

Attention Percy Gotywa, Daily Dispatch  
From Matthew Moonieya, Director: Office of the Executive  
Mayor

Please receive press statement as promised as a joint statement by Executive Mayor Sindisile Maclean and City Manager Mxolisi Tsika issued on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

1. We believe the Nepad international trade and investment conference in East London on May 25-27 is the most outstanding opportunity yet to market Buffalo City since it was established in 2 000.
2. In promoting the intra and inter-regional trade for which this high-powered conference is designed, we believe the City is basically opening the region to the investment world.
3. We propose to maximize the benefit to our City and we are calling on all our roleplayers to join hands and to come up with innovative “out-of-the-box” ideas that will enhance our image as a worthy investment destination.
4. We believe we can and must do this during this once in a lifetime opportunity. We must put flesh to President Thabo Mbeki’s hopes and aspirations to reconstruct the

economic strategy that will underline the claim that Africa's time has come.

5. The conference comes at a crucial time for us as a local authority. We are considering our IDP and making it relevant to deliver on the wishes of our people but we have to link it to the meager resources available.
6. It is a tough job and we are spending hundreds of hours on devising strategic ways to balance our budget and deliver on our pledges, which includes making our City an attractive investment destination, diversifying our economy and increasing our competitiveness.
7. We have an engagement strategy in place which we believe offers attractive investment such as the Industrial Development Zone (IDZ); the Beachfront/Quigney Redevelopment; the CBD renewal with the 20% tax incentives; the second bridge over the Buffalo River; upgrading of the rail link to Johannesburg and all it entails for the enlargement of our automotive industry sector; revitalization of the King-Bisho Corridor; the F1 Racetrack Redevelopment on the West Bank; attractive golf estate possibilities; and the vast opportunities entailed in the R500 million plan by Fort

- Hare which includes the establishment of a fully fledged campus in East London.
8. And the cherry on the top is of course the 2010 World Cup strategy where, even though the City is not on the map as a match venue, we will in all probability host one of the teams and claim our share of the billions of rands which will pour into the country.
  9. We are convinced that the City cannot do it alone. Civil society with all its riches energy trapped within our communities, labour, business, the NGOs and CBOs must come to the fore to drive our own socio-economic revival through this conference being organized by the Commission for Trade and Investment of the Nepad Council for three days from May 25 to 27.

People attending and issues will include:

- \*Internationally renowned and prominent speakers from industry.
- \*High profile international policy makers from government and industry will be contributing their experiences.
- Discussions which will give insight into the practical aspects of trade and investment challenges in Africa.

- Practices of translating policies into workable documents.
- Debates on identify the need for trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building in Africa.
- The identification of concrete interventions and solution which will promote trade and investment in Africa and to attract FDI.

The conference seeks to provide a framework to foster trade and investment in Africa by:

- Improving the quality of support for trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building in Africa.
- Developing appropriate intervention strategies and frameworks to foster intra- and inter- regional trade and investment in Africa.
- Evaluating context-specific governmental, institutional and management requirements.
- Implementing policies conducive to economic growth.
- Attracting foreign direct investment.

## **Conference Objectives**

Coherent with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) objectives, the Conference aims to identify enabling mechanisms for the implementation of intervention strategies at grass roots level. More specifically, the Conference objectives are to:

- Provide a critical assessment of current trade and investment climate in Africa.
- Identify specific intra- and inter- regional needs in Africa.
- Encourage multi-lateral co-operation between international investors and role-players, African academic institutions, business practitioners and policy makers.
- Identify the need for trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building in Africa.
- Establish a platform for initiating relevant research in critical trade and investment related matters.
- Establish research networks for promoting NEPAD throughout Africa.
- Showcase key development initiatives in Africa.

- Facilitate the development of competitive investment attraction strategies for FDI.
- Offer an international Conference for business leaders, policy makers, researchers and academics, from around the globe to share ideas, debate and build consensus around trade and investment issues in Africa.

### **Separate story:**

The trade and investment conference comes at a strategic moment for the city and opens new horizons for innovative thinking and opportunities, says the Director in the Office of the Executive Mayor, Matthew Moonieya.

“We have been instructed by the leadership that as May 25 falls on Africa Day which is celebrated in many countries on the continent, Buffalo City can be made the central venue for the continental celebrations,” Moonieya said.

He said May 27 is also the highwater mark of the civic calendar when Executive Mayor Sindisile Maclean will deliver his State of the City and Budget Address.

“This is the final budget speech by the Mayor for his five-year term and we are planning to make it a special event.

“We believe that with the emphasis on governance in the Nepad discourse, Buffalo City can act as a mirror for South Africa in the crucial sphere of local governance before a captured international audience.

“We will also be able to justify our City as a worthy Vuna Award winner for municipal excellence.

Moonieya said intense preparations and delivery are underway leading up to the budget.

“The Executive Mayor is preparing to join in the IDP-Budget Review public hearings which will enable him to link his outreach programme to all the hearings throughout the 45 Wards.

“These person-to-person contacts will take place from April 1 -20 and represents the City’s entrenchment of community participation.

“It affords people an opportunity to interact with the budget and to look at the links with the IDP which embodies their requests and wishes for their specific living areas.”

He said top level political and administrative leadership will feature at these hearings which will culminate in the State of the City address.

Ends.