

REMARKS BY THE VERY REVEREND MMACHAKGA MPHOBENJAMIN WALTER MORUAKGOMO PRESIDENT OF THE BOTSWANA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL ASSOCIATION ON BEHALF OF AND FOR UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF AFRICA (UCLG AFRICA) AT THE LOCAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICA 2017: WATER AND CIMATE CONGRESS, 22 – 24 MARCH 2017 BIRCHWOOD HOTEL & OR THAMBO CONFERENCE CENTRE. JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

I stand here this morning on behalf of the continental municipal and local government movement United Cities and Local Governments of AFRICA (UCLG Africa) at this opening plenary to offer message of support and solidarity to our partner ICLEI. The Local Climate Solutions for Africa 2017 Congress: Water & Climate, held under Local Government for Sustainability - ICLEIAfrica's Urban Leadership for African Leadership Sustainability is so timely as it comes at a time when the world has just over one year ago, the world adopted an ambitious fifteen year 5P Global Development Agenda: Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The agenda that appositely focuses on the People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships. An agenda which amplifies a world's collective resolve to take bold and transformative steps needed to shift a rapid urbanising world, on to a sustainable and resilient path, that ensures that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives, where all people are equitably assured of opportunity to better their lives given their innate God given ability, where no one will be left behind, where lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for better: And that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature. This lend impetus by the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Urban Agenda which adopted in

Quito, Ecuador at the close of last year. These agendas provide a road map towards a fairer, more equitable and sustainable world for all, as well as the African Union Agenda 2063, The Africa we Want, which focuses on ensuring a more sustainable, inclusive and just future and the Sandai Framework. All these agendas and agreements are in congruence and intent, and agreement that for these to succeed and rapidly achieve the intended impact they must be localised and the need to support and empower cities and sub – national governments to achieve these transformative development agendas and realise the vision for a fairer, more equitable and sustainable future for all.

With rapid urbanisation and the impacts of climate change, the role of the city and sub - regional governments is more evident by the day. Cities especially are at the forefront of the battle for sustainable development particularly responding to challenges of urbanisation; These include, health, poverty, inequality, water, sanitation, food security, sustainable use of resources and investment in requisite infrastructure.

Cities and sub – regional governments are under resourced, they make tough decisions on which issues to prioritise. They are expected to deliver within tight budgets and often with inadequate technical capacity among other limitations. Therefore they need to be capacitated and empowered to effectively execute their mandate [including to engage all people at the local level. Inclusion means paying attention to all voices including women, youth, the poor, the displaced, and local government is the sphere of government which is best placed to play this role. Strengthening local democracy and governance is essential if the SDGs are going to be achieved].

However, local government is often not empowered to play its role due to lack of a clear mandate, inadequate technical capacity, and limited

financial resources to enable them to promote development in response to the developmental challenges the world is facing.

It is clear that the transformation of societies, economies and planet cannot be achieved without **leveraging on the comparative advantages of all stakeholders**. Multi stakeholder partnerships which include national and provincial governments, local authorities, development partners, the private sector, civil society and the communities themselves are the glue for the implementation of the SDGs. The proposed partnership approach to the delivery of public goods and services requires a paradigm shift. It requires skills and capacity to effectively coordinate stakeholders.

The transformative agenda is complex and interdependent. It requires the **strengthening of individuals and institutions across the board**. Capable individuals and institutions, leadership and technical management of local government are critical.

UCLG – Africa remains committed to the requisite and functional partnership we have with ICLEA . We look forward to the outcomes of the congress and will pass them to relevant structures. We wish you a successful congress. I thank you.