



The Office Of The Principal and Vice - Chancellor

ON BEING THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY

Inauguration and Investiture Speech

By

Prof. Mandlenkosi S. Makhanya

Principal and Vice Chancellor

University of South Africa

16th February 2011

ORDER OF PROTOCOL

- The Chancellor, Judge BM Ngoepe: The Judge President of North Gauteng High Court
- The Chairperson of Council, Dr M Phosa
- Members of Council of the University of South Africa
- Pro Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa, Prof Narend Baijnath
- Members of Unisa Executive and Extended Management
- Deputy Minister for Higher Education and Training, Prof H Mkhize
- MEC for Infrastructure Development, Gauteng Provincial Government: Mr BS Nkosi
- MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation: Mr L Maile
- MEC for Local Government and Housing: Mr H Mmemezi
- Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Science and Technology, Dr ENN Ngcobo
- Member of Parliament: Mr P Maluleke
- Auditor General of the Republic of South Africa, Mr TM Nombembe
- Members of our National and Provincial Government here present tonight
- His Worship the Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Councillor Mr KD Ramokgopa
- Members of the Mayoral Committee here present tonight Ms TE Mmoko and Ms AW Mosupye
- Former President of South Africa, Mr T Mbeki and Mrs Z Mbeki
- Former President of Haiti, Dr JB Aristide and Mrs M Aristide
- The former Chancellors of our University, Dr CF Garbers and Mrs Garbers
- The former Chairpersons of Council of this University, Adv AM Motimele and Dr ATM Mokgokong
- Chancellors and Council Chairpersons of all universities here present this evening
 - Adv PF Tlakula
 - Dr D Phaho
 - Dr S Fikeni
 - Ms NT Mtoba

- Dr MDC Motlatla
- Former Vice Chancellors, Prof AP Melck and Prof SS Maimela (former Acting VC).
- Vice Chancellors of sister universities in the Continent, who are all the Board members of the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) ;
 - Prof James Adelabu, University of Abuja, Nigeria (Also Chairperson of the ACDE)
 - Prof Tolly Mbvette, Open University of Tanzania, Tanzania
 - Dr P Kurasha, Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe
 - Prof M Musonda, Copperbelt University, Zambia
 - Dr Fred Barasa, Executive Director of the ACDE, Nairobi, Kenya
- Chief Executive Officer of Higher Education South Africa, Prof D Malaza
- Vice Chancellors of our sister universities in South Africa and who are Board Members of Higher Education South Africa (HESA) ;
 - Prof I Rensburg UJ)
 - Prof IN Moutlana (VUT)
 - Prof C de la Rey (UP)
 - Prof LG Nongxa (WITS)
 - Prof AC Bawa (DUT)
 - Prof D Swartz (NMMU)
 - Dr M Tom (UF)
 - Prof MM Balintulo (WSU)
 - Prof NF Mazibuko: UZ
- Executive Members of the Universities of UCT, UKZN, TUT, North-West, VUT, WSU, UP, NMMU, WITS, UJ and UFS
- The Honourable Justice S Ngcobo: Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa
- Judges of the High Courts and the Constitutional Court of South Africa:
 - The Hon Judge D Moseneke, Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court
 - The Hon Judge P Langa, former Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court

- The Hon Judge PM Mojapelo, Deputy Judge President of the North Gauteng High Court
 - The Hon Judge NM Mavundla, Judge of the South Gauteng High Court
- President of Judicial Officers Association of South Africa, Mr D Dosio
- Bishop Dr JT Seoka, Bishop of the Diocese of Pretoria, Church of the Province of SA Anglican Church and also the President of the South African Council of Churches
- Bishop M Dlungwana, Bishop of the Diocese of Marianhill, Pinetown
- Bishop and Mrs M Mpumlwana, Bishop at Ethiopian Episcopal Church
- Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Members of the Board of Trustees of Unisa, Adv B Gundelfinger and Mr A Mthembu
- Members of the Board of Trustees of Unisa
- Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Mr A Essop
- Members of the Board of the CHE
- President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Research Foundation (NRF), Dr AS van Jaarsveld
- Members of the Board of the NRF
- Chief Executive Officer of the Freedom Park, Dr MW Serote
- Chief Executive Officer of Coastlands Hotels and Resorts, Mr S Naidu
- Chief Executive Officer of African Exploration Mining and Finance Corporation, Mr SE Madondo
- Chief Executive Officer of Mining Qualifications, Mr EL Nxumalo
- Dr Bakary Diallo, Rector: African Virtual University, Nairobi, Kenya
- President of the Board of Directors of the Black Management Forum, Mr J Manyi
- Prof EA Wright, Director: UNESCO Windhoek Cluster Office
- Dr B Bam, Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa
- Chairperson of Council of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), Mr JWA Godden
- Members of the Board of the ARC
- Members of the Board of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

- President of the Council for the development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Prof Sam Moyo
- Representative of the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, Dr Carlos Cardoso
- Dr KS Kongwa and Dr Ramdhani, Africa Institute of South Africa Council (AISA)
- Members of the Board of the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA)
- Chairperson of Umalusi Council, Prof SG Mabizela
- Executive Director of IDASA, Mr P Graham
- Executive Director of the Institute for Global Dialogue, Dr S Zondi
- Members of the South African National Commission for UNESCO
- University Staff and institutional affiliates
- Chairperson of Nehawu (Unisa branch), Mr B Phakathi, and members of the executive of Nehawu
- General Secretary of APSA, Mr JM Jonker, and members of the executive of APSA
- Chairperson of the Unisa Black Forum, Prof H Mogashoa and members of the executive of the Unisa Black Forum
- Chairperson of Unisa Women's Forum, Dr A Ravhudzulo and members of the executive of Unisa Women's Forum
- President of the NSRC, Mr N Siwela and all members of the executive of the NSRC
- Leaders of the SRCs from our Regional Centres
- Unisa's students
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Bishops and Pastors and all members of the Ecclesiastical Community (including Col Rev MT Masuku Chaplain General of the SANDF and Pastors C & C Dhlamini)
- Special Guests
- Illustrious Alumni, Dr PM Maduna, Dr NM Magau and Dr WP Rowland
- Recipients of our Honorary Degrees, Dr RJ Meko and Prof OEHM Nxumalo
- Executive Director of MTN Group, Ms N January-Bardill, Group Executive of Global HR & Transformation, Barloworld, Mr SP Moloisane, General manager: Strategic & Economic Planning, Trade Investment, Limpopo, Chairperson of Vilakazi

Dvelopment Strategies, Prof HW Vilakazi and all the Leaders of our Business Community

- Praise singers, Prof BD Ntuli and Mr MK Mothoagae
- All the partners of these special guests
- Members of my family
- My mother, Mrs Makhanya, uMaZuma
- My better half and wife, Mrs Makhanya, uMandu
- My children: Sinenhlanhla, Zamakhanya, Njabulo and Nondumiso
- and my grandchild, Ntsumi
- Members of the media, and
- Programme Director, Adv V Kahla

It is a great honour and privilege to have been appointed as the 8th Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa – and the second of the merged UNISA. As I assume this colossal responsibility of the leadership of this great institution I will draw inner strength from the legendary intellectual resilience of ZK Matthews, the abiding creativity of E’skia Mphahlele and the care, compassion and commitment of Unisa’s illustrious alumnus, former president Nelson Mandela. As I reflect on this daunting task ahead I know I will need the proverbial Wisdom of Solomon to steer this gigantic ship.

1. Introduction

In most parts of the world, education and higher education are viewed as prime vehicles for socio-economic development. Yet education is so much more than just an incubator for the acquisition of knowledge, requisite skills and qualifications. It is more than mere didactics or research on, or by schools, colleges or faculties. It is *also* about transformatory pedagogic actions that are intrinsic to continuing education and learning. Education evolves over time, through processes of engagement with life. It is an attempt to bring valuable influences to bear for the better, and it includes the formation of human and moral agency, and the ideals, norms and values which foster and encourage high standards in reason, judgement and action. It entails critical learning on the logics and optics of life, and enables reason, interpretation and creativity on how to think; how to understand; how to appreciate meaning; how to make use of knowledge; and how to discover value and its usefulness in knowledge. It also refers to efforts to understand how to know when knowledge is revealing, obfuscating and/or clarifying life and its interpretation or meaning. It “goes beyond creating a mass of competent technicians and efficient imparters of skills - to inspiring creativity, autonomy, citizenship, vision and imagination, as well as hope and a generosity of spirit.”¹

In the fullest and truest sense therefore, higher education is essential in deepening knowledge and expanding people’s horizons and efforts to be fully human. It enables and nurtures learning and creativity and the ability to live and relate well with others, in

¹ Odora-Hoppers, Catherine, A. Framework and Strategy constituted as the South African Observatory on Human Development 2009:7

harmony with creation. It is central to socio-economic development, and it is invaluable for the formation of human and moral agency of peoples and societies. Higher education is without doubt, fundamental and integral to the development of all societies and peoples.

It should be self-evident then, that any society that seeks to advance, must substantively understand and appreciate the developmental role of higher education, including universities. In this regard, for instance, Lord Winston, Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom, stated recently in a BBC radio interview, that “.....without a healthy university system you can’t advance the wellbeing of your society.”

It is my intention in this address, to discuss the realities that undergird African universities today, with particular reference to the University of South Africa, which I have been appointed to lead. I shall identify some of the pragmatic/ philosophical/ academic and policy challenges that UNISA and many African universities face, and which need, and ought, to be overcome.

Understanding our strengths, capabilities and limitations will help us to devise strategies to triumph over the challenges which limit us. It obliges us to envision alternative praxes, philosophies and world outlooks, which cohere with the goals that we at UNISA have set for ourselves for the years 2011 to 2015 and beyond. Over and above Unisa’s more immediate strategic goals, UNISA is simultaneously committed to progressive processes of Africanisation, the aim being to become a contextually and globally relevant and innovative university in the 21st century.² Africanisation involves the centring of Africa and African intellectual thoughts, knowledge systems, epistemologies, innovations and technologies, whilst not neglecting understanding and learning from those knowledge systems, philosophies, epistemologies and or insights which derive from other contexts, regions and/or the broad global community. It also involves the provision of education that is relevant and responsive, and reflects the local context and

² Refer to UNISA 2015 revisited 2010; Makhanya, M.S and LenkaBula, P. African Intellectuals, Knowledge Systems and Africa’s Futures’ Concept Note, 2010.

the present period. However it does not limit itself to these, but is willing to venture beyond our local contexts and our lives today. Education also has to be creative, imaginary beyond the empirical, and attentive to Africa's and world futures and future generations.

When it comes to Africanisation, the development of globally relevant education is particularly important, because the negation and discounting of one's humanity, contexts, peoples, creativity, inventions, technologies, languages, sciences, achievements and struggles, is antithetical to development and denudes lives of their dignity and existence. Africanisation is about engendering education that is completely relevant within the context in which UNISA exists and in which it provides education. This implies that whilst UNISA will remain committed to the diversity of knowledge systems evolving and deriving from the global context and global communities of knowledge, Africanisation will foreground its ethos, work and praxis. Africanisation thus constitutes one of the key ontological expressions of UNISA's culture.

The third part of my address tonight will outline the opportunities, prospects and alternative approaches to higher education, which I contend will be resourceful to the developmental needs of South Africa and the continent.

In the fourth part, I will identify some of the key, pragmatic strategies relevant for higher education in the 21st century and beyond, with which UNISA will have to engage if our society is to benefit from our existence as the premier Open and Distance Learning higher education institution in South Africa.

2. The Realities of Higher Education Today

I assume the leadership of the UNISA at an interesting time in the development and history of South Africa - toward the end of the second decade of democracy. This is a period still marked by urgent demands for education, freedom, justice, infrastructural development, and the development and overhauling of systems to ensure that the inequalities of the past are overcome. The euphoria of freedom, liberation and democratisation has begun to wane and material and politico-economic and moral

demands for a 'better life for all', are becoming more apparent, especially for those who live on the underside of all power - that is, the downtrodden, poor and marginalised members of our society.

Many people in South Africa are beginning to question democratisation, as well as the institutions and instruments which were instituted to facilitate the transition from apartheid to democracy. In spite of the numerous socio-political gains made by South Africa, there are still many gaps and bifurcations. South Africa is, for example considered to be the most polarised society in the world, with the greatest gap between the poor and the rich. This must surely tell us that a lot of work remains to be done by our society, and by institutions of education and higher education – including UNISA, to transform the lives of South Africans, especially those on the underside of power, for the better. To that end, South Africa is forging a new and innovative articulation of its own developmental agenda, and Unisa must play its part. Yet even as South Africa matures into its new democracy and experiences the pangs of growth and development, our brothers and sisters on the continent are engaged in struggles of their own to find genuine expressions of who they are, where they are going, and what it is that they desire to become. It is this conflicted and dynamic environment that African universities, including UNISA, must function.

Many commentators view the 21st Century as a deepening of the phenomenon of globalisation, which poses significant challenges around the role of universities and the communities and societies that they purport to serve. Charles is of the view that under the banner of globalisation, the new knowledge economy and the information and communication technologies of today, as well as higher education policies, programmes and practices, have been increasingly co-opted and shaped by wider geo-strategic political and economic interests and to a large extent, have become firmly incorporated into the discourse of neoliberal economy/ trade and notions of 'global competitiveness.' This has resulted in the 'marketisation' of education, which poses many challenges for African universities and research institutions.

For instance, we are told that “no country on the African continent is listed among the world rising innovation hot spots [which include countries such as Russia, India, Taiwan, China, Singapore and South Korea].”³ Britz et al, further point out that “Africa’s inventors have secured very few patents.”⁴ This suggests that African universities, which ought to be the bedrock of innovation and creativity, are lagging behind when it comes to innovation and creativity. It also means that we lag behind other regions in utilising, optimising and generating intellectual property rights capital, which often provides a resources-base for research and development. Furthermore, where knowledge is bought and sold on the global market, those who generate the knowledge, wittingly or unwittingly enjoy a form of knowledge hegemony which militates against the generation and propagation of own, or indigenous knowledges. This situation and many others, which limit African universities from performing optimally in the provision of education, require defining, redefining, and reforming so that African universities can become centres of excellence.

Ten years ago almost to the day, the Association of African Universities (AAU) at its 10th General Conference recommended in what has come to be known as the *Nairobi Declaration* that: “Through the promotion of research and free enquiry, the open contestation of ideas, and the appreciation and tolerance of difference, African universities must generate and disseminate knowledge and understanding, foster the values of openness and respect for merit, and enrich the general quality of the social life of their communities.”

We are also keenly aware that the African Union (AU) has identified the higher education sector as a key focus area in its Plan Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa 2006-15. The Union has been developing major programmes aimed at strengthening higher education and the quality and competitiveness of institutions. The AU has also started a continental conversation to develop a *Strategy for the Harmonisation of Higher Education*.

³Britz, J.J, Lov, P.J, Coetzee, IEM and Bester, BC 2006 Africa as a Knowledge Society: A Reality Check in International information and Library Review No 38 pp 25-40, 2005:25

⁴ Britz et al, 2005:25

In affirmation of these initiatives and in his own articulate expression of the dire need for embedding and advancing higher education on the continent and beyond, Zeleza asserts:

The need for redefining and defining the importance of universities has never been greater. Questions abound. How are African universities trying to balance the demands of autonomy and accountability , expansion and excellence, equity and efficiency, diversification and differentiation, representation and responsibility, privatisation and the public purpose, community service and consultancy, internationalisation and indigenisation, global visibility and presence and local anchorage and relevance in the face of liberalisation, and as they address the new challenges of knowledge production and dissemination, of Africanising global scholarship and globalising African scholarship?⁵

If we are to agree with Spelling that in the world today, no country, state, society and/ or community can flourish if it does not augment and improve its provision and delivery of so-called human, social and educational capital, then the calls for reawakening and regaining our ground as African universities and institutions of higher learning in South Africa, are particularly urgent. Spelling states that “in [today’s] and tomorrow’s world a nation’s wealth will derive from its capacity to educate, attract and retain citizens who are able to work smarter and learn faster.”⁶

In a rapidly changing globalised knowledge society, in which the gap between the developed and developing continues to grow, the call for access to higher education continues unabated, and the role, relevance and future of universities the world over higher is engendering growing attention and scrutiny, there is clearly a need for reconfiguration to overcome the complex demands and challenges that we all face. More so in Africa.

⁵ Zeleza 2007:1.

⁶ Spelling quoted in Globalisation, societies and Education pg 229.

These changing dynamics compel universities to become more creative, and to seek to play constructive roles in their societies and in the world. They compel African universities to devise and conceive of innovative approaches and strategies to facilitate their own renewal and “contribute to the sustainable development of African economies, societies and polities.”⁷ It is for this and many other reasons that many African researchers and policy strategists, have claimed that there is no more opportune time than now for African universities to play constructive roles in the development of the African continent and the advancement of education as the bedrock of success, wellness and wellbeing. Urgent assertions have been made that “our entire continent remains at risk until the African university, in the context of a continental reawakening, regains its soul.”⁸ In the words of one Mbeki, this needed to be done “... to defeat the pernicious view that Africa was but a hapless appendage to the rest of humanity condemned to survival as an object of pity and benevolent charity and contempt, and the actions that derive from this (negative) perspective”. It is education and higher education that will enable Africa to find its voice, regain its soul and assert its dignity.

Education must look beyond only traditional and formal education and training modes and build on existing capabilities and capacities gained from the world of work. This would have direct and indirect impacts on economic success, and would enhance strong relationships, cooperation, networks and engagement between universities, the world of work, communities and the private sector, and logically, lead into new models of local, regional and international cooperation in which education, private and public needs and utilisation of education, knowledge, and innovation and research find coherence.

Higher education institutions also have to embark on collaborative and strategic networks and/or partnerships with other social partners. The potential to cultivate strong relationships and networks of civic engagements in which wider social, public, economic and socio-ecological needs and performance cohere, is particularly resourceful for the

⁷ Zeleza 2007:1

⁸ Mbeki quoted by Zeleza 2006: 14.

flourishing of communities, industries, and other social partners within their locality, regions and beyond. They can without any doubt, lead to local, regional and international relationships and networks in which norms of social trust, cooperation and reciprocity exist. They can also provide models for future cooperation and can play key roles in “the development of cultural and political determination of socio-economic success.”⁹ In addition, universities have the potential to play an integrative role in regional innovative systems and capital. University leaders, managers and all staff and stakeholders, have a moral obligation to ensure that universities are rid of practices and elements which deter them from providing constructive and life-affirming education.

Universities can no longer be content with the traditional roles ascribed to them. In order to balance the requisite needs for promoting education and engaging in the construction, production, and dissemination of knowledge, they must be at the centre of creativity and innovation, research and development, citizen and intellectual formation and they must support collaborative engagement.

3. The Challenges and Opportunities Facing Unisa

Given the numerous issues I have just mentioned, what are the challenges, prospects and or opportunities that UNISA faces today, which we need to attend to? How do we position UNISA as an ODL higher education institution, for success? For UNISA to claim that it aspires to be *the* African university in the service of humanity in the 21st century, it will need to address challenges that include:

- Anthropocentric research and innovations which neglect the global economic injustices and ecological degradation: meaning research that only concentrates on human beings and neglects the environment and ecological wellbeing;
- Our marginal position in research and innovation reflected in international and local rankings/ standing;
- Transformation and questions of expanding diversity in human resources base/capital and infrastructural deliverables;

⁹ Charles 2006:121

- Responding to the high demand for tertiary and university education
- Low innovation, research and development outputs

Other substantive issues also need to be engaged, such as the imperative to develop the amplification and contextualisation of African thought and epistemologies, mapping scenarios and alternatives for Africa's futures and future generations, and issues of balancing contextual relevancy with global educational demands.

These challenges have encouraged me to accept the leadership of UNISA and to contribute to the construction and reconstruction of this university, advance its agenda, and utilise the opportunities and prospects which exist to contribute to the socio-economic wellbeing of South African and indeed, all Africans. South Africa needs intellectuals and institutions that are committed to ensuring that the intellectual agendas that are pursued are in line with the economic, ecological, social, and political and educational developmental needs of Africans.

4.1 Developing Human Capital and Improving African Intellectual Output

Proponents of endogenous development models have suggested that in the current context of globalisation, the role of the university ought not to be limited to knowledge production and innovation only, but must be expanded through the development of small, medium and large enterprises and/or firms aimed at the private generation of funds for research and development of universities. Whilst many universities in the global north are adept in these areas, many African and South African universities have not begun to make inroads in the commercialisation aspects of education. This is something that needs to be addressed in an innovative and creative manner.

The development of human capital also represents one of the most urgent challenges of our time. It facilitates development and socio-economic growth, and it allows people to live and work with dignity, to be creative and innovative, and to exercise their agency in transforming the world and their lives for the better. If Unisa is to be *the* leading university in the service of humanity, then the development of ecologically and human sensitive intellectual communities will be central to our work.

4.2 Promoting Infrastructural Deliverability

Unisa will also need to capitalise on its very significant infrastructural development project. As stated by Britz et al, “Many policy makers forget that this new dematerialised weightless economy is underpinned by a materialised and top-heavy infrastructure comprising airports, railways, roads, trucks, warehouses and physical addresses of people. Access to the unbundled productions and services offered via modern ICT’s in most cases - education and banking are for example excluded - does not allow access to physical objects itself.”¹⁰ Life-needs, such as medicines, cares, food and household items, refrigerators, etc cannot be shipped as email attachments, delivery of these still requires a highly sophisticated physical infrastructure.¹¹ A dematerialised economy without a physical infrastructure is of little use and can even create unmet expectations. There is not much merit in advancing development rhetoric when many societies in Africa live in squalor and inhumane conditions. To neglect our infrastructure is to deprive future generations of the opportunity for education and development.

4.3 New Strategies for Advancing ODL on the Continent

As the biggest ODL institution on the continent and one of the biggest in the world, Unisa has a key role to play in the socio economic development of the country and the continent. Some additional strategies might assist Unisa to locate itself more strategically and effectively in the higher education domain. Unisa envisages reconfiguring itself as a knowledge hub in which intellectual nurturing and creativity are manifest, but in order to do so a number of conditions need to be present, including:

- Creative and responsible intellectual, political , policy and economic responses to the new economic paradigm and its implications for higher education and the role of intellectual research and development;

¹⁰ Britz et al 2006: 28

¹¹ Britz et al 2006:28

- Investment in young and emerging academics within and outside the purview of Unisa, taking national imperatives into consideration (and this should include inter-institutional collaboration);
- Re-assessing and evaluating education and the value of knowledge and reconfiguring as well as re-articulating its value as fundamental to the flourishing of any nation;
- Taking seriously and concretising Africa's rebirth as stated in notions of African renaissance, pan-Africanism and many other intellectual and social initiatives.
- Interaction and leadership formation through a dedicated Leadership Hub/ programme with primary and secondary schools. If we in Africa do not invest in the education of our children and youth, there will be no *well* to draw from, and Africa will continue to lag behind in the knowledge production, research and development, innovation and contribution to society.

4.4 ICTs and ODL

Some encouraging trends in the continent include the investments in ICT's. These however, have not begun to bridge the gap between those who can use these technologies for research and education. Some scholars' assert that the gap between the developed and developing countries is actively increasing and that it will become increasingly difficult for poor countries to catch up or even keep pace with the economic, educational and technological advances in the global north, or developed countries . However, in getting to grips with the veritable wave of ICTS, we need to ask ourselves: how many individuals on the African continent can log on to the internet, access the website of an electronic journal publisher and use a credit card to download articles from research journals? To what extent has the African continent, in the applications and use of modern ICT's succeeded in benefitting from this new economic landscape? Are new technologies used to their full economic capacities or is their use limited to mere communication technologies between groups and individuals".¹²

¹² Britz et al 2006: 31

4.5 Our Research Agenda

Some important factors for constructive, viable and creative research, development and innovation agenda include:

- Narrowing the knowledge and technological usage gap;
- Ensuring that Unisa develops a coherent intellectual property rights policy aimed at protecting its knowledge, intellectual property capital and innovations and or research from being appropriated without benefit-sharing agreements, licences and or other legal means, whilst at the same time guaranteeing that Unisa's research will largely be used for the developmental agenda of South Africa and the African continent;
- Whilst aware that the prices and commercial costs of electronic journals, books, databases are often beyond the reach of many African universities, my role and that of my leadership will be to seek to ensure that Unisa facilitates access to knowledge, support and capacity and capabilities in research and development by strengthening publication, dissemination and access to information and knowledge, within and outside the institutions;
- Encouraging Unisa staff and students to tap into and utilize open and commercially based sources aimed at enhancing open and distance education in order to improve its research outputs, rankings and standing;
- Making sure that the knowledge insights and epistemologies of Unisa researchers, scholars and African intellectuals as a whole, are present, amplified and reach a wider public than they currently do; and,
- Guaranteeing that the patterns of engagement and relationships with all relevant and stakeholders are harnessed and are constructive.

Unisa seeks to embark on a transformation agenda that will impact positively on the institution, its staff, its, students and the broader South African and African community. Such an agenda will harnesses the knowledge and skills of those sectors which are experienced in their different scholarly disciplines, and which have strong commitments

and capabilities in research, innovation, tuition and community development. In growing its footprint in Africa and further afield Unisa will harness all available networks, capacities and resources.

4. Conclusion

I want to conclude my address by quoting extensively, the words of one of the leading African intellectuals of our time, Tiyambe Paul Zeleza. He articulates the dreams of so many in regard to African universities, when he says:

I dream of truly decolonised, democratized, and decentralized African universities that are autonomous yet accountable, committed to the pursuit of intellectual excellence yet rooted in their communities, effectively managed internally yet working closely with all stakeholders; universities that are Africanised in their staffing, values, pedagogy, epistemologies, and instructional languages yet are capable of competing globally, contributing to the global pool of knowledge, and responding quickly and effectively to global changes and emerging local needs; universities that attract students and faculty from across the continent and the diasporas, and that participate in extensive academic exchanges with universities in other parts of the world; universities that provide inclusive education , where access is open regardless of physical or class disabilities or various cultural and social affiliations ; universities with ample and up to-date learning facilities, instructional technologies , and well equipped libraries and laboratories, manageable student teacher ratios, that provide multiple entry and exit points as well as individual and group enrolments for lifelong flexible learning; universities with vibrant communities of scholars where public seminars , lecture and debate flourish, research and publishing are valued ... universities where gender is mainstreamed, curricular are innovative and not trapped in the old parochial disciplinary divisions or the current faddish interdisciplinary fields and which produce students who are literate in the major fields of knowledge, innovative and entrepreneurial , as well as critical

thinkers and citizens; universities where the professors are highly trained and motivated and productive but also include practitioners' from other sectors; universities, in short , that are the spearhead for the African renaissance.¹³

Thank you and best wishes to you all.

Mandla S. Makhanya February 16th, 2011

¹³ Zeleza, Tiyambe Paul 2006 Critical Issues in Higher Education and Intellectual Developments in Africa
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