



**NAMIBIA
UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY**

STATEMENT

BY

HONOURABLE PROFESSOR PETER KATJAVIVI

CHANCELLOR

ON THE

OCCASION OF THE 2016 SPRING GRADUATION

OF THE

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NUST)

ON

14 OCTOBER 2016

AT

09:00

AT

SAFARI HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, WINDHOEK

Master of Ceremony and Vice-Chancellor of NUST, Dr Tjama Tjivikua

Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi

Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Council Members and Senior Management of NUST

Honoured Graduates

Staff Members of NUST and Students

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to everyone. Occasions like this one are a measure of social progress. When we consider the Social Progress Index, the three main pillars of social progress, which are basic human needs, foundations of well-being and opportunity, then we can better appreciate the value of education, especially higher education.

It is, therefore, my great honour and pleasure to serve as the founding Chancellor of this very young and progressive university. In the short time of its existence, this University has made a good name for itself and has become a developmental force of note for Namibia. It has become known for its record of excellence and achievement. I am, therefore, proud to constitute this important congregation, the Spring Graduation of the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

So let me join the Vice-Chancellor in welcoming you to this joyous occasion, where the University will be graduating about 900 students. I would like to congratulate all the

graduates as we join your parents, friends and relatives in sharing this joyous moment with you.

Secondly, let me recognise the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi, under whose purview the higher education and training sector falls. This sector is the foundation of the knowledge economy and I would like to take this moment to congratulate her, encourage her and wish her success in this important task of driving our socio-economic development to the next stage.

Director of Ceremonies

The University of Science and Technology came into being in November last year and one of the primary tasks of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation was to set up the governing structure of this new University. For this reason, the new Council of NUST was constituted about four months ago. I want to congratulate all the Council members for their appointment. I have no doubt that the University is in attentive and meticulous hands and this has already been demonstrated by your professional conduct and interactions during your meetings.

Indeed, one of your first and important tasks was to meet the statutory requirement of electing the Chancellor for NUST. I'm deeply honoured by your collective decision to appoint me to this prestigious post. I am truly thankful and proud for this great esteem and distinction, and respect bestowed on me by the Council the first Chancellor of the new University.

I am aware that this is not an inaugural speech for myself as Chancellor. But it is the first moment of official public interaction of the Chancellor with the Minister, the Council, the Vice-Chancellor, the University Community, and society at large. I will, therefore, make short and general comments about the Chancellorship.

In my life, I have been a member of the academic community in various countries, in Europe, the United States of America and Africa. I was the Founding Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia, where I served for 11 years. My new assignment is an elevation to Chancellor, the highest position in the University structure and hierarchy.

As I assume this task, I am reminded of a profound statement made by the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, who became the Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg, Professor Njabulo Ndebele. He wrote: ***“Being used to talking, I must just learn to say very little and having to enjoy a title without power. The one official that gives appearance of being my assistant, the Vice-Chancellor, actually wields all the power. A powerful assistant, indeed!”*** To learn to say very little is an extraordinary challenge for the Speaker of the National Assembly! However, as Chancellor, I will be quite happy performing one of the most enduring special tasks of having to exert presence and aura rather than power.

Director of Ceremonies

I am a Chancellor who is familiar with the challenges of transforming the higher education system, and being appreciative of the role the University has to play in linking theory and practice and promoting applied research and innovation, as well as understanding the hopes and expectations of our communities from the new University. It, therefore, calls for calm, clear-mindedness, having the right attitude and dedication, and also to have a common focus and vision. This is the only way we can build the ***‘Team NUST’ and the ‘NUST Brand.’***

NUST has been borne out of an institution that had built an incredible presence and reputation both nationally and internationally, and hence the challenge we face is, what will be needed to take the new University to greater heights? I have no doubt that under my

leadership as Chancellor together with the Vice-Chancellor and Council, and supported by all stakeholders, we should be able to build NUST into a highly relevant and responsive university of the 21st century. Today, I am embracing the beginning of this journey with the century-old tradition and ritual that define the culmination of a rigorous academic process - graduation. Graduation is not a mere ceremony but a signification of dedication, hard work, intellectualism, success and excellence.

To the graduates, T S Eliot, the British essayist, publisher, literary and social critic tells us, ***“It is in fact part of the function of education to help us escape, not from our own time – for we are bound by that – but from intellectual and emotional limitations of our time.”*** I hope that this is the gift of NUST to you and also to society.

Finally, it is my deep hope and desire that a culture of mutual respect and consultation, of good governance, of camaraderie and team spirit, and peace and tranquility, and excellence will be established, nurtured and well-entrenched in this University. These are the marks of a successful university. I stand ready to serve this noble University to the best of my ability and to leave a legacy of excellence.

I thank you.