



**steve biko**  
foundation

**UNISA** |   
university  
of south africa

*“Our belief was essentially that we must attempt to get people to identify with the central core of what you are saying rather than individuals. We must not create a leadership cult... We must centralize the people's attention onto the real message.”*

~ Bantu Stephen Biko

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**5 September 2020**

## **20<sup>th</sup> Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture to be delivered by Reverend Al Sharpton**

*Gauteng* – The Founder and Executive Trustee of the Steve Biko Foundation, Mr. Nkosinathi Biko, and the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UNISA, Professor Mandla Makhanya, are pleased to announce the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture. The renowned Reverend Al Sharpton will deliver this year's Lecture, which will be held virtually, on Saturday 12th September 2020. Significantly, this date marks the 43<sup>rd</sup> Commemoration of the murder in detention of Bantu Stephen Biko.

Reverend Al Sharpton is the outspoken civil rights activist at the forefront of many historic battles against racial injustice as well as the resurgent global resistance movement organized under the moniker #BlackLivesMatter.

Reverend Sharpton is founder of both the National Youth Movement and of the National Action Network. Born in New York, and ordained as a Minister in the Pentecostal Church. He has been a tireless voice in many cases that affected the African American community and led protests against injustices and incidents of racial discrimination, including the racially-based murder of a Black teenager named Michael Griffith in 1986, Guinean immigrant Amadou Diallo in 1999, Eric Garner in 2014 and Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery in 2020. A television and radio show host as well as a 2004 Democratic Party contender for the United States Presidency, his activism continues unabated. Having earlier addressed mourners at the memorial for George Floyd, he most recently organized and led thousands of people in the “Get Your Knee Off Our Necks” March on Washington on 28 August 2020.

*“In South Africa the lack of political will to prosecute the apartheid murders of Imam Haron, Mapetla Mohapi Steve Biko, Ahmed Timol and Fort Calata amongst many others has nourished the tradition of police brutality in the new democracy. Recent murders include amongst others, Andries Tatane (2011) the Marikana Massacre (2012,) Mido Maica (2013) as well as Collins Khosa and Nathaniel Julies in 2020.*

*In line with our institutional tradition, we have on this occasion, asked Reverend Sharpton to reflect on his, and the general, history of activism against the injustices perpetrated on the Black body, and to use the opportunity to link the question of the outstanding amends for the historic atrocities to the present financial crisis, particularly as Africa and the Diaspora reboot their ravaged economies, following the pandemic”* said Founder and Executive Trustee of the Steve Biko Foundation, Nkosinathi Biko.

*“At UNISA, we are very excited that the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture will be delivered by an activist in the tradition of Martin Luther King and our own Steve Biko himself – a veteran with a commendable track record in activism; and a leading figure in the current struggle against racial*

*oppression and injustice. We look forward to an exciting lecture worthy of marking the 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the death of Steve Biko and celebrating his ever-lasting legacy”, added Professor Mandla Makhanya, the Principal and Vice Chancellor of UNISA.*

**Details of the upcoming virtual 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture are as follows:**

Date: Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Time: 17:40 for 18:00

Please express your interest in attending the virtual lecture by registering at <http://rsvp.unisa.ac.za/index.php/272779?lang=en>

The Lecture will also be broadcast live on SABC, on ENCA and on Newzroom Afrika channels

**End!**

**FOR QUOTES AND INTERVIEWS PLEASE CONTACT:**

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**ISSUED BY THE STEVE BIKO FOUNDATION  
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA)**

