ADDRESS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY COUNCILLOR NTOKOZO SIBIYA AT THE AGRO-PROCESSING SITE VISIT WITH THE UKRAINIAN DELEGATION, CAMPERDOWN, 4 MARCH 2021

- Programme Director
- Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of South Africa: Ms. Liubov Abravitova
- Representative of the Ukrainian Business Trade Association: Mr. Dmytro Los
- Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO: Ms. Palesa Phili
- Members of the media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon,

On behalf of the people of eThekwini Municipality, we are deeply honoured to welcome you all today. We are delighted because the presence of the Ukrainian delegation is a sign of new beginnings for the City and its residents.

Your Excellency, Ambassador Abravitova, we can assure you that eThekwini Municipality is open for business and we are ready to partner with the people of Ukraine and build strong ties with your country's business sector.

Interest shown by Myronivsky Hliboproduct (MHP) in doing business in our city bodes well for our plans to attract foreign direct investment to our shores. We continuously seek to create a conducive environment for investors and improve the ease of doing business.

You will be glad to know that this part of the country has a reputation and history for being the home of the poultry industry. Therefore, we view MHP's interest in investing here as a positive development and will go a long way in resuscitating poultry business in our city.

As the leadership of the eThekwini Municipality, we are committed to working with you to make the City a hub for your operations in Southern Africa.

Government has identified agribusiness as central to food security because of the potential to increase production, reduce losses and ensure employment for local communities.

Ladies and gentlemen, we meet at a critical time when the world is still grappling with the devasting impact of COVID-19 which continues to put pressure on the world economy.

It is also true that while this global pandemic has disrupted many economies around the world because of job losses and business closures, it has highlighted the importance of having a strong agricultural sector.

Without a solid and robust agricultural sector, there is always a danger of more people going hungry. COVID-19 has also shown how interconnected and interdependent we are as a world community. No one has been spared by this virus.

Therefore, we must establish a mutually beneficial partnership to ensure that local communities benefit from such projects. Because we have truly become a global village, it is in our collective interest that we build a sustainable and environmentally friendly future.

Again, as we extend our warm welcome to our visitors, we commit ourselves to working with you and we look forward to partnering with you to make MHP the largest poultry producer in the world.

In conclusion, as local government, we want to reimagine our future post COVID-19 and we are striving to make our City Africa’s Most Caring and Liveable City by 2030.

I thank you