

AMEU TECHNICAL CONVENTION 2006.

CIVIC RECEPTION BY CITY OF JOHANNESBURG ON MONDAY, 16

OCTOBER 2006

**WELCOME SPEECH ON BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR
COUNCILLOR AMOS MASONDO BY COUNCILLOR ROSLYN GREEFF,
MEMBER OF THE MAYORAL COMMITTEE (MMC) RESPONSIBLE FOR
INRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

Programme director, President of the AMEU, Madame Speaker, Chairperson of the ISD Portfolio Committee, Mayors and MMC's from Other Metro Councils, City Manager, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be with you here tonight and to welcome the AMEU delegates from across the country to the City of Johannesburg.

We in Johannesburg have indeed had ample reasons to celebrate in recent weeks as we recalled the formal establishment of the city, a mere 120 years ago.

There have been human settlement in this area for close to a thousand years. The excavations at the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve Melville Koppies have uncovered evidence of human habitation dating back to 1060. And by the 1700s there were already several well established settlements in the areas that are today known as Northcliff, Bruma, Melville and Lonehill.

Since formal proclamation in 1886 a small mining town has grown into Africa's premier city in the very short space of 120 years. After all, most of the world's most famous cities have evolved over hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

So, Johannesburg, by comparison grew from a tent town to wood and iron shanties, then to bricks and mortar buildings at the pace of an historical wink of an eye. Within less than two decades since its formal proclamation the broad outlines of the city as we know it today were already well established.

We as a city have so much to be proud of. We have truly established a world class city that can compete on almost any level with our counterparts across the globe in a very short space of time. And very little of this could have been achieved without the vision, the knowledge, the technical expertise and the dedication of the various engineering professions – especially the electrical engineers.

I have the highest regard for your profession and your work environment – your job is to light up our lives – literally – electricity is the single, most visible, proof of service delivery by any local government.

If the lights are off – the city descends into a pall of gloom and cabinet ministers start looking for missing bolts in faulty generators.

In Johannesburg we are working at a frantic pace just to catch up with existing backlogs and the replacement of old infrastructure – some dating back to the 1940s and 50s. At the same we are dealing with the “growing pains” of a very young city.

Every week we see the establishment of new housing developments, the construction of new shopping centres, new places of entertainment, new community facilities. All of these devour electricity as fast as we can supply it.

With an economic growth rate of almost five percent the city is expanding at a rapid pace. The current projections are that the number of households in the

Speech by Cllr R Greef, at AMEU Tech Conv COJ Civic Reception, Mon 16 Oct 2006

city may reach the two million mark by 2012 – double the number at the turn of the century.

At the same time we have to deal with the reality that very little was done in the 1980s and early 1990s to prepare the city for the current economic boom and growth in population.

The City of Johannesburg has committed more than R8 billion for infrastructure development to ensure that Johannesburg's entire power network are overhauled within the next decade.

As you can see, ladies and gentlemen, we are not running away from our responsibilities. On the contrary, our talented and tireless men and women are coming forward with innovative solutions and practical alternatives to solve very vexed and complex problems.

Your conference also takes place against the backdrop of a rapidly changing environment in the delivery of electricity services. By this time next year the JORED will be a reality and the Gauteng Premier's vision of the province as a global city region will become bigger on our radar screen with each passing month.

In my brief tenure as MMC in the City I have come to know electrical engineers and the members of AMEU as a special breed of people. For them, there is no challenge too big, no crisis too daunting.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Speech by Cllr R Greef, at AMEU Tech Conv COJ Civic Reception, Mon 16 Oct 2006

I trust that you will enjoy your stay in Johannesburg, and that you will have a very productive conference and that your decisions and resolutions will enable us as the administrators keep up with the rapid development of our beautiful country

I thank you

Councillor Roslyn Greeff

MMC

City of Johannesburg