

Speech by the Mayor at the 175th Gala Dinner at the Show Grounds on 8th November 2013

The Honourable Minister of Communications, Minister Yunus Carrim, Honourable MEC for Finance, MEC Ina Cronje, Honourable Deputy Mayor, Cllr Thobani Zuma, Honourable Speaker, Cllr Baboo Baijoo, Honourable Chief Whip, Councillor Trueman Magubane, Members of the executive Committee, fellow Councillors, President of the PCB, Mr Paris Dlamini, CEO Of the PCB, Melanie Veness and the entire PCB Board, Municipal Manager Mxolisi Nkosi and the entire Msunduzi management, Our Partners and sponsors NEDBANK and VODACOM, dignitaries from the business community, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

When we put together and approved the business plan for the 175th Anniversary celebrations, one of the underlying principles that we adopted, was that we needed to plan and organize these different events in partnership with other stakeholders. This was informed by the fact that the anniversary was not just for Msunduzi Council, but for all the various formations and sectors that make up the municipality. When we launched the celebrations, we partnered with the Royal Agricultural Society at this venue, MEC Cronje was there. We partnered with the Comrades Marathon Association, and we awarded the top ten winners in the men and women section with special 175 medals. We partnered with the Mandela Day Marathon and all medals, over 5000 of them, had the 175th anniversary logo. We partnered with uKhozi FM for a celebration with the elderly. We partnered with the Youth to host a street carnival and talent search which ended with electrifying performances by the youth. We partnered with Cultural organisers for a Jazz in the park 175th anniversary celebration.

It would not have been a complete exercise if we had not had a celebration with the community that is the livelihood of our City, the Business Community. We are very happy and excited that one of the most important pieces of the 175th anniversary is put in place today. In the 175 years since Pietermaritzburg was established, the role of the business community has contributed immensely in shaping our City to be what it is today, and you continue to play that role. It must be remembered that when we talk of a Municipality, or a City for that matter, we are talking about people.

And when we talk about people, we are talking about their wellbeing. Socially and economically, how are they managing? Do they have food, do they have water, do they have access to quality health care and education. Do they have jobs? In celebrating these so many years, we have to do that in the context of the lives of the people, our people. The wars were about people's lives. The revolution was about people's lives. Therefore, because government and business are both about people, it is absolutely critical that we work together and work towards the same vision that will at the end improve the lives of our people. The GREAT effort that has been made by government in the past 20years to improve people's lives has been driven by the belief that "TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE".

Now ladies and gentlemen it's time for the toast and the cutting of the cake!