ENERGY TRANSFORMATION SUMMIT GALA DINNER REMARKS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY MAYOR CLLR MXOLISI KAUNDA, 1 MARCH 2023

- Programme Director
- Our Social Partners (Business, Civil Society and Organised Labour)
- Government Officials present
- Industry Experts
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening

Let me welcome you all to this prestigious gala dinner of the Energy Transformation Summit.

As you know that the conference begun today with a strong focus on electricity crisis. We would like to thank the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Hon Nomusa Dube-Ncube and the MEC for Economic Development Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Hon Siboniso Duma and all other government representatives for outlining government's policy direction on energy transformation.

Our gratitude also goes to industry experts, business leaders and all our social partners who participated in various panel discussions for your invaluable contribution. Your input will indeed go a long way in taking our energy transition strategy forward.

What became clear during the discussions is that eThekwini Municipality is ready to become the leader in the energy transformation space. This is demonstrated by our energy transition policy which has a tangible programme of action with clear timelines. The procurement process we have undertaken clearly indicates that we are ready to create 30 priority energy infrastructure projects over the short, long, and medium term.

As a city, we are resolute in ensuring that by 2026 we must have procured 400mw of new generation capacity from Independent Power Producers. This will indeed enable us to reduce reliance on the national grid. Our aim is to reduce reliance on the national grid by 40% in 2030.

The resonating theme throughout the first day of the summit was that this transition must not leave anyone behind and that it must not discard coal since we still have coal reserves in various parts of the province. Therefore, this transition must not result in job losses.

In line with our radical socio-economic transformation programme, we must ensure that this process brings the majority of people who were deliberately excluded from participating in this sector, Blacks in general and Africans in Particular into the mainstream economy. Our position is unequivocal that social solidarity economy must be a key component of this energy transformation.

Therefore, social enterprises owned by women, youth, people with disability and military veterans must be given an opportunity to participate in this space. We are confident that as the summit continues, we will be able to come up with concrete proposals on how are we going to ensure that not only established business benefit from this initiative.

Colleagues, this is not an evening of long speeches, but an occasion to network and share ideas on how we can build an energy secured country.

Thank you for your attention and enjoy the evening.