



Office of the Principal and Vice Chancellor

Programme Director and director of the Institute for Global Dialogue, Dr Zondi

Our keynote Speaker from the Australian G20 Sherpa , Dr Smith

Our guests from Australia and the diplomats

Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko

Distinguished audience

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the University of South Africa for this important G20 Outreach Seminar which is also co-hosted by the Institute of Global Dialogue. I am delighted that Unisa, a university with an extensive African and global footprint, is hosting this event which, I understand, is one of the build-up seminars and consultations towards the next G20 Summit that will be held in Australia later this year.

As we gather in this seminar today, the global financial and economic crisis is still a major concern for all people around the world and slow recovery from the 2008 financial crisis is still a vexing issue in the agenda of many multi-lateral forums such as the Group of 20. These economic challenges have been compounded by or contribute to the rising levels of social and political disorder within and between nation-states. From Libya to Egypt, from Nigeria to Kenya, from Gaza to Syria, from Ukraine to Afghanistan and Iraq, from Somalia to the Central African Republic, geopolitical issues are shaking the very foundations of statehood and nationhood in the 21st century. The issue of peace and security has become a pressing issue alongside the economic and financial challenges.

The G20, which accounts for almost two thirds of world population and almost 90% of global GDP is one of the most important multi-lateral forums that are well-positioned to grapple with the current global challenges and provide practical and realizable solutions. As a sociologist it becomes difficult to resist an opportunity like this, even in a cursory reference, not remark that as the next Summit of the G20 deals with the strategies for economic growth it is hoped that it will deal with broader issues of development, some paradoxes such as jobless growth as well as the growing inequality between and within states. Humanity's collective quest for social justice will be well-served by a G20 Summit that begin to ask difficult questions about the current trends of development or lack of it and the underlying causes. A seminar of this nature can also begin to raise questions about the paradigms of development that can provide answers to current challenges as well as the link inextricable between economy and politics today.

The Institute of Global Dialogue headed by Dr Zondi is living up to the true meaning of its mission by providing a space for a global dialogue for one of the most influential and important global players in the

form of G20. Unisa, the largest Open Distance Learning University in the Southern Hemisphere, stands ready to play its meaningful and constructive role in partnership with our government department and multi-lateral forums such as G20. Unisa's bold vision is "Towards the African University in the service of humanity." We are guided by this vision of serving humanity in shaping futures in our engagements. Unisa has a global reach with previous and current students drawn from a significant number of the G20 countries including Australia. Producing the human capital in a form of our graduates we are also contributing to the development of requisite skills to tackle the current global and economic growth challenges. I would have liked to say more but I would want my passion for this subject to get on the way of your carefully crafted programme.

I would like to take this time to wish you success and fruitful deliberations in this Outreach Seminar. I also hope that it is an opportunity for networking and building bridges. For our visitors from Australia and countries abroad enjoy this beautiful country of Nelson Mandela and make sure that you visit our tourist destinations and spend as much money as a practical way of boosting our economic growth. Also enjoy our beautiful campus.

I thank you.