

Address to South African Dance Sports Academy Ballroom Dance Festival by Executive Mayor: Clr. Dikeledi Tsotetsi, Emfuleni Local Municipality, 12 May 2007

Members of the Mayoral Committee, Councillors in the Section 80 Committee of SRAC, fellow Councillors, organizers of the event, distinguished guests, officials and fellow participants, accept warm and heartfelt greetings in this wonderful evening. It is with great pleasure that Emfuleni Local Municipality had to host this event honoured by participants from far and wide. We are also honoured as the Municipality to extend our hospitality to all and sundry. It is our wish that you should enjoy your festival and stay in the area of Emfuleni.

Our Municipality is honoured to host the Gauteng Ballroom Dance Festival, as it marks the beginning of great things to come for the entire community. This event should leave a legacy that not only us will be proud of, but our children as well. As a Municipality we pride ourselves of all programmes related to Sports, Arts and Culture because we understand our mandate that of creating a safe environment for all citizens. It is through such initiatives that we are kept occupied and therefore not involved into activities that are counter productive and destructive in nature. We should dance more and do less crime.

It is therefore important to understand crime in relation to its various causality. Crime does not occur because those who perpetuate it are naturally inclined towards it. While crime cannot be condoned, there are however crimes that occur as a result of poverty afflicting the affected individuals. The question that we should ask ourselves is – how could we use dance, be it traditional, modern or contemporary to fight crime and poverty.

Despite the dance fever in Emfuleni in particular and Gauteng in general, it remains largely marginalized and is not seen as economically viable sector. In the main dance programmes operate in the periphery and as informal centres of business and as a result their efforts are not sustainable. There are also issues of access to facilities and opportunities to perform and derive income. All of these challenges are noted by government and therefore should be addressed and solutions found.

Dance as a form of sport or arts expression, has over the years benefited our communities and dancers respectively. This form of sport has had considerable contribution in areas of education, health and social development. It was also used as a social tool for social transformation.

In the circumstances, the Emfuleni Municipality has noted these challenges. The Municipality seeks to involve all relevant stakeholders who will play a significant role in the development and production of dance culture. We should provide a platform for this culture to thrive. We should further ensure that we generate a good standard and develop community appreciation and audience for dance. It is our wish that together we can promote sports, arts and culture.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our gratitude to the South African Dance Sport Academy for providing this opportunity to the people of Emfuleni and Sedibeng to host this august event.

Enjoy the Ballroom Dance Festival and mostly our hospitality.

I thank you.