

PROF MANDLA MAKHANYA, PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDRESS: UNISA/TITANS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

TITANS CRICKET GROUNDS

15 MARCH 2020

Thanks to our Programme Director: Ms Cristal Peterson,
Communication and Marketing – Unisa SBL

- Dr Jacques Faul: Acting Chief Executive Officer of Cricket South Africa
- Mr Pierre Joubert: Acting Chief Executive Officer of Titans Cricket – as well as other members of Titans Cricket present today
- Mr Sandy Lebeso and Mr Amukelani Ngwenya, Members of Council
- Dr Gavin Isaacs: Chief Operating Officer of Unisa SBL
- Members of Unisa management and extended management present
- Representatives from various media fraternities
- Distinguished guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

I am delighted to be here today to share in the launch of this exciting and quite novel partnership which is aimed at:

- developing sports through higher education
- strengthening learning at the governance and administration levels of executive business
- enabling study opportunities for qualifying area club cricketers in the Northern Gauteng region
- establishing and branding the Unisa model as an African thought leader of choice

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a saying that *no man (or woman) is an island*. This is especially true in this 21st century – sophisticated technology and digitisation have turned the world into a global village and have made each of us global citizens.

It was Metternich, the distinguished 19th-century diplomat, who coined one of the most famous phrases about the global economy. In an era when Europe dominated the world, he came up with: “*When France sneezes, Europe catches a cold.*” This same sentiment was then applied to America at its zenith, and most recently to China – both of whom are deemed to be the most powerful global economies. I’m sure you have all heard the expression: “*When China sneezes, the world catches a cold.*” Now, if you were ever in any

doubt about how connected we are, then just look at the unprecedented and swift spread of the Corona virus, from its identification in China, to the entire world in the briefest period of time. We cannot deny our global citizenship as the world transforms before our eyes.

Higher education has not been exempted from this globalisation trend and we are firmly in the midst of what is called the 4IR. In higher education we note that:

1. the concept of education and the University is changing
2. the complexion, content, understanding and acceptance of “knowledge” are changing (more than 60% of new knowledge is produced outside of the University)
3. student debt and institutional financing have reached unsustainable levels
4. students’ contexts, needs and expectations are different
5. we have a hugely differentiated HE sector and very diverse “students” with different and often non-traditional educational needs
6. there is a huge and growing gap between the haves and the have nots, which technology has not been able to bridge

Clearly, we have had to look at higher education through different lenses. If we intend reaching our full potential, we have to accept that we actually have a very broad stakeholder base which collectively comprises the university community. So, in our view, our university community does not merely consist of staff, students and traditional collaboration partners. Universities now include multiple (also non-traditional) peer and external “stakeholders” to foster cooperation and engagement, leverage collective resources and create opportunities for research and innovation. Unisa, like most other universities, has committed to entering into agreements/partnerships that accommodate the needs – and that will benefit – both constituencies.

So, we are obviously delighted and excited to be entering into this memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Titans because it provides a visible manifestation of our mutual commitment to the sharing of resources and capacities. On the one hand, the Titans will benefit from Unisa’s core business through the facilitation of registration and learning for players and cricket management, while on the other hand Unisa and specifically, the Unisa Choir will benefit from stadia branding, exposure and hospitality – crucial aspects in promoting our brand. In this way, we will collectively contribute towards student enrolment and success, governance and

administrative improvement and excellence, and marketing and development. This, in my view, is a true expression of Ubuntu/Botho. It is the magic that happens when people work together with a common purpose and for the common good.

MoUs such as this one show our mutual appreciation of, and deep commitment to, our citizens – and our determination to make a meaningful and measurable contribution to the change that we would like to see in their lives, and by extension, our societies and our continent.

Unisa's vision to be ***“The African University shaping futures in the service of humanity”*** reinforces this collaboration while it resonates with practical and symbolic meaning. Unisa is the largest university in Africa and in the Southern Hemisphere and it has a global footprint in terms of its student enrolment as an Open Distance e-Learning university as well as its international partnerships. Our students can study from wherever they are – I think this would be particularly beneficial for our cricket players and their management who are often away from home for fairly lengthy periods of time.

We feel humbled and honoured to play our role in the Titans' development and drive for excellence. I am hopeful – and

confident – that the relationship that we are formalising today will grow and develop to the continued benefit of our respective institutions in the months and years ahead.

Thank you!