

SPEECH BY CLLR MPHONGA PARKS TAU, EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF
JOHANNESBURG, INDEPENDENT NATIONAL GOSPEL AWARDS
(INGOMA), JOHANNESBURG, 4 MARCH 2016

Deputy Minister of Telecommunications, Her Excellency Professor
Hlengiwe Mkhize

Doves Funeral service Marketing Executive, Ms Refiloe Kgoale

CEO of Africom, Mr. Thulani Khoza

Chairperson of INGOMA, Mr. Dan Raseluma

Dignitaries

Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening

I want to start by thanking you most sincerely for inviting the City of Johannesburg to this spectacular event: the 3rd Independent National Gospel Awards. We are humbled by this gesture.

Musicians: as gospel musicians you have an important role to play in uplifting and inspiring people and in ensuring spiritual revival in our society. This is significant particularly in times like these when we are faced, as the country and the world, with a range of socio-economic problems. These include the scourge of xenophobia, racism, poverty and mass migration. Thus your music should continue to bring us back from the precipice of pessimism: giving hope to the hopeless, strength to those of us who feel

weakened by life's challenges and renewal and a sense of proper direction for those tempted to engage in evil acts. Such inspiring and motivating music is important especially because as gospel musicians, you are role models. Society looks up to you.

Ladies and gentlemen, music contributes to the GDP of our country. Our country is the 25th largest market for recorded music and the industry employs about 20 000 people. Back in 2007 when the Mzansi's Golden Economy received major attention from government, our country's music industry was worth around R 1.7 billion in sales and ranked 17th in the world. We should never underestimate the role of music in economic development. It does so by creating jobs for different role players in the music industry, namely composers, artists, producers, technicians, publishers, retailers and promoters.

An example of a value chain in music economic development is the staging of music festivals. This greatly contributes to local economic development and job creation. Different sectors also benefit through staging music festivals. This includes hospitality and structural industries such as stage and marquee owners. Through a music festival, a number of local people in both the formal and informal sectors where a festival is staged secure jobs. And depending on its magnitude, a music festival can contribute to tourism.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the City of Johannesburg we also make a significant contribution to the music industry. For example, on New Year's Eve we host a music festival at Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown. As

the City we also pay for copyright (to SAMRO) for music played in our facilities. In turn this money is paid to artists as royalties.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the host city of the INGOMA awards tonight, we want you to know that we are fully behind you and that we welcome this initiative. It is an important gathering that brings about togetherness and social cohesion, the building blocks of non-racialism. Music, and especially gospel music with its message, as the Bible says, of 'faith, hope and charity', brings people together. Isn't that almost the definition of social cohesion? And for us also, in government at all levels, the fight against the racism, xenophobia and intolerance of all kinds that undermines social cohesion is central to our policies.

Programme Director, the new democratic dispensation has been a significant catalyst in bringing about social cohesion, reconciliation and nation building. And as government, through our programmes, particularly those relating to arts and culture, including music, we have played an important role in creating a platform for nation building and social cohesion.

Through the City's spatial redress programme, for example the Corridors of Freedom, we hope to bring about an economically inclusive, diverse and non-racial society. The Corridors of Freedom initiative is of great significance especially if we want to reverse the damage done by the apartheid government, with its policy of racial separation. This was characterized by forced removals and displacement of our people away from economic opportunities and social amenities.

Programme Director, social cohesion is particularly important for a country that was once divided along racial lines - a country that seeks to understand and welcome diversity especially in this world of mass migration which requires us to be champions of tolerance and acculturation. We are a country that seeks to achieve a non-racial society, and this is a central principle of our deservedly celebrated and revered Constitution. Again, our country's 2030 vision epitomized in the National Development Plan, emphasizes the importance of and the need for social cohesion. It stipulates that we need

- A broad- based knowledge about and support for a set of values shared by all South Africans.
- An inclusive society and economy.
- Increased interaction between South Africans of different backgrounds

However for us to achieve true social cohesion we need civil society organizations like INGOMA to ensure that it is indeed the cornerstone of this liberated South Africa. This is why gatherings and gospel music initiatives of this nature are so important, spreading the Gospel message of love and charity between all human beings. This is a message, let me emphasize again, that matches government's commitment to social cohesion. We are together on this.

Once more, as the City of Johannesburg, we congratulate you on this successful event.

Thank you