

**ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR: COUNCIL MEETING – 24 FEBRUARY 2004**

Thank you Mr Speaker, I have decided not to present a speech as it is the first one that I will present on the 30<sup>th</sup> March when we present our budget. I will indicate more of the challenges and how we are going to deal with the challenges of the coming year. But Mr Speaker, I am having this few areas that I needed to emphasize to this Council that indeed we are privileged to be part of this Council and also to ensure that we are the builders, we laid the foundation for the future generation when our children looking back, after we have passed, they would say, who are the forbearers who have laid the foundation of a democratic local government. So we are challenged Mr Speaker that in whatever we do we must make sure that we lay the legacy that will be remembered and honoured for the systems of local governance that we are introducing. Instead, indeed Mr Speaker, this is our 4<sup>th</sup> year or we are starting our 4<sup>th</sup> year, we have not yet mastered the question of local development, developmental local government. We are still locked in old thinking, we are still locked in old ways of doing things, that is been measured that our administration, our system is not yet geared to the developmental local government. Our vision we said we want to build a democratic non-racial, non-sexist society and we also want to build a community of entrepreneurship. (I'm being disturbed by this noise. I'm not sure what is happening with the technical people there.) Right. As I have indicated Mr Speaker, that the question of masterminding the developmental local government, we are still struggling. This is the indication of the manner in which the community is responding to our messages to say that the community must stand up and do things for themselves. The question of the business initiatives that is been done by ordinary masses out there and the local government or the municipality has not yet put itself in power to respond appropriately to those initiatives and out there the people, because we are saying we are developmental local government, they are also expecting that even the decision that we are making, it must conform with the speed at which they expect this municipality to make a decision. So Mr Speaker it is clear that the cycle of making a decision within the municipalities, we either needed to look that and we have to delegate more powers to certain department and certain councillors and certain committees that when an issue reaches a stage where the committee has to dispose of that matter and later on submit a report to the Executive Mayor, we must do so. I think that the challenge, because there are a lot of people who are coming around here who want to invest, who want to develop certain things in our municipality, but because of our decision-making cycle is too long we are not able to capture those investment that are coming to us. So those are some of the challenges that are facing this municipality. When it comes to our own people, our own people they come up with projects, they initiate projects and they wanted to be assisted by the municipality, either by getting people who are well-thought in relation with how to do business plan, how to go about managing the finances, all those things people come to the municipality and present their ideas and the municipality is not able to respond appropriately because with our thinking we are still saying we are service model. Only when we provided the services that's fine, but we forget that we are now a developmental local government where we have to influence each and every sphere of our people. So those are some of the areas that we have been able to experience for the last couple of years. And indeed Mr Speaker, for us to, not to, to be left behind by own

people not to lose hope that this government can make their lives better we needed to improve on the question of decision-making. The other one, Mr Speaker, which is also very critical, is in relation with our laws that are governing the local municipality. If you go into the Systems Act, the Systems Act challenges the initiative of administrators, of politician, they are saying although we were rule-based, but there is certain decisions that you needed to come up with your own idea, which are not necessarily prescribed by law, but the law allows you to come up with a framework that will be able to assist you in taking decision. That is also another gap which we have realize that as municipality, because the law said this thing and because the law does not tell us whether to do it or not to do it, we are stucked with what the law is prescribing to us and the Systems Act is saying as long as you'll be able to justify the action and the decision and the practice that you are making then that is fine, but there must be a parameter where you'll be able to say, I've taken this decision, having looked the following benefits and so forth, so I think this year is one challenge that we needed to a little bit get out of the mode. Continuously as local government we are being required to play a major role in the lives in either mediating or advising, not necessarily the small business, even the big business they also like to hear what is the thinking of the local government and you'll find that some of their suggestions, they are true, I heard, of the local municipality. What does that say? It says we need to acquire the necessary skills, our administrators they must be empowered to the extent that they are able to meet the demand of the private sector. When they are here, they also wanted to meet equally with people who are having the same level of understanding on how the economy works and where development should take place. So those are some of the areas Mr Speaker, which I thought in this introductory remark of this Council I needed to highlight. When coming to the question also of our Systems Act and I've also looked into the question of reporting in this Council. Mr Speaker this municipality is doing so many things that are good to try and address the problems that we are having, but our reporting mechanism, our reporting mechanism has deficiency. We cannot expect to report to this Council only at the end of the year and we present the annual report, but we must get a way of either ensuring that this Council understand what is happening within the administration, within the community on a monthly basis. Not necessarily that the report must be tabled in Council, but the report can be dispatched to various Councillors and as we are doing that, we must take that as having tabled that report in the Council. Some of our Councillors they also need more information and I have also realized that there is certain Councillors, because they are specialized on a particular Portfolio Committee, they are excellent, they know what is happening there, but what about those Councillors who are not necessarily part of that Portfolio Committee. So those are the challenges that our people are facing, especially our Councillors, they are under tremendous pressure to respond to each and everything that is happening in the municipality and if this administration will not be able to provide that information then we are rendering our own Councillors ineffective. So those are some of the things Mr Speaker, which I have identified as the challenges that we needed to improve as we are doing this. Maybe the other thing Mr Speaker, which I also looked into, yes indeed we have not been able to present the by-laws in this, because we thought when we were told in the law that there will be a standard by-law derived or done by the provincial and local government then we are then absolve from that responsibility. We now discovered that the Constitution says the legislative and executive authority of the

municipality lies with its Council. We cannot come and say, because the department has said they will draft a standard by-law so we are still waiting we cannot move. So those are some of the Constitutional issues that, as municipality, we needed to look into and we have started Mr Speaker, to work very hard in that regard. Let me conclude by indicating that as municipality we are also required by law to establish the Municipal Decision and Planning Process by-law. That the community out there must know the process, we needed to pass a by-law as this municipality to say how do we take decisions and how then do we accommodate the people to participate in that decision-making. But at the moment we just take it for granted that everybody knows. Those are some of the discoveries as we have learnt and those are some of the experience that we are coming up with. So Mr Speaker, I'm saying, I'm raising this issues because some of them we have already started, we will be presenting some of the ideas as we proceed, but the challenges that is facing us now, we have committed ourselves as this municipality to build a non-racial society, non-sexist, democratic. One of the issues that we have identified is that the Constitution says that it is the local government's responsibility to make sure that the community participates in the governance of themselves. What does that say Mr Speaker? It says, as municipality we cannot sit back and say this is a national election, this is a national programme, this is a provincial programme, as municipality we don't have to play a role, no. The Constitution, if you go to Section 150, Section 151 it says it is our objects to make sure that the people and community participate in their governance. And all those things Mr Speaker, it means money. It means money. It says this municipality must spend to make sure that you promote and you encourage the community to participate in the decision of their government. So those are the challenges. I don't have answers at the moment, but I'm sure this honourable house will be able to make some inputs and so forth.

Lastly Mr Speaker before I sit down, as municipalities, the national government has pronounced on the expanded public works programme, where its saying that jobs must be created, and if you listen to the Minister of Finance, you listen to all the Ministers, they are saying local government must be capacitated. Local government must be capacitated to make sure that they undertake this programme. And the key question Mr Speaker, we know that our roads, our infrastructure is decaying, our roads are not well maintained. Now we are having an opportunity to make sure that we submit the plans that will assist us to make sure we acquire those funds. So Mr Speaker, as I will be going down my podium I would like to indicate to this Council that I will be using my executive authority, in fact for the last couple of 3 years I've been trying to take everybody along and I think the time is now arrived, everybody knows what the Executive Mayor is suppose to be doing and definitely I will also, but carefully, make sure that I apply what the law has said that I must do and I am also appealing to my fellow Councillors that are having a lot of ideas, let us make that this municipality become number one municipality. I still maintain, despite we did not succeed Mr Speaker in the VUNA Awards, but I still feel that we have a place there one day to concur the VUNA Awards.

Thank you very much.