

**Welcome: Inauguration of Chancellor & Vice-Chancellor
Ambassador Nozipho January-Bardill
Chairperson of Council
17 April 2018**

Chancellor-designate, Dr Fraser-Moleketi
Premier of the Eastern Cape, Hon. Masualle
Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay, Cllr Trollip
Members of Council
Vice-Chancellor Professor Muthwa
Director General of the Department of Higher Education and Training, Mr Qonde
representing the Minister of Higher Education & Training, Hon. Pandor
Chancellors, Chairs of Council and Vice-Chancellors from sister universities and
colleges and also those who have previously held office at this university
Deputy Vice-Chancellors
Executive management of the university
Members of the Student Representative Council
The professoriate, academics, staff and students
Honorary Doctorate recipients
University stakeholders from business, government, funders, civil society, the faith
sector, and communities
Family members, friends and compatriots
And to all those around the country and the world who are watching the live-
streaming on their devices

I greet you all and extend a warm welcome to you. Wamkelekile.

I also wish to recognise Nkosi Zwelivelile Mandela and the accompanying delegation. As a university, we stand in solidarity with you at this time of deep sadness, mourning the loss of Mama Nomzamo Winifred Zanyiwe Madikizela-Mandela, a towering stalwart in the fight for equality and the liberation of the people of South Africa. At the height of resistance in the 1970's, she became the touch-point for the surging student movement and continued to encourage youth activism throughout her life. This mentoring, encouragement and on-going support

to young people is in part the reason she has been recognised for her leadership by student movements and on University campuses, including ours. Nelson Mandela University extends its heartfelt condolences to the Madikizela and Mandela extended families. To the South African nation as a whole, we say *tutwini. Akuhlanga okungehliyo.*

Leaders emerge from and are moulded by the circumstances in which they find themselves. Today is a very significant day for Mandela university, as we inaugurate our new leadership, Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and Professor Sibongile Muthwa, with their investiture as Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor. We thank all of you present here today for joining us and witnessing this historic and auspicious occasion which is their ceremonial induction into office. Your presence is important because Nelson Mandela University sees itself in relation to our surrounding communities and the communities from which our students and staff come. Thus today's public act, in your presence, of establishing in office the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor is an expression of our mutual and reciprocal public accountability as a university embedded in community.

Dr Fraser-Moleketi and Professor Muthwa will be formally introduced to the congregation during the proceedings, so suffice it for me to say at this point that the university is privileged and extremely proud to have two women of such stature at the helm of the university. Each is a distinctive leader in her own right, with shining track records reflecting their respective contributions to the country and the continent straddling a range of areas of expertise. Putting this collective experience together to lead the university will surely see Mandela University catapult to new heights and take on new opportunities with innovation, perseverance, foresight and enthusiastic courage – and I dare say with humility and a deep concern for the students and staff of this university.

This inauguration takes place within the autumn graduation ceremonies, which this year see 6788 students receive their certificates, diplomas and degrees, including 78 doctoral degrees which will be. We proudly celebrate this pinnacle achievement for students and their families. As it does indeed take a village to raise a child, so too does it take community and family support to students to stay the path during the course of their studies and graduate successfully.

We are also extremely pleased to be conferring three honorary doctorates at our graduation ceremonies tomorrow, on most deserving candidates, in recognition of their contributions in their respective fields. Our warmest congratulations to:

Justice Maya (Law); Prof Xaba-Mokoena (Health Sciences) and Ms Gcina Mhlope (Applied Languages).

Thank you for accepting these awards, which we regard as symbolising the beginning of a lasting interactive relationship as we welcome you into the Nelson Mandela University family.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends and family we have much to celebrate today. We need to do so with gratitude and appreciation. Because although the doors of learning and culture have been opened to enable vastly increased numbers of students to access higher education, there remain much larger numbers for whom a university education remains but a dream. We need to harness all which constitutes the university – skills, expertise, research, innovation, infra-structure - and place this at the disposal of serving communities, working in unison to make an indelible contribution to change the world for the better.

We look forward to the vision of Dr Fraser-Moleketi and Professor Muthwa in leading us on this quest. I offer the full support of Council to you as you boldly mould the future.

I thank you, enkosi