

# Joburg youth urged to protect the environment



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**J**ohannesburg youth have been urged to “be awake and be aware” of the growing threat to the environment.

Speaking during the **Zero Waste** Youth Summit at the Johannesburg Metro Centre in Braamfontein on Friday as part of Youth Month celebrations, United Nations’ Youth Ambassador Elle Bella told the city’s youth to put on their “green glasses” and fully dedicate “every single part of who and what you are” to the promotion of a zero waste culture in communities.

“I hope you’ve been inspired by what you learned here today because that’s the whole point – to be inspired and to grow. Now is your opportunity as young people to stand up and fight for what is right,” Bella said.

The youth summit – organised by Pikitup, the City’s waste management entity, and the City’s Youth Directorate – came on the back of a highly successful Environmental Awareness Week, which reached its climax on Saturday last week when Executive Mayor Councillor Parks Tau led a cleanup campaign in Ivory Park.

In her keynote address at the youth summit, Pikitup Managing Director Amanda Nair called on young people to move out of an environment that “almost lets you give away your right to a better future”.

Nair told the young green crusaders not to abdicate their own responsibilities by waiting for other people to come up with a solution to their problems.

"I want you to know that the world just doesn't work like that. The recipe to success in life is hard work, which always yields guaranteed results," said Nair, noting her own rise from humble working-class beginnings. "The only thing standing between you and a positive future is yourself."

Nair urged the youth to come up with innovative waste management concepts and partner with Pikitup to make the city clean. She said she was proud of the various eco-friendly ways Pikitup applied to deal with waste.

She said Johannesburg produced 1.7 million tons of waste a year and was rapidly running out of landfill space as a consequence.

"The most important thing to understand is that when we as an entity embark on such green-friendly initiatives, we cannot do it alone," Nair said.

Read more: [http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=9787:joburg-youth-urged-to-protect-the-environment&catid=88:news-update&Itemid=266#ixzz3pIdIv3pX](http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9787:joburg-youth-urged-to-protect-the-environment&catid=88:news-update&Itemid=266#ixzz3pIdIv3pX)