

Speech by Her Worship the Deputy Mayor of eThekweni Municipality Cllr Nomvuzo Shabalala on the occasion of the 20 Years of Democracy and Freedom in South Africa at the Ceremony at the Kulturkirche, Bremen, Germany on 3 June 2014

- Mrs Ulrike Hiller, Under Secretary of the Bremen Federal State.
- Mr. Volker Schütte, Honorary Consul of the Republic South Africa
- Mr Hans Ulrich Barde – the Chairperson of the Bremen- Durban Partnership.
- Ladies and gentlemen
- Good evening

On behalf of the people and the council of the eThekweni Municipality I wish to thank you for the great hospitality and friendship we have experienced here in Bremen.

Durban and Bremen signed a sister city cooperation agreement in 2003 and both cities have flourished through this partnership. Today we are here to build and strengthen this cooperation and share our celebration of 20 years of freedom and democracy.

Since 2003 there have been a number of successful projects in both Bremen and Durban that benefited our citizens, particularly young people. These projects have been in the fields of water, sanitation, eco-tourism, green energy, arts, culture, trade and investment.

During our stay here in Bremen we hope to strengthen our partnership through trade and investment. In our delegation from Durban we have a number of key officials and private sector partners facilitated by the Southern African – German Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Durban office.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Southern African German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the office of the President of the Senate of the City of Bremen for facilitating and hosting our visit to Bremen.

Our trip also affords us the opportunity to celebrate our nation's 20 years of freedom and democracy with you tonight.

Tonight I also wish to thank the people of Bremen and Germany as a whole for their support in our struggle against apartheid.

On the 27 April 1994 South Africa cast aside centuries of discrimination and oppression to form a new society built on the foundation of freedom and democracy. It marked the end of apartheid rule and introduced a new Constitutional order, wherein we all worked towards a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

However, we must never forget that our road to democracy was not easy and was achieved because of the unyielding sacrifice of thousands of patriots and partners abroad, including Germany.

The year 2014 presents an opportunity for the people of South Africa, the continent and rest of the world to join us in celebrating the South African story. Today I stand before and invite you to join us in celebrating 20 years of freedom and democracy.

In 2014 South Africa will celebrate 20 years of freedom and democracy. This momentous occasion presents an opportunity for us to reflect on how our freedom and democracy were achieved; the progress we have made over the past 20 years; and on how people in Durban will work together to implement a vision to make our city Africa's most caring and livable city. I believe partnerships with cities like Bremen will strengthen this vision.

South Africa has abandoned its shameful past and has steadily moved towards building a new culture based on respect of human rights and

dignity. This includes working with international partners to build a better world for all our citizens.

Compared to before 1994 we can proudly proclaim that millions of people now have water, electricity, sanitation and housing. By our own standards, we declare that this is not good enough; that we must not rest until all the people can claim a better life.

- We have risen from the ashes of apartheid to be a beacon of democracy and hope for millions of people across the world.
- South Africa is indeed a much better society than it was before 1994 when we inherited a country from the apartheid government that was both morally and financially bankrupt.
- The injustices of the past where people were judged according to their race, creed and sexual orientation have been firmly cast off.
- Our national symbols, our flag and our anthem are synonymous with the shared values and the unity of our nation.
- A national identity has emerged built on a respect for each other and our love for the country that we all call home.
- The Census 2011 results indicate that income levels have increased, education levels are up and millions of people now have access to water, electricity, sanitation and housing.
- The number of households with access to piped water increased from 80,3% in 1996 to 91,2% in 2011.
- The number of households that used electricity for lighting increased from 58,2% in 1996 to 84,7% in 2011, and households that used

electricity for cooking increased from 47,5% to 73,9% over the same period.

- Interventions by the Department of Health to improve the quality of life continue to yield results; for example the overall life expectancy of South Africans has improved significantly between 2009 and 2011 to 62 years.
- The tide is turning in the fight against HIV and AIDS. By March 2012, more than 20,2 million people had undergone testing since the HIV Counselling and Testing campaign started in April 2010.
- We have recently launched a revolutionary one tablet a day for people living with HIV.
- Durban has successfully hosted some key international events such as the Soccer World Cup 2010, COP 17 conference on Climate Change, to name a few. This has resulted in large investment in infrastructure projects that benefited our economy and made Durban a leading port city in Southern Africa's development.
- Dube Tradeport and King Shaka International airport development is on track and we invite investors from Bremen to explore opportunities at this important site.
- For the clothing, textile and footwear sector that is in decline, an implementation framework to revitalise it was 80% completed. Indigenous medicine is a niche sector with significant potential; an implementation plan was instituted but not completed.
- I invite partners from Bremen to consider the fields of agri-business, marine business, renewable energy technologies, wood, pulp, paper,

furniture, tourism, clothing, textiles, chemicals and footwear. These are sectors that we can provide investor support services. There is an equal focus on large and small and medium enterprises.

- The city works very closely with national and provincial Trade and Investment facilitation and promotion departments to provide our partners with all the support and information required to invest and do business in our city.
- Durban and the South African economy in general are increasingly becoming significant players in trade and investment opportunities globally. The port of Durban and the municipality will see significant opportunities for trade and investment. We invite you all to come visit our great city. I promise you a great tourism experience and access to trade and investment opportunities that will contribute to our achievements we have made over the last 20 years.
- I look forward to welcoming you all to Durban soon.
- Long live the partnership between the Bremen and Durban, I thank you.