

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **ASSEMBLY APPLAUDS THE WORK DONE TO ABATE KILLING OF COUNCILLORS IN KZN, CALLS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER BETTER SERVICES**

The South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) concluded the National Members Assembly (NMA) on Wednesday, 12 December 2018. About 196 municipalities, national and provincial government, together with international guests and partners, academic institutions, business and stakeholders attended the assembly which was officially addressed by President Cyril Ramaphosa, early Tuesday.

Key on the agenda on the last day of the assembly was the address SALGA President Park Tau on the organisational progress report, adoption of the SALGA 2017/18 Annual Report and the Annual Financial Performance as well as the Annual Performance Plan 2018/19. The programme ended with a hard hitting political party represented panel where the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), Economic Freedom Front (EFF) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) unpacked matters affecting local government and also made input about what role SALGA should play in influencing 2019 Party Election Manifestos in order to benefit the sector.

Highlights on the progress that SALGA has made since the 2016 National Conference included notable strides in the work of SALGA's National Women's Commission, as well as the establishment of the Council of Mayors and Council of Speakers as outcomes of the conference.

Some of the fundamental issues that SALGA had to deal with in the last period of two years include, among others;

- The impasse between ESKOM and municipalities on Electricity Reticulation Authority
- ESKOM Concessions – debts owed
- Energy future of Local Government
- Pooled Financing Mechanisms and Innovative Funding Instruments for Infrastructure Financing

- SALGA Bargaining Council around salaries and wages, the wage curve and the Pension Fund restructuring
- Community protests, xenophobia attacks and attacks on municipal Councillors and officials
- Engaging government and key role-players to ensure a more equitable Councillor Remuneration System
- Structured engagements with the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA)

The organisation continues pay more focus on programmes delivering outcomes with greater impact, as evidenced by its Municipal Audit Support Programme (MASP), the Centre for Leadership and Governance, Small Town Regeneration Programme; Municipal Barometer; the Knowledge Innovation Hub, among others.

The assembly passed the eThekweni declaration with local government leaders reaffirming to commit to the spirit and vision of the 1998 White Paper on Local Government which is founded on working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to improve the quality of their lives.

The delegates further acknowledged policy assumptions made at the time of the development of the new democratic system of local government and agreed that some policies were no longer relevant and realistic, requiring a fundamental re-think.

Holding plug cards, delegates stood up to close the assembly and pledged in solidarity with victims of violence; pledging to make the fight against abuse of women and children a daily fight and to lead the fight against HIV/Aids through implementation of the UNAIDS endorsed 90-90-90 Campaign.

**ENDS**

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