

**Speech by the AMEU President, Mr Moferefere
Tshabalala on the occasion of the Welcoming
Address, 09 October 2017 at Nelson Mandela
Bay Municipality – 66th AMEU Convention**

- The Honourable Minister of Corporate Governance & Traditional Affairs (“COGTA”), Mr David van Rooyen
- The Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Cllr. Athol Trollip
- Members of the Mayoral Committees and Councillors from the various municipalities who are present here today;
- Municipal Managers and City Managers and the CEOs;
- AMEU Executives and Affiliates Members

- Distinguished guests; amongst which are leaders of various organizations and organs of civil society;
- Members of the public and of the media;
- All Protocol Observed.

Distinguished guests, let me first thank the God Almighty for giving us the opportunity to attend the 2017 AMEU Convention.

I would like to thank the Executive Mayor, Cllr. Athol Trollip for accepting our invitation to host this year's Convention in the beautiful "windy city" Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

Our thanks are also extended to all the MMCs and Councillors that made time to attend our 66th Convention. We've put together a programme of some excellent papers and presentations – we therefore hope that you will also find them value adding.

Greetings to my colleagues, senior officials and other officials from various municipalities and utilities.

Greetings to Directors, Managers and officials of various manufactures, service providers and media companies.

Greetings to our Presenters, I am so excited about the effort you made to prepare and deliver your presentations.

Greetings to our lovely spouses and partners. We appreciate that you sacrifice your time to be with us, and your support is valuable. I hope and trust that spouse programme that is put together will be of benefit.

Thanks to Pastor Adriaan Vermaak for gracing our Convention with a prayer. I believe that God Almighty will be with us throughout this Convention.

On behalf of the AMEU, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all of you. Moreover, I wish to make special mention to the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, namely Mr David Van Rooyen and his Department for the unwavering support they have provided the AMEU over the past years.

I want to make special mention of the Council of the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality for supporting the AMEU in hosting the Convention.

In deciding on a theme for this year's Convention we deliberated and discussed various options internally and given the challenges facing the membership of the AMEU and our sector we eventually decided on the theme, "Technical Solutions for Our Changing Business Model". Is our current business model and energy mix still valid today given the significant challenges facing most of our municipalities?

It is unbelievable that it is already a year since my inauguration which marks the start of the second half of my tenure as the President of this glorious Association, AMEU.

Given the huge loss and drain of skills and competencies in our electricity supply sector, especially in metros and municipalities with respect to graduate professionals, there is a now an urgent need to upskill especially our graduate professionals with focus on female professionals in our metros and municipalities, to ensure that the metro and municipality are able to deliver on its service delivery mandate especially from a technical perspective.

It is evident that the AMEU should give consideration of capacity building, in metro and municipalities through knowledge mentoring, with focus on increasing employability, and job creation of graduate professionals, especially females.

We have also seen most senior leaders leaving the industry under different circumstances, whatever it is, it is likely to leave some leadership void within the industry. I also trust that this will not lead to effective governance within the Industry as new colleagues are still finding their feet in the new roles that they have been entrusted with. I am positive that these colleagues will be equal to the task and I welcome them to the new leadership role. , I would like to thank our departed colleagues and trust that they will continue to be there to guide us whenever we need wisdom from the grey hair.

I have also seen some old grey hairs of the industry present with us who have continued to guide us along the way. I have seen our Past President At Van Der Merwe whom we went hiking with among others.

I am particularly happy, that the work started by our immediate Past President, Mr Sicelo Xulu, has matured enough that WIE has developed to a stage where a decision has been taken to incorporate them into the main stream of the AMEU thus ensuring that there is only one AMEU Conference a year, thanks to the positive input from the Affiliates that contributed to this decision.

WiE has proven to be a strong force within AMEU, and have made significant progress to the achievement of the goals they had set for themselves. I wish current WiE leadership success in ensuring that women take their rightful place within the Electricity Supply Industry working side by side with their male counterparts **as equals**

Before I sit down I would like to express my heart felt gratitude to the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and all political principals present for gracing our convention with their presence.

Ladies and gentleman, with the powers vested in me, I now declare the 2017 convention officially open.

I thank You, Ke ya leboha, Ndiyabulela, Dankie,
Ngiyabonga...