



**GAUTENG**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**ADDRESS BY BARBARA CREECY, GAUTENG MEC FOR FINANCE AND E-GOVERNMENT AT THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA CONFERENCE, FUTURESPLACE, SANDTON, 17 MAY 2018.**

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Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

#FutureOfTechnologyConference

It gives me great pleasure to address your annual conference today on behalf of the Gauteng Provincial Government. Let me take the opportunity to welcome the important work your organisation does in providing a link between your 200 member organisations and government, consumers and specialist organisations.

In this era of technological innovation linked to the fourth industrial revolution you have a greater role to play than ever before in helping us to build a country and an economy which in

the words of President Cyril Ramaphosa will “find jobs for our youth..... (and) prepare our children for a world of change and progress”.

Ladies and Gentlemen as we have heard here this morning, the world is experiencing unprecedented levels of technological innovation that are changing the lives of every citizen.

Here in Gauteng, the fourth largest economy in Africa, Premier David Makhura’s ten pillar programme of Transformation, Modernisation and Re-industrialisation has given us a vision of a City Region, where profound social and economic change is already improving citizen’s daily lives, promoting more inclusive growth and unlocking new economic opportunities.

From the beginning of this term, the Premier realised that technological innovation would be central to the success of the ten-pillar programme and accordingly he gave considerable attention to developing our partnership with Gauteng’s five major universities and promoting innovation hubs where academics and entrepreneurs can join hands. He also initiated the formation of the Gauteng Department of e-Government, the first provincial department of its kind in the country.

Because our goal remains that of being a smart province, we are investing as Provincial Government in ICT infrastructure and more importantly in e-government services.

We are also conscious today that advances in technology offer governments across the globe the possibility of re-shaping how we exercise our mandate.

ICT-enabled public service delivery offers an opportunity to improve efficiency and access to public services; develops the transparency and accountability of governments and empowers citizens to better participate in decision making processes.

In the Gauteng City Region, Stats SA found that almost 60% of households have direct access to the Internet. It therefore becomes necessary for City Region Governments to move towards providing on-line services.

The Gauteng Department of e-Government is currently involved in:

- An expanding range of efficient e-services and applications, information, resources and support delivered, **through**
- An integrated consolidated GPG-wide common platform, **which uses**
- Connected, shared, managed data and information, **and**
- Enabled business processes, **driven by**
- Adequate people capability.

Over time, our provincial government has come to understand that to modernize the economy and the public sector would require the establishment of an innovation ecosystem that:

- Is citizen centric in that the primary focus is benefit for citizens,
- Is cost-effective in delivering services,
- Is secure and trusted with a high level of security confidentiality and credibility,
- Is easy for citizens to use and simple by design,

- Is open and shared, with data available to all components of government and the public sector.

To help us on this journey Gauteng Province hosted an Innovation and Technology Conference in February this year under the theme: “*Building Innovative Technology Ecosystems for a Modernised City Region*”.

Arising from the conference, there was general consensus that the first step in building an innovation ecosystem is to set up an Innovation Forum consisting of government, private sector, higher education; and civil society.

I am happy to report to you all today that we have already drafted terms of reference for this forum which are en route to the Gauteng Executive Council for approval.

The conference also agreed on some of the key tasks for this Innovation Forum going forward. I know many of you attended our conference but I think it’s important to once again share these with you today, in the hope that your organisation will also agree that these are the key issues we need to tackle together.

The first was to increase investment in research and development particularly with regard to, but obviously not exclusively, this Government’s existing partnerships with tertiary institutions around the Innovation Hub in Tshwane and the Tsimologong Innovation Precinct in Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Equally importantly the Forum will need to strategise ways in which we link our investment in research and development to

changing production and consumption in Gauteng's key economic sectors. This needs to be a conscious process so we speed up modernization and productivity on the one hand, and mitigate the impact of technical disruption on the other.

If we acknowledge that we are indeed in the middle of a Fourth Industrial Revolution then, as students of history we know that all industrial revolutions have winners and losers: those who make enormous gains in terms of material well-being and those who are impoverished and marginalized by technological change.

Without significant government investment and regulation, the Fourth Industrial Revolution will pose new and even greater risks to those who find themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide

This means that in all we do we must continually look for ways to promote economic inclusion of start-ups, particularly youth startups and township entrepreneurs in the process of building the digital economy.

The Department of e-Government, in partnership with the Tshimologong Innovation Precinct, has established the Design and Validation Centre (DAV Centre) in order to promote innovation for the delivery of government services. This centre is available to the private sector and township entrepreneurs for the development of applications and services.

It also means that we have to prioritise skills development of our existing and future workers as a matter of urgency. In this regard it will be important that all of us work with the entire education system from Primary to Tertiary level to ensure we

get the right skills to support new career paths, economic productivity and entrepreneurship.

In this regard we know that the ITA has a longstanding commitment to human resource development within the industry. Through its close association with the MICT SETA, the ITA promotes the maintenance of high standards of IT industry technical skills in accordance with international trends. I hope that in the course of this conference your organisation will take the opportunity to discuss what role you can play in assisting the Innovation Forum with human resource development.

Big Data can help government improve overall efficiency, boost the speed and accuracy of forecasting and decision making, identify more opportunities for savings, and better understand their own operations as well as citizen needs.

The provincial government itself, has huge amounts of disparate data and data sources scattered throughout government departments. In order to effectively deliver e-services to citizens, data integration and data analytics are becoming critical for effective decision making and planning.

The Department of e-Government has already established a Big Data Forum and under the umbrella of the Innovation Forum itself, we must develop a big data strategy to guide the collection, processing and use of this important resource for government and all other partners in the innovation ecosystem.

Important data is shared and stored by governments more and more frequently as cloud systems become common practice. However, opening up networks to outside mobile devices and

virtualization software also makes these networks more susceptible to attack.

Some experts predict that by 2020 there will be 200 billion connected things. Cars, planes, homes, cities, and even animals are being connected. We are putting software everywhere.

This is changing the way we live and how we behave and interact with the world around us. As technology becomes more and more deeply integrated into our lives, we become more and more dependent on it. But this dependence makes us vulnerable if technology fails.

As part of its mandate the Department of e-Government has developed a GPG cybersecurity policy and strategy; implemented a Security Operations Centre (SOC). And developed a range of cybersecurity detection and prevention tools.

It will be important that the Innovation Forum develop a cyber security task team that will coordinate all elements to prevent and combat cyber security threats to our ecosystem.

Ladies and Gentlemen allow me to conclude by wishing you every success with your conference today. The Gauteng Provincial Government is committed to forming long term partnerships with institutions of higher learning and the private sector in our quest to modernize our economy and government services. We look forward to working with you in the future.

I Thank You