



Dear Unisan

Greetings and Compliments of the New Season!

As I write this message to you, the very first in the new year 2023, we are already ten days into the new calendar year and, from the perspective of the University of South Africa (Unisa), exactly six days since our return from the official university recess. Across the country, including here at the University of the Land, social, economic and academic activities are slowly picking up pace.

Most importantly, 2023 represents an incredibly significant milestone in the life of Unisa - the marking and celebration of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This is a milestone worthy of celebration, given that our university has been at the forefront of shaping and transforming the higher education landscape in the country for fifteen decades - in the process spawning the South African university system, providing access to educational opportunities for marginalised communities and producing some of the best political, business and community leaders this country, continent and the world has ever seen.

This moment therefore calls upon each of us - staff, student and alumnus alike – to recommit and rededicate ourselves to reclaiming the stature of this university as a shining light amongst institutions of higher learning in the country and a beacon of hope to our broader national and continental knowledge communities.

It is my sincerest hope as that you have used the recess and holiday period optimally; and that you have returned in the new year with fully recharged batteries as well as renewed vigour and energy.

We have put together an institutional bumper programme for the celebration of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary which, with your unwavering support, is guaranteed to ensure that our quest to reclaim Africa's intellectual futures continues earnestly.

Our theme for the year therefore remains : **'Reclaiming Africa's Intellectual Futures'**.

If you are a staff member – whether academic, administrative and professional staff - we urge and rely on you to ensure that the academic and student support work of our university becomes more student-centric and that the academic agenda remains firmly rooted at the centre of everything we do. We collectively have the responsibility to secure the futures of current and future generations by simply committing to adhere to and fulfil the social mandate entrusted upon us.

We must equally commit 2023 as the year in which we optimise the successes of the Academic agenda of our university, particularly student support/services, teaching and learning, research and innovation and Engaged Scholarship. We will also propel the various strategic partnerships with fraternal universities, science councils, public and private institutions locally and abroad, so that our key knowledge communities can derive tangible benefits out of these. In particular, we will create more opportunities for workplace experiential learning for our students within Unisa and with our various strategic partners, including and especially the creation of student

exchange opportunities with our international partners. Such experiences will go a long way towards equipping our students with the requisite life and work experiences required to face the world of work and business head-on.

If you are a student and/or alumnus of this august university, you have an equal responsibility to be a trusted ambassador of Brand Unisa amongst your peers and in the spaces you operate in. Your general conduct, performance and presentation of yourself should be consistent with the values of our institution and should, at all material times, represent UNISA positively.

As we enter the new year, it is our hope that we will all endeavour to engage in the spirit of openness and collegiality and to treat one another with dignity and respect.

I also wish to share with you that I have started a 3 km walk on the Muckleneuck Campus as a way of keeping fit, refreshed and energised. The walk starts at 16:00 every day and I invite you to join the walk whenever you are able to do so. Those who are unable to join are still encouraged to start their own walks whenever and wherever it is suitable to do so.

Finally, we announced at the end of last year the extension of the term of the Independent Assessor by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation for an additional ninety (90) days from 13 December 2022 (*Please see attached*). Once again, we call upon all knowledge communities to give their full support and co-operation to the work of the Independent Assessor as and when requested to do so.

On behalf of Executive Management, I wish you a prosperous 2023 and a successful 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Best Regards

Signed

---

Prof Puleng LenkaBula  
**Principal and Vice-Chancellor**