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WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF JOHANNESBURG, CLLR DADA MORERO

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

26–27 March 2026 | Focus Rooms, Modderfontein, Sandton

Theme: Unlocking Investment and Partnerships for Integrated Human Settlements

Programme Director,
Leadership of SALGA NEC and PEC,
Honourable Minister of Human Settlements, Minister Thembi Simelane,
Deputy Minister,
Councillors and municipal officials,
Representatives of the Gauteng Partnership Fund,
Delegates from the Association of Local Authorities of Namibia,
Development finance institutions,
Private sector partners and developers,
Academia and professional bodies,
Civil society and community representatives,
Distinguished guests,
Good morning.

It is a privilege to welcome you to Johannesburg for this important summit.

We meet at a defining moment for our cities. Urbanisation is accelerating. Demand for housing is rising. Infrastructure systems are under pressure. At the same time, economic growth remains uneven and constrained. These are not abstract challenges. They are lived realities for millions of residents. They demand a coordinated, practical response.

This summit is therefore not ceremonial. It is an intervention. It brings together the state, investors, and practitioners in one room to resolve constraints, unlock opportunities, and accelerate delivery. As the City of Johannesburg, we are honoured to host this platform. We recognise that spatial transformation and investment-led development are central to the future of our city and our country.

The purpose of this summit is clear. It is to create a credible platform for engagement between the public and private sectors. It is to identify scalable opportunities in affordable and middle-income housing. It is to strengthen partnerships across all spheres of government. It is to confront regulatory and policy bottlenecks directly. It is to showcase practical solutions that improve project viability and reduce delays. In simple terms, we are here to unlock the full value of the property development ecosystem.

Local government sits at the centre of this ecosystem. It is at municipal level where approvals are processed, where infrastructure is delivered, and where development either moves or stalls.

We must therefore focus on the fundamentals:

Improving land use management systems.

Reducing application turnaround times.

Ensuring the availability of serviced land.

Strengthening infrastructure planning and investment.

Providing regulatory certainty to investors.

Driving precinct-based development in inner cities and townships.

Using public land strategically to support inclusive growth.

These are not optional reforms. They are prerequisites for investment.

As the Executive Mayor, I want to reaffirm the City's position. Johannesburg is open for investment. We are committed to improving efficiency. We are strengthening governance systems. We are working to restore confidence in municipal processes. But we are also clear. Government cannot deliver at scale on its own. Partnership is not a slogan. It is a necessity.

The value of this summit lies in the diversity of perspectives. The Gauteng Partnership Fund brings financing innovation. Our Namibian counterparts bring regional experience. Academia brings evidence and insight. The private sector brings capital and delivery capacity. Municipalities bring regulatory authority and spatial direction. The task is to align these capabilities. We must use this platform to respond to real constraints.

Housing affordability remains a structural challenge. Urban densification is uneven and contested. Infrastructure financing gaps persist. Transit-oriented development is underdeveloped. Developers continue to face delays and uncertainty in municipal processes. These are the issues we must resolve. Not in theory, but in practice.

Colleagues, the scale of the housing challenge requires urgency. It requires innovation in financing. It requires coordination across spheres of government. It requires disciplined implementation. Most importantly, it requires accountability.

This summit must therefore produce outcomes. Clear actions. Defined timelines. Measurable commitments. We must move from discussion to execution. South Africa cannot afford fragmentation. We need alignment. We need consistency. We need a shared framework for delivery. Let this summit mark a shift towards that approach.

With these remarks, it is my honour to welcome you to the 2026 Local Government Property Development Summit. I wish you productive engagements and concrete outcomes.

Thank you.