

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY GAUTENG PREMIER DAVID MAKHURA ON THE OCCASION OF THE GAUTENG CITY REGION E-GOVERNMENT AND ICT SUMMIT. GALLAGHER ESTATE. JOHANNESBURG.**

**2 November 2015**

Director of the Programme, MEC responsible for e-Government, Honourable Barbara Dallas Creecy;

Minister in the Presidency responsible for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Honourable Jeff Radebe;

Members of the Executive Council and Executive Mayors;

CEO of Telkom SA, the main sponsor of this Summit, Mr Siphon Maseko;

CEO of Accenture, the premium sponsor, Mr William Mzimba

Representatives of the ICT Industry

Senior officials from national, provincial and local government;

Distinguished Delegates;

Esteemed International Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to this Inaugural Gauteng e-Government and ICT Summit of the Gauteng City Region. I thank all of you heartily for taking part in this ground-breaking

and future-oriented [summit](#) that seeks to change the way government and citizens interact and transact.

I would like to convey our special word of welcome to Minister Jeff Radebe who has kindly accepted our humble invitation to deliver a keynote address on behalf of our national government.

Distinguished delegates, earlier in July we emerged from the Gauteng Infrastructure Investment Conference with clear commitments to [realise](#) the goal of 100% broadband connectivity in the Gauteng City Region by 2020; to bridge the digital divide and promote equitable access; [modernise](#) governance and build a responsive, accountable, competent, clean and intelligent public service; and ultimately contribute towards a more competitive and transformed ICT industry in South Africa.

The e-Government and ICT Summit is [a](#) direct follow-up on our Inaugural Gauteng Infrastructure Investment Conference held in July this year, wherein we had extensive discussions and resolutions at which we presented the Gauteng City Region's Infrastructure Master Plan for the next fifteen years. Minister Radebe addressed that conference.

The National Development Plan and our Provincial Ten-pillar programme for Transformation, Modernisation and Re-Industrialisation of Gauteng place high premium on access to broadband connectivity and bridging the digital divide as a key goal of sustainable development.

We live in an increasingly Digital Economy and Information Age in which equitable access to broadband is a basic human freedom which must be guaranteed to every member of our democratic society in the same way as access to education, healthcare, water, energy, shelter, sanitation and safety. Connectivity is now a utility with which to measure the quality of life, human progress and economic development.

The information technology revolution is profoundly changing the way people work and live their lives; the way governments, businesses and other institutions operate; the way armies fight wars; the way human beings interact and transact and the way societies and economies function.

The revolution in ICT has totally changed the experiences and lives of millions of people across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and South America through access to financial services and ability to communicate.

In fact, Africa offers the best insights into how technology can change the quality of life of a billion people over one generation. The success story of M-PESA in financial services and renewal energy technology is the best testimony to the Africa Rising narrative, although there are still major technology infrastructure challenges.

Programme Director, according to a World Bank Study titled "Yes Africa Can: Success Stories from a Dynamic Continent" as recently as 1998, few people in Sub-Saharan Africa had access to a telephone, and even fewer had access to computers.

The [study](#) shows that since then there has been a “continent-wide revolution” in the growth of the information and communications technology sector. The total population covered by mobile networks increased from about 10% in 1999 to 60% in 2009. More than 90% of Sub-Saharan Africa’s urban population now lives within range of a mobile signal. By any account, this is a remarkable achievement in a short space of time!

The study points to a causal relationship between telecommunications infrastructure investment and economic performance. It indicates that every 10% increase in broadband internet penetration, in developing countries, results in 1.38 percentage points in additional GDP growth.

Equally the study points to a significant and positive relationship between broadband infrastructure as well as local, regional and national economic growth, including growth in small, medium, micro-enterprises and cooperatives.

These findings by the World Bank Study confirm that; information and communications technology is an enabler of development. It is a catalyst to economic growth, improved productivity and competitiveness. ICT is also an important factor in advancing social transformation, in building sustainable livelihoods and in ensuring expanded access to quality services.

The unprecedented rate of technological and scientific innovation through which we are living imposes serious pressures on governments and governance systems to continuously transform and modernise themselves.

The old ways through which governments and public servants interfaced and interacted with members of the public - face to face, office bound and time bound - are wholly inadequate and completely unnecessary.

Public services and public engagements have to respond to the information technology revolution wherein millions of people can access services and transact with governments anytime, anywhere, without coming face to face with an arrogant or incompetent civil servant or corrupt public official.

In our own country, there are many innovations in ICT-enabled delivery of public services that have to be given impetus and momentum to bring about the necessary Transformation and Modernisation of government and governance.

The Department of Public Service and Administration established the Centre for Public Service Innovation and the State Information Technology Agency to stimulate the necessary innovations, transformation and modernisation of the government sector.

In this regard, I would like to acknowledge Mr Nhlakanipho Nduli from the Department of Roads and Transport who invented the RIMS, an innovative idea and a first of its kind

system in South Africa. RIMS has made it possible for us to improve the efficiency of our motor vehicle licensing, testing and renewal service points.

Over the past two weeks RIMS has received accolades at the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), GovTech, ICT Public Services Awards 2015; the Annual CPSI Public Sector Innovation Awards, and the Annual Transport Awards. Once more we congratulate the team behind the RIMS. This innovation is one of the exhibitions that form part of this [summit](#).

We, in Gauteng established the Innovation Hub in Tshwane in order contribute to research and development, modernising our public service, departments and our employees have also been involved in developing ideas that can help us deliver services in a most innovative and efficient manner. Recently, we established the Department of e-Government to spearhead the transformation and modernisation of public services and governance.

I would also like to acknowledge Gauteng's pioneering initiatives such as the schools of the future led by MEC Panyaza Lesufi; e-Health led by MEC Qedani Mahlangu, Gauteng Broadband Network and the rollout of free Wi-fi by

municipalities, with Tshwane as the leader; Ekurhuleni leads on e-health and Joburg on e-services through cloud computing called Maru-a-Jozi.

All these initiatives are driven by a common vision of the Gauteng City Region and a shared passion to make our province successful example of connected government and e-government in the Republic of South Africa.

Also exhibiting at this Summit are township entrepreneurs, active in the ICT space. We have included them as part of our on-going commitment to the revitalisation of the township economy and the support of township based entrepreneurs.

The National Development Plan, Vision 2030 has something profound to say about the state of our ICT infrastructure; *“Compared with the best international standards, South Africa’s ICT infrastructure is abysmal. Efficient information infrastructure that promotes economic growth and greater inclusion requires a stronger broadband and telecommunications network, and lower prices. The economic and employment benefits outweigh the costs.”* The NDP goes on to call for universal access to high speed broad-band internet at competitive prices.

This summit must, therefore, help us respond in a comprehensive way to our ICT infrastructure challenges as highlighted in the NDP. It must move us closer towards the goal of a stronger broadband and telecommunications network that promotes economic growth and greater inclusion.

Programme Director, there is no doubt that information and communication technologies will continue to play a leading role in helping us achieve the goals we have set for ourselves in terms of our programme of radical Transformation, Modernisation and Re-industrialisation, the TMR.

Towards this end we have already adopted a five year GCR-wide e-Government Strategy. Through this strategy we seek to:

- Build an enabling broad-band infrastructure for a connected government;
- Create an enabling platform to deliver e-government services;
- Establish a Gauteng City Region structure to co-ordinate, standardise, regulate and prioritise the implementation of our e-government initiatives;
- Promote the use of e-government services across the board - by government, citizens and the private sector;

- Stimulate the ICT economy by encouraging public, private partnerships for the development and roll-out e-government services.

We have established a new department of e-government to coordinate the implementation of our ICT strategy and generally to improve and expand access to e-government services within the Gauteng City Region.

Our investment in ICT includes the work we are doing to build paperless classrooms - classrooms of the future, especially in our township. Thus far, more than 300 schools across Gauteng are part of our classrooms of the future initiative and more than 17 000 learners are using tablets to enhance their learning experiences and outcomes. This intervention is helping us to mould future Gauteng citizens that will be globally competitive.

Work is also underway to connect all our health facilities to the Gauteng Broad-band Network in order to improve the quality of our health care services and to significantly reduce patient waiting times.

We are working in partnership with the City of Johannesburg, Wits University and IBM the Tshimologong Precinct in Braamfontein, a software development and ICT skills Centre.

We are also entering the final phase of planning with regard bulk infrastructure and land consolidation in order rapidly to unlock the development of the ICT Hub in Nasrec and its integration with the Soweto Empowerment Zone.

We take this opportunity to urge the private sector to train more young people, especially from the townships, and make available to them job and other economic opportunities within the ICT space. We also urge you to work with us through the Gauteng City Region Academy to provide more ICT bursaries to the Matric class of 2015.

We also look up to the private sector to partner with us in developing ICT incubators in the townships as part of the township economy revitalisation. We also urge you to partner with us to train and further capacitate our Chief Information Officers and our ICT personnel in general.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Gauteng is a smart province. It is a province of big and innovative ideas. It is a competitive province. It is part of the global community. Let us continue to work together to enhance our province's competitive advantages through greater and inclusive use of ICT and innovation.

Welcome to Gauteng, the smart province that is taking a lead in the revolution on e-governance. Welcome to the Home of Homo naledi.

It is now my honour to call up on stage, Minister Jeff Radebe to address us.

Thank you.