

Unisa denies conferring honorary doctorates on Malawian socialite Phemphero Mphande, Malawian musician Patience Namadingo and Mansoor Sharif Karim

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The University of South Africa (Unisa) has become aware, through social media posts and media queries, that Malawian socialite Phemphero Mphande, Malawian musician Patience Namadingo as well as a certain Mansoor Sharif Karim claim to have received honorary doctorates from the university in 2020, 2022 and 2023 respectively.

Unisa wishes to state categorically that it has **NOT** conferred any such degrees on the trio and that any assertion to this effect is simply **NOT TRUE**. These three individuals are also not amongst the candidates considered and approved for the awarding of honorary doctorates in 2020, 2021 and 2023. Neither have they ever been nominated, considered or approved for such honours at any period whatsoever. No honorary degrees were awarded in 2022.

Furthermore, the certificates displayed by Messrs Mphande and Namadingo respectively are definitely **NOT** Unisa degree certificates.

For the record, the awarding of honorary doctorates at Unisa occurs through a strictly controlled process, with nominations and approvals handled through various governance structures of the university until final approval by the University Council. Once such approval has been secured, the conferment itself is done at an open graduation ceremony of the university, in full view of those attending and presided over by a duly authorised official of the university, usually the Chancellor or Principal and Vice Chancellor. Any claim of the awarding of an honorary degree which did not follow this process cannot be an official Unisa process.

“As a university, we distance ourselves from these false claims and also condemn in the strongest terms the misuse of the Unisa name for fraudulent conduct. Relevant officials within the university have been directed to look into this matter and ensure that these individuals are held to account and also made to retract any false claims”, said Acting Registrar, Professor Moloko Sepota.

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