**Ekurhuleni “Let’s Get Things Done!” Rally Speech**By Refiloe Nt’sekhe MPL
DA Ekurhuleni Mayoral Candidate

Halala, DA, Halala!

Halala, Ekurhuleni, Halala!

Halala, 1 November, Halala!

We are about one week away from an election that is poised to change the landscape of Ekurhuleni.

We are one week away from changing the fortunes of our people for the better!

I was announced as the DA’s Ekurhuleni Mayoral Candidate on 23 August 2021. From that day, I have travelled the length and breadth of this municipality.

But my work didn’t start then. My work in Ekurhuleni started when I was elected as the Councillor for Ward 24 in 2011.

I have effectively been on the campaign trail spreading the DA’s message of hope and change for the past ten years.

From this Ekurhuleni to the Gauteng Legislature, I have been fighting for our municipality - I have been fighting for us, the people of Ekurhuleni.

I have been fighting for our children, for our parents, for our brother and sisters – for our futures.

Ekurhuleni is rotten. Ekurhuleni is dirty. Ekurhuleni is broken.

Ekurhuleni has become the city where people dreams come to die.

I have seen people living in poverty and squalor, surrounded by filth – with no hope for a better tomorrow.

Today we are in Reiger Park where people live without services, without dignity, and for many – no hope. An area that those in Green, Black and Gold have completely forgotten about.

If you don’t believe me, go look down the road at the site of Leeuwpoort Mega Housing Project!

This project was started in 2017 and should have provided 22 000 housing opportunities by 2024 for the people of Reiger Park and surrounds – but all there is to show for this project are two cranes that have never moved since the day they were delivered to the site.

The only thing mega about this project is the price tag. R2 billion to be precise.

Do you see R2 billion worth of development? There isn’t even one house on the identified land.

But I bet if you look in the pockets of the Cadres running this city – you’ll find these billions.

Leeuwpoort is not the only expensive white elephant in Ekurhuleni.

I have seen taxi ranks, industrial hubs, trading centres, development projects worth millions wasted. Our communities were not consulted with these projects and so no one is using these white elephants.

Monetary waste is but one aspect of the criminal nature of this government. The true crime is the oppression of our people – the missed opportunities to empower our people. The missed opportunity to deliver services to our people.

This is the real crime committed.

Our youth have lost hope and turned to drugs, alcohol for comfort. Unemployment has ravaged their futures.

I have seen our fathers and brothers – able bodied men, reduced to begging and turning to a life of crime just to make ends meet. In increasing circumstances, beating us women and our children to vent their frustrations.

I have seen our fellow mothers and sisters – strong women, turn to unthinkable acts in exchange for payment just to put food on the table.

Yet, the current Mayor would have us believe that this is a clean, safe, thriving city…

Are we living in a clean, safe, thriving city?

No, we are not.

Ask businesses if are operating in such a city?

The resounding answer will be no!

Like us, businesses have constant power outages, erratic water supply, pothole riddled roads and virtually no services.

They’re like us are struggling to hang on. Fighting to keep their employees in jobs.

And yet, those currently in power, scratch their heads wondering why 39% of residents in Ekurhuleni are unemployed?

It’s not rocket science.

The solution is about getting things done – getting the basics right.

And that is exactly what the DA intends to do.

There are over 1000 power outages in Ekurhuleni every single day.

Why?

Because the municipality has not invested in new infrastructure or maintained existing infrastructure.

In Phomolong, Tembisa, there is supposed to be a R70 million power station except that instead of a power station, there is an open field.

Yes, it’s a very expensive field. A power station would have increased power security for the communities of Ekurhuleni. Instead this project has lined the pockets of connected cadres.

In Katlehong there are residents who pay their bills: have electrical appliances but for the past five months, they have been reduced to cooking with the dangerous Prima Stoves or cooking with fire outside.

Why?

Because the incompetent coalition that runs Ekurhuleni has left them for months on end without electricity.

Why?

Because Ekurhuleni blames Eskom, but…. there is no management of stock of substations in the energy department.  Funded positions are not filled - despite there being funds available to employ people in this crucial department.

Instead, they choose for our people to suffer.

Here is a mind-numbing fact, there are over 4000 funded vacancies in Ekurhuleni.

Every single department in this municipality has stuff shortages.

That is why it should not surprise anyone that Ekurhuleni does not work.

Mzwandile Masina may have dreams of building a zoo in Ekurhuleni, but through his incompetence, Ekurhuleni is already a zoo.

You and I are the animals, trapped and caged, staring through the bars in search of freedom.

Freedom that comes with service delivery.

As I stand here today, my promise to you - the residents of Ekurhuleni, I too am a resident,  under my leadership – with my skills and Democratic Alliance’s record of good governance, Ekurhuleni will be a city where every single resident is treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Dignity starts with service delivery and fixing the broken finances of Ekurhuleni.

Dignity starts with protecting Ekurhuleni from Eskom instead of pretending to build power stations.

Dignity starts with providing water by building reservoirs and not buying PPE.

Dignity starts with collecting waste and not allowing residents to live in a dirty city.

Dignity starts with fixing our roads.

Dignity starts with fixing sewerage.

Dignity starts with getting the basics right.

Dignity starts because the DA gets things done.

But…You have the power to taste a City where people have dignified lives.

Together we can liberate ourselves from those who have taken us for granted: insulting our existence every day.

Real service delivery, real development and growth will take place under a DA-led administration.

Don’t take my word for it, even the national government agrees that the best run municipalities in South Africa are all run by the DA.

Where the DA governs, we keep the lights on.

Where the DA governs, we make sure that people have access to fresh water and sanitation.

Where the DA governs our cities create an environment conducive to economic growth so that much needed jobs for our people are created.

The DA will put you first, because you – residents of Ekurhuleni, are our most valuable assets.

You are the life blood of this city.

Ekurhuleni, I am here for you.

I am in your corner; I am your champion – I am your humble servant.

I want to thank every one of you here today. I want to thank everyone who is not here today but has been committed to carrying the blue flame forward.

To every public representative, to every activist, to every DA voter – I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your tireless dedication and commitment to the people of Ekurhuleni!

I want to thank the countless residents who have opened their homes to me, who have shared their lived experiences with me. Your experiences are my experiences.

This election is for you. To reclaim dignity. To hire the DA to get things done.

It is only your vote that can hire the DA to fix Ekurhuleni. It is only the DA that can fix Ekurhuleni.

All I ask is for a 5-year contract to start fixing this broken city.

We have one week to go. Next Monday Ekurhuleni will be a DA Municipality.

Let’s grab this opportunity with both hands and make our X near the DA logo!

One more week to go!

Let’s go out and push to get things done!

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