ADDRESS BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY SPEAKER CLLR WEZIWE THUSI AT THE INAUGURAL TOYOTA LOCAL COUNCILLOR'S SUMMIT, 25 MARCH 2021

- Programme Director
- President and CEO Toyota South Africa Motors: Mr. Andrew Kirby
- Senior Vice President Toyota South Africa Motors: Mr. Suben Moodley
- Councillors
- Senior management of the municipality
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

It is a distinct honour and privilege to be part of this crucial engagement between eThekwini Municipality and Toyota South Africa – one of our strategically important and major investors in the city.

Firstly, we would like to commend Toyota for the continued commitment in helping grow the economy of our city, province and the country. We

must also express our gratitude for a number of initiatives you are involved in which seek to benefit local communities.

Again, we are meeting at a critical time when our country is facing an imminent threat of a third wave of this devastating global pandemic which has adversely affected our economy and livelihoods. The impact of COVID-19 will remain with us for a long time and it is important to stress that our actions today will determine the kind of future the next generation will enjoy.

We remain grateful to the management of Toyota for the sterling work it has done in helping minimise the spread of this virus. You have indeed demonstrated that if government and private sector work together we can achieve a great deal.

The generous contributions made to all our social relief measures as the city continue to cushion poor communities from the impact of the virus. Toyota led the way and inspired other private sector companies to come on board and partner with us in alleviating the plight of the poor during this difficult period.

Therefore, today's seminar further illustrates your dedication to the people of eThekwini and, as leadership of this Municipality, we want to assure you that we will work hard to strengthen this partnership.

The involvement of councillors must enable us to collaborate in programmes that will have a lasting and positive impact at a grassroot level. We say this because the councillors are in close contact with the local communities and it is through these elected representatives that we can help improve service delivery.

We must continue to spread the message to all our citizens to respect all the health protocols in order to reduce the negative impact of the coming third wave of COVID-19. We also urge employers to ensure that they protect their employees by creating a safe working environment in line with all the health guidelines.

Colleagues, it is important to convey our profound gratitude to Toyota for the fact that despite the tough economic climate the world is currently

facing because of this invisible enemy, you have not withheld your investments into our city.

As the Municipality, we remain committed to create a conducive environment for you so that you can derive returns on the major investments you have made. The success of Toyota is in the interest of all of us.

It is for this reason that as the city we will continue to ensure that you receive uninterrupted water and electricity services.

One of the areas we must jointly focus on going forward is the inequality gap that has been exposed by COVID-19. In this regard, we view access to education as key in addressing unemployment and poverty ravaging our communities.

In conclusion, we look forward to working with you and changing the lives of our citizens for the better. Working together, we can do more. Let us build a better life for all through an inclusive economy.

I thank you.