Gumbi was not only a spiritual leader. He was a moral compass, a builder of communities, a voice of calm in chaos, and a bridge between God and humanity. His work extended beyond the pulpit, into hospitals, schools, homes, and the very heart of our city. His sermons were not just preached but they were lived.

As people of eThekwini, we were privileged to have known him and worked alongside him. He had a unique ability to unite people across race, class, and background. He inspired hope where there was despair and offered direction when we were lost.

Even as we mourn, we do not do so as those without hope. For Dr. Gumbi's life was one of purpose, and we are all witnesses to that. Though he is no longer with us in flesh, his spirit lives on in every soul he touched, in every community he served, and in every seed of faith and kindness he sowed.

To the Gumbi family, we extend our heartfelt condolences. You allowed us to share this giant with you, a man of wisdom and warmth. As a City, we share your pain. Let us honour his memory by walking in his footsteps with humility, courage, and love.

May the legacy of Dr. S.D. Gumbi live on in our hearts and in the work we do.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Lala kahle Somkhanda. Umsebenzi wakho uwufezile.

Thank you.