



Office of the Principal and Vice Chancellor

20 November 2020

To our Unisa students

RE: A MESSAGE OF FAREWELL, GRATITUDE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

As you know, I will be retiring as the Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of South Africa (UNISA), on 31 December 2020, having served two full terms, which represent a decade of service to this most wonderful university. It has been my pleasure, privilege and honour to do so.

As we reach the end of an extremely busy and disrupted year, I would like to thank you all for the truly humbling resilience and diligence that you have displayed as Unisa students, at a time when you may so easily have thrown in the towel. Unisa's decision to move fully online, especially with regard to our non-venue-based examinations, was not taken lightly. We were at pains to save the academic year, being keenly aware of the financial constraints of so many of our students. Unisa is also obliged to ensure that it remains relevant and sustainable as a 21st Century higher education university, and this required some timely, yet necessary adjustments.

I must therefore congratulate you all for the courage you displayed in facing the challenges associated with writing non-venue based examinations and having done so successfully. Your courage and proactivity demonstrates a mature understanding of the demands of 21st Century education for the 4th and future Industrial Revolutions.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to persevere until you qualify in your chosen careers, whether you have enrolled with Unisa straight out of school or whether you are pursuing your studies in order to improve your life chances at your various workplaces. My tenure at Unisa has demonstrated repeatedly that Unisa students are able to excel and achieve great heights where they have the will and dedication to do so.

I am also inviting you to welcome our new Principal and Vice Chancellor, Prof Puleng Lenka-Bula, as she takes over the reins of leadership of Unisa from the beginning of 2021. I know that you join with me in wishing her a productive and blessed tenure.

It remains for me to wish you all success with the examinations and with your future studies. May you and your loved ones enjoy a blessed and safe festive season and may you return to a kinder, safer and less disruptive 2021.

Yours sincerely



Prof Mandla S Makhanya
Principal and Vice Chancellor