



MINISTRY  
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND  
TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, DR ZWELI MKHIZE, at the  
WELCOME DINNER OF THE NATIONAL TREASURY'S EXECUTIVE  
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME, on "Leading Future Cities – Navigating Today's  
Complexity"

WE ARE IN IT TOGETHER:  
A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO REAPING THE URBAN DIVIDEND,  
09 April 2018,  
Johannesburg

Deputy Minister Andries Nel and all Deputy Ministers present,

The leadership of the metropolitan municipalities of Buffalo City, Cape Town,  
Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, Johannesburg, Mangaung, Nelson Mandela Bay, Tshwane,  
Polokwane and Umhlathuze;

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA),

The South African Cities Network,

Good Evening, Sanibonani,

We meet during a period of national mourning, given the loss of our national heroine  
Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. She fought a brave fight and taught all of us that  
it is better to die on your feet than live on your knees. Her passing is a reminder that  
the struggle continues, which is the reason why we are gathered here today.

I am told that you have had a long and productive first day in this fifth edition of the  
Executive Leadership Programme for cities. This is an important programme for us  
as the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, given our role in

championing the Integrated Urban Development Framework (the IUDF), and in building better communities and cities.

Our cities are the engines of our economic growth. They are where most of our population is concentrated. Importantly, our cities, are where many of our problems, as well as our solutions, are located.

This course is thus designed to prepare you to deal with the problems and challenges of running our cities. The country is grappling with numerous interacting political, administrative, economic, and socio-cultural factors and dynamics. From water, electricity and land-fill crises, to massive infrastructure backlogs, economic pressures, fiscal constraints, confronting fraud and corruption in our administrations and ranks, intergovernmental battles, political rivalries, civic protests, labour actions, technological change, threats of further job losses from automation, climate threats and many others.

Looking at these factors, a day in the life of running a city must feel like a fast-paced action movie on any given day, or the Kingdom of Wakanda.

The problem is that – unlike the Kingdom of Wakanda –we are left to do battle every day as mere mortals, trying to govern these complex places called cities.

The IUDF has advocated strongly for a “*whole of government, whole of society*” approach.

This is an approach that acknowledges that “*governance is not just about government*”, as was stated in the latest State of Cities Report. It is an approach that locates cooperation and partnership at the centre of anything that we do, for us to succeed. It is an approach that is consistent with the new national mood: that South Africa can and must pull together in order to move forward.

The African Proverb “*If you want to go fast, go alone, If you want to go far, go together*”, has become increasingly popular. This saying is deeply significant in that it acknowledges that we cannot go it alone. We are faced with a difficult economic and fiscal context, characterized by weak growth and cuts to local government transfers.

I am sure that the National Treasury would have emphasised these issues during the day’s discussions.

Furthermore, by our estimation, metros are currently only budgeting about 65% of the annual R43 billion in direct municipal infrastructure investment required for the renewal and expansion of infrastructure to accommodate future growth. That does not even include additional significant investments required in housing and public transport, nor the costs of strengthening the climate resilience of existing infrastructure assets.

At the same time, in our IUDF conceptualisation of how the “urban dividend” could be attained in South Africa, it is proposed that we will require three things. We need investments in people, meaning social development and basic services. Secondly, we need an inclusive and resilient economy.

Thirdly, we need a sustainable environment in order to unlock positive urban futures which can transform the quality of life of all in our communities.

Faced with these challenges, and with our prognosis, the case seems to be clear. We need deep and practical partnerships across government, with the private sector, and with our communities in order to move forward.

When it comes to inter-governmental relations, Lever 1 of the IUDF, Integrated Urban Planning and Management, highlights the crucial need for improved intergovernmental planning and management by the different spheres of government if we are to create the compact and connected cities of the urban century.

We also need to achieve improved alignment between the three spheres. We need to see national and provincial government departments working together with local government in local spaces. We need to see state owned enterprises seeing themselves as part of the same team, and coming to the party to coordinate and enable much-needed development.

We want to see neighbouring municipalities collaborating as functional economic regions, rather than islands, municipalities learning from each other, peer-to-peer, and collaborating where necessary. We need to urgently understand how to enable productive partnerships with the private sector.

Social partnerships are also key. Every citizen and household in your respective cities should see themselves as participating fully in urban life, including in its democracy, its benefits, and its responsibilities. Organised civil society and NGOs should be able to locate themselves in constructive roles, fully employing their voice and agency.

By the end of this week, I hope that you will all have gained the techniques and models of working with the future, and more especially, of working together.

You will also have gained better insight to ensure the achievement of the bold IUDF vision.

That vision is *“Liveable, safe, resource-efficient cities and towns that are socially integrated, economically inclusive and globally competitive, where residents actively participate in urban life”*.

This is our vision for the future. This is South Africa’s Urban Century.

Colleagues,

The programme has all the right ingredients to help us succeed. However, given the fact that it has been implemented for the past five years, we may need to start reflecting on the impact of previous sessions and to discuss what we have learnt so far. That kind of assessment is very important in order to ensure that we don’t just go through the motions, but ensure that the value of the programme is felt in our cities.

It should help us move in the new direction that the country is taking. I am sure you have heard of people talking about “a new dawn”.

The new dawn calls up on us to re-think, re-invent and re-group with the ultimate goal of making our cities work for all of us. I believe that one of the secret ingredients of the new dawn is leadership and this programme is in line with that spirit of the new dawn.

Let me emphasise that as leaders in our own spaces, we must always remember that, together, we must make a difference. Let us be the visionary and accountable leaders who mobilise the whole of our society towards pulling and acting together to achieve the cities that we need for the future. Working together we can indeed build the type of cities we dream about, and improve the quality of life of our people.

We are in this together. It is not about one municipality, but all of us working together to build our country and make the lives of our people, especially the poor, much better. It is about us working together to fight corruption, maladministration, incompetence and indifference in our municipalities.

It is about us fighting the political-administrative tensions that make it difficult for municipalities to function, and for them to provide basic services for our people such as refuse removal, cutting grass on the verges of the streets, building street humps to save the lives of our children or ensuring that water and lights are provided.

All of these would make our people's experience of local government pleasant. It is not about improving our own lives, but those of the people.

All of us in this room have the capacity to make a difference. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to engage with the top leadership of our biggest cities. Together you account for over 50 percent of South Africa's economic activity.

The impact you make through your efforts will have a greater influence on the economic growth of our country.

Indeed if we can get things right in our metros, then we can make a significant difference in the lives of many of our citizens.

We all have a role to play to build the South Africa of our dreams. In the COGTA family we have developed our own mantra out of this year's message, using the Hugh Masekela song.

**WE SAY**

I want to be there when our people turn municipalities around. Send me!

When they triumph over poverty unemployment and inequality I want to be there.

When our people protest and cry out for service delivery, I want to be there.

I want to be there for the indigent, unemployed and those in informal settlements.

I want to lend a hand when our people fight against the rigging of tenders, fraud and corruption.

I want to be there when our people eliminate crime, violence and the abuse of women and children.

I want to be there in the fight against HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Cancers.

I want to be there to ensure food security and healthy lifestyles, Send me!

I want to be there when our people fight for land and get involved in the agrarian revolution.

I want to be there when our people clean the streets of our towns and cities to reclaim our dignity and pride.

I want to be there in the fight for a sustainable environment.

I want to be there when our people fix the potholes, fix broken lights and cut the grass on the verges of the roads.

I want to be there when our people share in the country's wealth to be included in a growing and vibrant economy.

I want to lend a hand in the struggle to improve the lives of all South Africans.

I want to be there for nation building social cohesion and the protection of human rights for all.

THUMA Mina, Send Me!

I am ready to serve our people, nothing else but serve our people.

Thuma Mina

I wish you all the best for this week of learning.

I thank you.