

UNISA GREEN CAMPUS INITIATIVE: A FOCUS ON THE ZERO EMISSIONS CARS UNISA ROAD SHOW (28 JUNE 2013)

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

I never would have believed that the subject of **environmental sustainability** could generate such excitement and (as my children would say) ‘a vibey atmosphere’. Perhaps, it has to do with the fact that we have cars involved, or maybe (as I would like to believe), it signifies Unisa’s growing understanding and emerging commitment to the 3 pillars of governance, ethics, and sustainability.

My speculations aside, I want to emphasise that whatever may be your reason for being here, I am very pleased to welcome you because I know that you will certainly leave this space with more information about environmental protection and the green sustainability project than when you first arrived – and that’s very positive.

This event marks a unique co-operation between the Department of Environmental Affairs, my Office (under the delegated leadership of the Vice Principal: Advisory and Assurance Services), and the Office of the Exxaro Chair in Business and Climate Change. I am very enthusiastic about this development and colleagues, I want to alert you to the fact that I am looking forward to many more engagements of a similar nature in the near future.

As some of you may be aware, on 22 January 2013, the Unisa Management approved the Green Economy and Sustainability Engagement Model through which we hope to take Unisa and its stakeholders to the next level with regards

to green economy and sustainability matters. The Unisa Green Campus Initiative is one of the main components of the project. As we know, Unisa is the only tertiary institution that is a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact in South Africa and I want to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the GESEM project team for their continued commitment and efforts to gain a foothold at the University to raise the necessary understanding of what we should be doing about environmental conservation and sustainability. I am aware that there are many role-players in addition to the GESEM team and I include all of you in my acknowledgement.

With universities and other organisations facing sustainability challenges emanating from amongst other factors, high carbon emissions the time has come to reflect and be proactive in our efforts to innovatively explore possibilities of lowering our carbon emissions. The **Zero Emissions Car Road Show** in which we are all participating today is one among many activities that Unisa and partners are embarking on to raise awareness amongst staff and the broader community in order to take action.

We are sincerely grateful to the Department of Environmental Affairs for choosing Unisa to be one of the first **institutions of Higher Education** in the country to which they have brought this Road Show. I hope my Unisa colleagues took the opportunity to either listen to the talk by the officials from the Department of Environmental Affairs and/or have a ride in the Zero Emissions Nissan LEAFs. I am told that the drive is an awesome experience and will forever change the way in which we think about our environment.

Finally, allow me to once again extend a sincere word of thanks to all who worked with such passion and urgency to bring this experience to Unisa and to

all of you present who took the time to show your support for the Unisa Green Economy initiative.

Please continue to enjoy yourselves and if you haven't done so yet, insist that you have a ride in one of the LEAFs, or even go for a second ride! To the GESEM team, well done colleagues; and to the colleagues from the Department of Environmental Affairs, let me emphasise that it is indeed our honour to be your hosts this afternoon. I thank you and look forward to a continued partnership and working relationship.

I thank you.