

**THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(HONORIS CAUSA)**

DR JAMES THOKOANA MOTLATSI

JAMES THOKOANA MOTLATSI WAS BORN ON 5 JUNE 1951 IN MORIFI VILLAGE IN MOHALE'S HOEK IN THE MOUNTAIN KINGDOM OF LESOTHO. IN 1969, HE COMPLETED HIS STANDARD 6 AT MOHALE'S HOEK CONTROLLED HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOL. RATHER THAN CONTINUING A PROTRACTED SCHOOLING CAREER WITH INFERIOR EDUCATION, HE PRIORITISED THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE IN THE MINING SECTOR. HAVING HUMBLY BEGUN AS A MINE LABOURER AT WELKOM GOLD MINE'S NO 1 SHAFT IN 1970, HIS SINGULAR EFFORTS AS A TRADE UNION LEADER BROUGHT THE LABOUR MIGRANT SYSTEM TO AN END. A DEDICATED LEADER, HE CONTINUOUSLY LEARNED AND TAUGHT MINE WORKERS BY THE PRAXIS OF DIALECTICAL STRUGGLE. THIS DULY EARNED HIM AN HONORARY DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL SCIENCES FROM THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO.

IN 1982, HE BECAME THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINE WORKERS ALONGSIDE PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA, WHO ROSE TO BECOME ITS FIRST GENERAL SECRETARY. DR MOTLATSI HAS BEEN, IN EQUAL MEASURES, REVOLUTIONARY AND INFLUENTIAL, LEADING AS HE DID 11 REGIONS, NAMELY CARLETONVILLE, EASTERN CAPE, FREE STATE, HIGHVELD, KWAZULU-NATAL, KIMBERLEY, MATLOSANA, NORTH EAST, PWV, RUSTENBURG AND WESTERN CAPE. TO FOSTER WORKER SOLIDARITY, DR MOTLATSI INNOVATIVELY OPENED A DEDICATED OFFICE WITH A STAFF COMPLEMENT IN ALL THESE REGIONS TO ENSURE ACCESS OF ITS SERVICES TO MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND SECTORS.

DR MOTLATSI WENT ON TO BECOME A FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS, CHAMPIONING WORKER SOLIDARITY. IN RECOGNITION OF HIS WORK ASSOCIATED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VAAL REEFS DISASTER TRUST FUND, AMONG MANY OTHERS, DR MOTLATSI WAS RECOGNISED WITH THE ORDER OF RAMATSEATSANA IN LESOTHO. HIS ACHIEVEMENTS ARE MANY AND VARIED. IN 1994, DR MOTLATSI WAS APPOINTED A MEMBER OF THE JUSTICE MELAMED COMMISSION ON PARLIAMENTARIANS' REMUNERATION. SIMILARLY, HE WAS ELECTED A COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND. HIS POLITICAL PROBITY WAS RECOGNISED WHEN HE WAS APPOINTED ELECTION OBSERVER TO TWO ROUNDS OF ZIMBABWEAN ELECTIONS. EXPERIENCES OF HIS LEADERSHIP ARE CONTAINED IN A BOOK THAT HE CO-AUTHORED, APTLY TITLED *DO IT!*.

A SELFLESS LEADER, HE IS A FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE ADOPT-A-SCHOOL FOUNDATION. THROUGH THE FOUNDATION, DR MOTLATSI HELPED ESTABLISH 177 SCHOOLS FOR 400 000 CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA, LESOTHO AND MOZAMBIQUE. BECAUSE OF HIS CONTRIBUTION, THE MORIFI VILLAGE OF TODAY HAS A HIGH SCHOOL, ELECTRICITY, CLEAN WATER AND A GRAVEL ROAD. HIS ILLUSTRIOUS WORK IN THE MINING INDUSTRY AND FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF HUMANITY RESULTED IN DR MOTLATSI BEING RECOGNISED WITH A CHAMBER OF MINES PRESIDENTIAL AWARD. IT IS ON THE BACK OF HIS CONTRIBUTIONS AND STERLING WORK THAT DR MOTLATSI ROSE TO BECOME EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON OF TEBA LIMITED AND NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SHANDUKA GROUP AND PLATFIELDS LIMITED, AS WELL AS AN EXECUTIVE OF VERIMARK HOLDINGS.

UNISA IS PROUD TO BE A PART OF HISTORY AND WORKER SOLIDARITY STRUGGLES BY HONOURING DR JAMES THOKOANA MOTLATSI WITH AN HONORARY DOCTORATE IN HIS LIFETIME. THE DOCTORATE IS THE HIGHEST DEGREE UNISA OFFERS ON MERITORIOUS GROUNDS. TO THIS END, WE RECOGNISE DR JAMES MOTLATSI WITH THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (*HONORIS CAUSA*).