

SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, ALDERMAN DAN PLATO, AT THE 2011 CIVIC HONOURS CEREMONY

28 APRIL 2011

Mr Speaker, Freeman of the City, Dr Richard van der Ross, Aldermen, Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Welcome to the City of Cape Town's Civic Honours Ceremony for 2011.

Each year, the City of Cape Town bestows civic honours on outstanding individuals or organisations in recognition of their remarkable service to the Cape metropole and its residents.

Yesterday, we celebrated our constitutional democracy – the seeds of which we planted 16 years ago on 27 April 1994. This nation has indeed come a very long way from an embittered and divided past to a society based on equality, dignity and respect for human rights.

We need to do all we can to promote the values of civic-mindedness in our maturing democracy.

These values have proven to be fundamental to the success of most great democracies in the world today.

We have 10 extraordinary Capetonians who will be signing the Civic Honours book today. On behalf of the City of Cape Town, I thank you for your contribution to our city.

Government is similarly conscious of the scale of work still to be done in order to uproot the odious legacy of apartheid – the pronounced effects of which can be felt in terms of service delivery, employment, social cohesion, transformation, empowerment, education, and skilling of our people, among other things.

In this regard, the democratic government had clearly understood that our people cannot enjoy full and meaningful freedom without development, reconstruction and growth – which are the key elements in ensuring prosperity for our people.

Conscious of our divisive history, we are also keenly aware that unity among all the people of our country constitutes a key priority that must be addressed with the proportionate vigour. Therefore government remains seized with the important matter of social cohesion.

Today the battle is the fight to end poverty and to work towards sustainable development. Our struggle is and must be a social contract between the government and the people to expedite the delivery of housing, to strengthen the provision of free basic sanitation, electricity and clean water, and to create appropriate jobs.

Today we will also confer the title of Alderman on six Councillors. This shows the City's gratitude for a lifetime commitment to the service of this Council.

The Mayor's Medal acknowledges contributions in eight different fields, including Community Affairs, Social Affairs and Services, Cultural Affairs, Youth Affairs, Recreation and Sport, Conservation, Economic Affairs and Extraordinary Bravery. Today we have 21 individuals and organisations that will receive awards in these fields.

As much as today is a celebratory occasion, we must take a moment to pay homage to two sons of the soil – Ezra and Duke Ngcukana. During their lives, these brothers made a considerable contribution to the music industry in Cape Town and worldwide. Duke was to attend today's ceremony to accept a medal on behalf of his brother Ezra. Sadly, he too passed away a few weeks ago. We will remember the Ngcukana brothers always and are grateful for their talent and commitment to music in Cape Town.

I would like to congratulate this year's recipients as a collective, and thank them for their valued contributions towards making Cape Town a great city.