

Welcome Address by the Executive Mayor in a District Growth and Development Pre-Summit at the Hall of Fame, 31 January 2007

Executive Mayor
Mayors
Speakers
Councillors
Business People
Labour Movement
Municipal Managers
Official from the Premier's Office
Official from IDT
Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director, I want to greet everyone here in this epoch making event so that you can enjoy the proceedings. Today's event will set the pace for our district growth and development. This is the first phase where we will plan together on how best can we reduce poverty and leverage employment in our district.

The purpose of this meeting is in line with the Election's Manifesto for 2006 local government elections, which purports that every district will hold a Summit for growth and development within one year of the elections. This suggests that these summits will bring together social partners, governments, business, labour and community organizations to develop concrete steps towards higher rates of local economic growth and poverty reduction. This process will culminate in a District Summit for Growth and Development which will take place on the 22nd February 2007. We therefore invite and appeal to all stakeholders to take this process serious as we want to inject this economy. This can happen through serious commitments from all of us

in various aspects of disciplines ranging from environment to the development of our human capital.

Programme Director,

We needed to have this meeting which will provide a strategic direction, and future efforts undertaken jointly with social partners to accelerate economic growth and enhance development in a way that will benefit both the district and contributes towards further transformation of our country as a whole.

A decent standard of living is as a result of sustained economic growth and expanded employment thereby making a district a powerful bloc in the province in particular and the country in general. For us to reach that stage this meeting must take a conscious decision towards making investment attraction a buzz word and should explore the ways and the capacity to attract more investors.

Harmonisation and Alignment

As we apply our minds in this exercise, we should ensure greater harmonization and alignment with the strategies and plans of provincial and national government. This harmonization and alignment will amount to incorporating the direction provided by these plans into the strategic choices made by this meeting.

Over time, harmonization and alignment will further be strengthened by working with other spheres and municipalities to ensure that they are also aware of and are able to support the direction spelt out in this growth and development strategy. The district

can only master the development and implementation of this strategy if all of us as municipalities and other stakeholders work together to realize the upliftment of this area.

I therefore call on everybody to heed the call made by our President Mr. Thabo Mbeki to own this process and make this district an economic viable one.

I thank you.