

ADDRESS TO BE DELIVERED BY CLR LUNGILE MTSHALI, AT THE INSTITUTE OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICERS CONFERENCE, AT EMPEROR'S PALACE, ON THE 5TH OCTOBER 2009

THE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR; MR SYDWELL MOFOKENG;

EXECUTIVE MAYORS AND MAYORS PRESENT;

MAYORAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS;

FELLOW COUNCILLORS;

IMFO PRESIDENT; MR GEORGE VAN SCHALKWYK;

MUNICIPAL MANAGERS;

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS;

DIRECTOR CITY OF CAPE TOWN; MS LOUISE MULLER,

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;

MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA;

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

It is with great pride and privilege that I welcome you all on behalf of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and the people we serve.

Ekurhuleni is a Tsonga word and can loosely be translated as a place of peace. Ekurhuleni is the smart, creative and developmental City. We are focused on creating partnerships that work, while striving to become a diverse investment destination of choice.

As Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, we are both humbled and privileged to have been afforded this opportunity to play host to this years Conference of the Institute of Municipal Finance Officers with its focus on the future and how to assist Local

Government; SALGA and DPLG to find effective and efficient methods towards improving service delivery to our communities.

Ekurhuleni is the industrial base of our country. In this respect, we have a strategic facilitation role managing the forces and dynamics impacting on the economy. We are part of the Gauteng City Region that plays a facilitating role in ensuring that the private sector and cooperatives sector plays a direct role in job creation and in empowering communities to play an effective role in a transformed economy as together with the Gauteng Government and municipalities within Gauteng we seek to implement integrated programmes that will ensure cohesion in development rather than pockets of poverty in focusing on regional development.

We have witnessed growth in the manufacturing sector of Ekurhuleni. Evidence in the figures on manufacturing has shown that Ekurhuleni is the best performing metro in terms of manufacturing growth and employment absorption. Most manufacturing and construction activities in South Africa are geographically located within the Gauteng Province, specifically in the Ekurhuleni Metro region.

More than a third of all SA's manufacturing takes place within our borders. Manufacturing is largely heavy industry and mining. A large portion of Ekurhuleni is home to warehousing and distribution centres, with many linked to the OR Tambo International Airport's cargo activities.

The Institute plays a crucial role through affording municipal delegates, representatives and stakeholders, an opportunity through the Conference to strengthen relationships and share experiences and international practice on matters pertaining to the running and administration of local government in general, and sound financial management in particular.

This Conference takes place under very exciting and challenging times, considering the impending 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament, on the one hand and the rising levels of public protestations around service delivery at local government level, on the other hand. All this coupled with the context of the Conference “making the elephant dance”, raises our expectations to a high level, in respect of the Conference.

At the outset, the task may seem humanly impossible if not difficult to realise, but as delegates, representatives and attendees to this Conference, we are certain that we will at the end have been empowered towards ensuring that this huge animal, makes progress towards becoming an accomplished and beautiful dancer, showing us beautiful moves.

We are hopeful as Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality that at the end of this Conference, we will all take with us the best practices and experiences learned out of this conference back into our Metro’s and municipalities and roll up our sleeves in ensuring that we accelerate and expand our peoples access to the better life that we all aspire to. This we have to do through ensuring that all we learn, hear and see, indeed help us to improve service delivery to all our communities.

I THANK YOU!!!