

1ST DRAFT

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY & LIAISON, HON. WILLIES MCHUNU AT THE OPENING OF
WARWICK OUTBOUND IN DURBAN ON 30 APRIL 2010.**

Protocol Observed

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for allowing me to join you here today. There is nothing that makes me happy like being part of the launch of a project that will impact positively on the lives of ordinary people.

As government, we are under no illusion about the magnitude of the task at hand and the obligation we have in ensuring that our transport system that is fully responsive to the needs of our people. The official opening of this Warwick Project today therefore bears testimony to our commitment as government to the development of an effective and efficient transport system in our city of Durban.

We know that Ethekwini, like many other towns in KwaZulu-Natal and in South Africa generally, is still faced with a situation where previous town planning did not accommodate our ever increasing traffic volume. As a result of this, the Warwick Junction has been experiencing huge conflict between commuter traffic, public transport and pedestrian activity. We even had a high number of accidents and pedestrian deaths in this area.

This area is a busy intermodal transfer point catering for bus, taxi and train passengers. There are also between 5000 and 8000 informal traders in the area. The scale of activity in the area results in 460 000 people walking through the triangle daily of which 166 000 are public transport users. In addition to pedestrian traffic, 38 000 vehicles drive through the Warwick Triangle each day and about 300 buses and 1 550 minibus taxis depart from the area each day.

From the above figures, I find it appropriate that we salute Ethekewini Municipality for this beautiful infrastructure which is a major public transport transfer node forming the public transport gateway to Durban's inner city from the N3 Western Freeway. We take our hats off also to construction workers who have ensured that the infrastructure is up to standard and has been completed one month ahead of schedule, well in time for the 2010 Football World Cup tournament.

This project entails the construction of a three lane 372m long viaduct to the tune of R200 million. About 250 job opportunities were created for local labourers during construction work.

As the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, I have a responsibility to ensure that people's lives are saved from road crashes as well as criminal activities. I find it important therefore to emphasise that this project was done in the interest of public safety. It is not another means of perpetuating the killing of our people because motorists tend to drive recklessly on a smooth road. I hope that our Ethekewini authorities will put measures in place to prevent motorists from speeding and irresponsible behaviour as they drive into the city.

We also appeal to communities of Ethekewini as a whole to join our government in spearheading its drive to **build a united front against crime** in KZN. On 21 January 2010, our Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize launched this programme here in Durban and made a clarion call for the mobilization and involvement of all sectors of society in a concerted and sustained campaign to significantly reduce crime levels in the province.

With Durban having almost 40% of KwaZulu-Natal's population residing in it and having become an international destination for tourists, it is important that we join hands in the fight against crime and criminals to further enhance Durban's stature among other local and international competitors.

In conclusion, our government has invested in to ensure that our transport system provides a seamless multimodal transport service throughout the World Cup to facilitate movements to all parts of the province. The provincial government through its Department of Transport has ensured that this World Cup becomes a success particularly with regards to Public Transport matters, road infrastructure development, and safety initiatives on our roads to mention but a few.

The Department has in consultation with all planning authorities developed a Provincial Public Transport Operation Framework so as to ensure that the Province is ready for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Consultation on the framework was done with the bus and the taxi industry so as to ensure that a sustainable, seamless and a hassle-free service during the World Cup is realized. This framework will support intra provincial public transport service between the non hosting cities and the hosting city of Durban including residents who will be travelling to the Public Viewing sites in and around the Province.

Finally, I take this opportunity to call on all of us gathered here today to commit ourselves to patriotism, let's love our country, respect our visitors and support our team Bafana Bafana.

I thank you.