**DISTRICT AIDS COUNCIL**

**20 JUNE 2019**

**MAYOR’S PARLOUR**

**OPENING ADDRESS**

**CLLR. BUSISIWE MODISAKENG**

Honourable Executive Mayors

Honourable MMCs, Health practitioners and researchers, Members of our District AIDS Council,

Civil Society Forum Members, Business and government departments

Distinguished guests; NACOSA delegates;

In his closing address at the recent SA AIDS conference held in Durban, our newly elected Vice-President David Mabuza who also serves as the chairperson of the South African AIDS Council highlighted that HIV and Aids continues to affect all aspects of our lives beyond the dictates of medicine, he also stated that it becomes more apparent that this epidemic defines our social, psychological, economic and spiritual existence.

Ladies and gentlemen

On that note, I would like to welcome you all to today’s District AIDS Council and hope that it has become clear how important these meetings are for our communities. It is engagements such as these that enable us to consolidate our resources, to further pursue the fight against HIV&AIDS and TB pandemic.

Honourable Guests

In our last gathering, several issues which I note to be of importance where raised:

* Firstly…that communication between the District & Local Municipalities remains a challenge, as well as the distribution of information to all involved stakeholders.
* Secondly…uncertain collaboration between FBOs and current stakeholders in terms of HIV/AIDS and TB education.
* Thirdly…administrative issues with relation to condom distribution and young pregnant women
* And lastly… governance and accountability challenges faced within local municipalities posing service delivery limitations.

Members of District AIDS Council

I am inspired in discovering that the presentations made by stakeholders in the last meeting show encouraging results in terms of the work that is being done. I would like to congratulate AIDS Council Members in mitigating these issues and seeking progressive solutions to continue our fight against a rapid disease.

Indeed, South Africa is amongst the first countries in the world with the largest HIV and AIDS programme. This has drastically and amazingly reduced AIDS-related deaths. In the last two years, the number of people on anti-retro-viral drugs has increased by almost a third.

Honourable guests

I implore everyone to continue to move forward with the Gauteng AIDS Council strategic goals which are PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND JOINT REACTION these are key objectives in assisting, more specially, high risk groups such as homeless and vulnerable youth, young women between the age of 15 and 24, sex workers and the LGBTI community. Indeed, we are positive that we will reach the government target of below (hundred thousand) 100,000 new infections by December 2020.

The HIV&AIDS and TB discussion is lengthy and dynamic, in conclusion I look forward to today’s presentations and welcome you all to this meeting.

Ladies and gentlemen

Tonight is the State of the Nation Address, I encourage members of council as well the community to tune in and listen to what His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa has in store for our country.