

Media Advisory

Unisa celebrates the Silver Jubilee of International Mother Language Day

Approved for public release.

Date: Wednesday, 19 February 2025

The University of South Africa (Unisa), through its Directorate of Language Services (DLS), will host the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the International Mother Language Day on 20 February 2025 at Unisa Muckleneuck Campus. The theme is *'Celebrating the roots and the multiplicity of voices of the exponentially multilingual world: The quest to re-centering sense-making in an all-inclusive world.'*

The event will culminate in the launching of the DLS's Language Style Guides and an interactive webpage promoting linguistic diversity and inclusivity. This aligns with the University's multilingual policy, which calls for the recognition of all South African languages as languages of teaching and learning, and UNESCO's 2025 theme, *'Make languages count for Sustainable Development,'* highlighting the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in creating a more sustainable and inclusive world.

UNESCO recognises the importance of languages in education and sustainable development as they are utilised to transfer knowledge and preserve cultures. Unisa, through the DLS, supports the right of all students to learn in their mother languages, hence the production of style guides to assist both students and lecturers. According to UNESCO, multilingual education can improve learning outcomes while also deepening the connection between language and culture.

Unisa is honoured to have Dr Munene Mwaniki, a lecturer in the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Literature in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at South-Eastern Kenya University, delivering the keynote address. Dr Mwaniki is an award-winning researcher and the founder and convenor of the Multilingual Education and Literacies Research Group [MEL-RG] - a graduate research and research-led teaching initiative focusing on multilingual education.

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the event as follows:

Date: 20 February 2025

Venue: Protea Function Hall, OR Tambo Building, Unisa Muckleneuck Campus

Time: 08:00

/Ends.

ISSUED BY UNISA MEDIA AFFAIRS

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