



**COUNCILOR ANDREW JOHN MAPHETLE
EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF POTCHEFSTROOM
ADDRESS TO Växjö CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY 24 AUGUST 2006
CONCERT HALL
Växjö
14H00**

The Chairperson of the City Council of Växjö / Mayor (Carl-Olof Bengtsson);

Eva Lonquist (Chairperson) of the Social Democratic Party;

Bruno Edgarsson (1st Vice Chairperson) Centre Party;

Rolf Sallryd (2nd Vice Chairperson) Christian Democrats;

Charlotte Branting – Liberal Party;

Agneta Eriksson – Left Party;

RosMarie Jonsson Necko – Social Democratic Party;

Ragnar Lindberg – Social Democratic Party;

Michael Sjoo – Social Democratic Party;

Ingemar Swalander – Moderate Party;

Bjorn Johansson – Head of County Development Department;

Erica Mansson – Head of Arts and Culture;

Annika Nilsson – Head of Economic Policies;

Monica Flodstrom – Chief Executive of Växjö City;

Kronoberg County Administrative Board;

Claes Sjoblom – Vice Governor;

Sivert Eklundh – Chief of Staff;

Councilors of the hosting City;

Councilor Barei Segotso – the Chief Whip of the Potchefstroom City Council;

Councilor Lucky Tsagae – the Speaker of the Potchefstroom City Council;

Councilor Meso Dassie – Member of the Mayoral Committee for Social Services;

Alderman Chris Landsberg – from the Potchefstroom City Council;

All member delegation of the Potchefstroom City Council;

Members of the Council of Växjö;

Ms Annika Ström;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me take this opportunity to stretch out my hand of friendship and goodwill to you all – the friends and working partners of the City of Potchefstroom. Our common interest has enabled us to take this trip across the seas – and to meet and further outline our way forward on the projects agreed upon.

Background:

Honourable Programme Director – we as the Potchefstroom City Council are keen on the Memorandum of Understanding that is envisaged between the Kronoberg County Council and the City of Växjö. We will be entering into this agreement in order to strengthen the ongoing partnership and contribute to a fruitful co-operation in both countries. We should initiate joint projects of mutual benefit and support co-operation between our municipalities, organizations and businesses from South Africa and Sweden.

It is important, ladies and gentlemen, that when such projects are initiated – they adhere to the contribution and stimulation of sustainable regional development [on economic, social and environmental matters], as well as, strengthening democratic processes and public service and institutions.

With the forthcoming elections in September, His Worship – we have heard that the race will be one of the tightest in recent times. I believe that when most of the Swedes will be casting their votes in the month of September – the issues of democracy, capacity building, public administration, information and communication, social development, culture, trade and business, will be key in their minds.

These issues are also vital to the working relations between the Potchefstroom City Council and this Council. The City of Potchefstroom and the municipal area in general – consists of approximately 280 000 residents. Like any other developing City in South Africa – our municipality

experiences lots of influx of people from the rural and farming areas in search of better services and employment.

With a sound political leadership and the system of government that we have in our country – Potchefstroom City Council is doing its utmost best in broadening communications mechanisms and channels with its residents.

In the system of government that we have in South Africa – local government is governed by a slew of legislation, which includes: - the Systems, Structures and Municipal Finance Management Acts. These Acts provide guidance and procedures that need to be followed in order to change the lives of our people for the better.

Public Participation:

It is required of us – to elect Ward Committees that would in turn, assist our Ward Councilors in matters relating to the specific area of the municipality. Since we have 21 Wards and it is required of us to establish 21 Ward Committees in the jurisdiction of the Potchefstroom City Council. We, as the Potchefstroom City Council, are providing administrative assistance to these Ward Committees. We offer them assistance with regard to printing of notices, agendas and typing of minutes and to a certain extent, provide transportation for the members of these committees.

I am mentioning all of these, ladies and gentlemen – so that you can see and fully understand our system of government which the Speaker spoke of. As

a developing country, our government is still trying its utmost best in redressing the imbalances that were caused by the apartheid regime.

Challenges:

Because of this system of government that prevailed for many decades in our country – there are a number of **challenges** that are still experienced and are consequences of that bureaucracy, and they include and not limited to:

- ✚ High unemployment, especially among young black people;
- ✚ Poor standards of lives in the black communities – with this I mean, lack of basic services like electricity, water and sanitation;
- ✚ Poor standard of education to previously marginalized communities;
- ✚ Lack of resources or educational aids at schools;
- ✚ Lack of sporting and recreational facilities in the black communities;
- ✚ Lack and backlog of infrastructural facilities and services, like tarred roads, street lighting and so forth.

Due to the poor educational system that was mastered by the apartheid and colonial regime in South Africa and Africa in general – there are also other social challenges that are coupled to those mentioned above. It is a fact that Africa suffers the highest HIV/AIDS records as compared to the rest of the

world. These challenges are not only limited to some areas of our country – but are visible and are daily occurrences at municipalities in our region.

Solutions:

However, it is fulfilling to notice that Potchefstroom City is doing its utmost best in carrying out the mandate of its people – and is working tirelessly to curb the above-mentioned challenges. Amongst other things that our City Council is doing in finding solutions are:

- ✚ Hosting Land Committee meetings to advise Council on matters relating to land allocation and rezoning for purposes of development to advance the previously disadvantaged communities to own land;

- ✚ Hosting Economic Development and Infrastructure Portfolio Committees – for advising Council on areas of business, being it macro or micro, and infrastructure development to advance economic development;

- ✚ Hosting Units or departmental meetings – and ensuring that we are taking the needs and wishes of our personnel seriously when carrying out our mandate as a municipality in ensuring that our personnel service puts the needs of the people first ;

- ✚ Hosting Governance and Administration Portfolio Committee meetings – and ensuring that our administration adheres to all the

required standard as stipulated in the Acts of the Republic to ensure that the citizens of our City enjoy their rights of service delivery.

Public Safety and Disaster Management:

In our endeavour to regulate and bring development to the growing needs of the City of Potchefstroom – our municipality is in the process of establishing a Satellite Fire Station for rural areas because the population of our City has outgrown the one station that we have currently.

We also deem the livelihood of our people serious and are currently establishing a separate Disaster Management Centre with Closed Circuit Television Cameras and Best Practice Model. These cameras will help us to further alleviate petty criminal activities that we experience from time to time.

We are also establishing a Community Court to off-load the Magistrates Courts in the City, especially when it comes to issues pertaining to the municipality – for example traffic fines, violation of traffic management systems and bylaws etc.

We still would want to know from you, as a first world country – how you succeeded in achieving your goals in all of these before – as we wish to partner with you.

Electricity and Credit Control Policy:

We are trying at by all means as a municipality to ensure that we provide services to our communities as an entity; our national and provincial legislation are beginning to have a huge impact on this requirement – as friends we would like to partner with you on best practices and influence national and provincial spheres of our government.

Learnerships and Human Resources:

His Worship – we have several projects that we are successfully running at our municipality and believe that we can learn a lot from one another. These projects include *inter alia*:

- ✚ Learnerships on Finance and Administration – and here we have chosen a number of unemployed youth and are providing them with survival skills on finances and administration. Our government believes that after completing this learnership in one year, these learners will be in a position to apply them in various facets of their own lives and employment stages.
- ✚ We are also offering Labour Relations training Phase One with the sole objective of empowering our personnel in labour matters.
- ✚ Our Employees' Assistance Programme offers our personnel workshops on HIV/AIDS, stress management, conflict resolution, employer and employees relations etc.

As our co-operation is based upon effective lines of information and communication, it is imperative that our joint Monitoring Committee set up to guarantee the principle of common benefit. We are a developing City and the primary objectives of this project as stipulated, suits us very well. We have agreed to:

- ✚ Identify possible staff co-operation areas;
- ✚ Establish personal contacts between key personnel in different areas and levels of both organizations;
- ✚ Establish a long-term connection between the two technical organizations;
- ✚ Deepen the co-operation between the two municipalities by looking forward into future areas of the union.;
- ✚ Ensured that you as a developed country to take the lead in empowering us as a 3rd world country.

The Potchefstroom City Council strongly believes that this union is viable. We should jealously guard that it meets the expected results from both parties, is mutual, sustainable, reduces poverty, is environmentally friendly and is gender sensitive.

Parks and Social Services:

Your Excellency the Mayor - these projects should at the end of the day – be able to provide guidance on how we can further improve the services of establishing, developing and executing maintaining our cemeteries to hold onto our history and heritage.

We also improved our library services – and we hope that, as a developed country, our Swedes friends will even introduce us in the deeper and yet not-so sophisticated ways of using technology for such services. With a rich history of our two countries, you will all realize during these exchange projects, that ours is a City rich in history. We would still like to continue promoting arts and culture and even rendering educational and informational services to a broad spectrum of target groups in our area. Our commitment to a cultural village with Swedish African-Afrikaaner history still holds your financial contribution in this is priceless – please assist to realize this.

Our commitment to 2010

We are starting now – on 25 August 2006 three years down the line. As Executive Mayor I commit myself that our City will be a home and training venue for your 2010 preparations. As your friends, we will ensure that you receive the most private, secured and prepared venues.

We will ensure that you as our friends who saved the life of our liberator OR Tambo – that, that is the payback time our liberation couldn't have happened without you taking care of our dearest leader OR Tambo.

Your home ground, your safety place, your private and everything else will be best placed at our world standard facilities in Potchefstroom (come, let it be your home and let us assist you to make it towards all the rounds of the World Cup final. We have got the facilities, your fans have our guest houses, hotel, dam areas and private homes for hospitality. Sweden is the home of South Africa and South Africa is the home to Sweden. Do not hesitate that 2010 training and preparations place – private and secured.

This commitment we are making – is because we know you always make the second round. We will prepare our people for that – Sweden is second to South Africa.

Conclusion and Best Wishes:

On behalf of the City Council of Potchefstroom and its people – I wish you all a peaceful voting process and I know that these elections will mainly be fought on the economy and development. We all know that Swedish economy is booming, but still, there is anxiety about developments in the job market. I would like to reiterate the words of 22-year old Carolina Westin, a student from Ullanger in northern Sweden who said [not so long ago], and I quote:

“The most important issues are the welfare issues, to even out the injustice in society, jobs for all, *et cetera*”. Close quote.

What Carolina meant is – and could be “the livelihood of people first, to better their living conditions without having to score points. I hope that as we enjoy the month of crayfish for dinners – we also clearly understand that changing the lives of our people is key. Just on lighter note – it is interesting to know that Swedish furniture giant Ikea, sells 150 million meatballs a year worldwide AND that according to a leading restaurant search engine in Stockholm, there are 33 national cuisines available in the city, not including Swedish.

South Africa is ready to take up the challenge. This Executive Mayor and his delegation is keen to prepare ground for you in the City of Potchefstroom.

Your country is beautiful – and with all those summer houses that are mushrooming, I hope you will realize that most of the world is watching you with envy. We are also humbled by the annual prestigious Polar Music Prize that is handed out in May every year – our very own Mama Africa [Miriam Makeba] is also one of the recipients of these awards.

I hope that our stay in this part of the world will encourage both of us, to work harder and leave a legacy behind. After all, this world is borrowed from the future generation. Let’s work hard – especially those of us who are given the privilege to lead and make it better, for our future generation.

I thank you.



**Executive Mayor Maphetle
Maphetle addressing the Council
of the City of Växjö during his
visit to Sweden (August 2006)**