

CLOSING REMARKS BY CLLR MPHONGISO PHEKISILE, EXECUTIVE  
MAYOR OF JOHANNESBURG, TEMPLE ISRAEL 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY,  
HILLBROW 9 JULY 2016

HIS EXCELLENCY ISRAEL AMBASSADOR TO SOUTH AFRICA,  
ARTHUR LENK

REEVA FORMAN AND THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF TEMPLE  
ISRAEL

PUBLIC PROTECTOR OF SOUTH AFRICA, ADVOCATE THULI  
MADONSELA

DIGNITARIES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Warm greetings to all of you

- I would like to thank Advocate Thuli Madonsela for her insightful lecture and the sterling work she has done as our country's Public Protector.

- Most importantly we would like to congratulate Temple Israel for its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary since its establishment in 1936 under the tutelage of Rabbi Dr Moses Cyrus Weiler.
- We thank Temple Israel for its sterling work in the country's oppressed communities over the years which manifested itself through the establishment of the MC Weiler School in Alexandra Township.
- As the City of Johannesburg we think that Temple Israel Heritage Centre has an important role to play in eliminating all forms of discrimination in South Africa, bringing about social cohesion. This includes racism, gender discrimination and xenophobia
- We think that the Heritage Centre could be a meeting point for our country's diverse communities- and engage on a number of issues including cultural, heritage, diversity issues, Ubuntu, religious tolerance and above all how we as South Africans can live together in a non-racial society.
- It could be a space where different communities and individuals can exhibit their work, deepening our understanding of the range of cultures of this Rainbow Nation - The kind of a Centre that could even archive the work of our various communities including oral histories. This would enable people from all walks of life to visit

Temple Israel Heritage Centre and unearth the histories of our various communities.

- The location of this Heritage Centre is itself ideal-Hillbrow- the melting pot of South Africa where people from all walks of life live- ex- South African exiles, the Jewish community and many from the African Diaspora. All this makes it ideal for the centre to be a meeting point, bringing about social cohesion.
- Hillbrow is a key strategic node in the Inner City and the meeting point for the Empire Perth and Louis Botha Corridors of Freedom. And as the City we have taken it to ourselves to revitalize this part of the City. For example, we are currently completing upgrades to the Hillbrow Tower precinct (1km radius of Tower), most notably along Goldreich Street and non-motorised transport infrastructure along Claim Street. The total investment by the City in the public environment upgrades in the precinct is R50 million rand (2015/16 30 Million; 2016/17 20 Million). This project is nearing completion.
- Thus as the City we fully support the work of Temple Israel Heritage Centre and its future endeavors plans. Engagement between Temple Israel and Community Development under MMC Chris Vondo has been ongoing for many years, with important milestones along the way. For example:

- In 2007, Temple Israel was added to the Joburg Heritage Register, a record of heritage sites recognized by the City of Johannesburg.
  
- In 2011, a blue heritage plaque was awarded to the M.C. Weiler Primary School by the City of Johannesburg.
  
- In November 2014, a heritage plaque was awarded to Temple Israel, mounted at the entrance of the synagogue.

Once more we would like to thank all of you for attending this awe-inspiring ceremony. Once more and speaking on behalf of the people of Johannesburg, we congratulate Temple Israel for its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary and thank its members for the unremitting commitment to our country.

Thank you