



## Curriculum Vitae Mr. Eric Oswald Apelgren



### **Career profile**

40 years' experience in international development and relations, civil society institutional development, international and intergovernmental project management, local government governance and education.

### **Career history**

I have dedicated 25 years of service to the eThekweni Municipality, playing a pivotal role in shaping and managing Durban's international and intergovernmental relations. My responsibilities encompassed overseeing all sister city partnerships, formulating municipal international relations policies, and fostering relationships with international donors, UN agencies, and other multilateral organizations accredited in South Africa. Developed key liaison and engagement projects with diplomats in the province and ambassadors and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). Aligned all the cities international and intergovernmental relations programmes with the office of the premier KZN.

In addition to policy development, I provided protocol and event management support for key city events involving national, provincial, and international stakeholders. This included coordinating logistics and protocol for major civic and intergovernmental engagements. I was also actively involved in securing bids to bring high-profile international conventions, conferences, and large-scale sports and cultural events to Durban.

Working closely with the Office of the Mayor and the City Manager, I provided strategic advice and support on all matters related to international relations, intergovernmental affairs, events, and protocol. I also managed public relations and media communications for the municipality's international and intergovernmental programs, ensuring alignment with the city's global positioning strategy. I played a crucial role in navigating complex international relations and policies that were in the best interests and maximum value for the city and the province.

My tenure at the municipality included key intergovernmental initiatives, such as leading secretariat, coordination, and content development services for the municipal District Development Model. I was an active participant in the Presidential Task Team and the COGTA government intervention, contributing to the municipality's recovery, capacity building, and support programs. My role also involved working on the city's inner-city regeneration plan, tourism and city strategic communications programmes. Additionally, I played a crucial role in international and intergovernmental projects addressing disaster and flood risk mitigation, infrastructure challenges, and climate change adaptation and resilience strategies.

Currently, I am an active member of partnership programmes with University of Kwazulu-Natal, Mongasuthu University of Technology and the Durban University of Technology to enhance scholarship support and diplomatic partnerships.

## **Experience**

### **Senior Manager, New Tourism Product Development – KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority**

Led the facilitation and implementation of new tourism development projects across the province, with a strong emphasis on democratic inclusivity and the empowerment of disadvantaged communities.

### **Regional Director, KwaZulu-Natal – Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)**

Designed, managed, and implemented programs to promote democracy, human rights, and civic engagement. Spearheaded land restitution initiatives and played a key role in conciliation and conflict mediation efforts. Developed proactive education for democracy programmes, voter education and proactive human rights awareness projects.

**Short Courses through the IDASA international programme for senior managers.**

October 1989 - Completed an international scholarship autumn programme of three months civic education and political leadership programme with the Kennedy School of Government and the Kellogg's Foundation in Austria.

**Regional Coordinator, KwaZulu-Natal – Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (IMPD)**

Identified and developed programs to foster political tolerance and national reconciliation, particularly among aspiring politicians, youth, and rural communities. Developed and conducted political leadership training programmes for youth leaders and political leaders from all political parties. Advocated for the active participation of women in political processes. Played a critical role in South Africa's first democratic elections and the establishment of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in KwaZulu-Natal. I was an accredited elections observer in the national elections. I participated in many urban and rural election dispute resolution processes and the mobilization of international, interfaith and civil society partners to support the promotion of human rights for a free and fair election

**Development Officer – Catholic Archdiocese of Durban**

Managed and supported urban and rural development projects aimed at uplifting impoverished communities in and around Durban. Provided strategic assistance to community-based structures operating in areas affected by violence, poverty, and natural disasters. Collaborated with international donors, including Oxfam UK, Christian Aid, and funding partners from Germany and the United States.

**Secondary School Teacher – Department of Education and Culture**

Taught Geography and provided school counselling, contributing to the academic and personal development of students.

<b>Leadership and community service</b>	
Current	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson of Operation Jumpstart Association. Managing a R200 million investment portfolio for NPOs and NPC to alleviate suffering.</li> <li>• Non-executive board member of Innovate Durban</li> <li>• Chairperson of TREE – Training Resources for Early Education</li> <li>• Board Member of the Nelson Mandela Youth Centre.</li> <li>• Associate member of Smart Exchange</li> <li>• Past board member of Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa. (WESSA)</li> <li>• Board member of the KwaZulu-Natal Organization – No violence against women and children.</li> </ul>
1996 to 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board member of Mfundoyesizwe Trust - building schools project in KZN</li> <li>• Trustee of the Bat Centre</li> <li>• Accredited Mediator on Land and Community disputes.</li> <li>• Founding member of the Wentworth Improvement Project – programme to empower youth and especially gangsters and youth in trouble with the law.</li> </ul>
1996 to 1998	Member National NGO Coalition, KwaZulu Natal NGO Council
1994	Accredited Observer for the Independent Electoral Commission
1993 to 1996	Member Coordinating Committee KwaZulu Natal Forum on Education for Democracy (network of 40 NGOs promoting democracy education, peace, human rights and development).
1993 to date	
1991 to 1992	

## **Educational qualifications**

Bachelor of Social Science Degree and a Higher Diploma in Education Counseling and Geography Methodology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, 1985

## **Personal details**

Date of birth 16 March 1962

9<sup>th</sup> Child in a family of 12 (Catholic)

International travel – traveled extensively in Europe, North America, Africa and Asia.

Zulu, Swedish, Khoisan and English ancestry

## **Contact**

Email:

ID number:

## **Referees**

1. Cllr Cyril Xaba, Mayor, eThekweni Municipality
2. Mr Vasu Gounden – CEO, African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes ACCORD.
3. Ms Ela Ghandi – Ghandi Development Trust and custodian of the Phoenix Settlement Inanda
4. Mr Alain Pierre Gringoire – Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Durban Kwazulu-Natal and Hon Consul for Belgium

