

African National Congress

23.11.92

51 Plein Street
Johannesburg 2001
P O Box 61884
Marshalltown 2107



Tel: (011) 330-7058
Fax: (011) 29-0120
Telex: 421252

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT

To: Spencer Hodgson
Fax No: 816-1236

Attention: Mr Walter Sisulu.

23 November 1992.

Dear Cd. Walter,

Lucky is not well and is unlikely to be in before you leave on Thursday for Harare, nor is he likely to be accompanying you there.

This speech was faxed from Mr. Nyelisani from Venda University who has already departed for Zimbabwe.

I thought you should have a chance to see it before you leave and am therefore faxing it to Spencer with the request that he enlarges the type and gets it to you by this evening. I am sure he will help if you want to make any changes.

I trust that the NEC deliberations are going well and that you are O.K.

Regards

Rica
Rica

The People Shall Govern!

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

ADDRESS OF

DRAFT SPEECH OF THE CHANCELLOR'S PRESENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA AT THE HARARE INTERNATIONAL SHOW

It is my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you one of the young Universities in South Africa. The University of Venda is one of the promising institutions in the Northern Region of the Transvaal catering for the tertiary education needs of our population.

It is of no doubt that many institutions in South Africa were created with an aim of furthering the interest of the apartheid regime which at this hour regrets the establishment of some of such kind of institutions including our University. I am glad that when this institution was established the boundaries and terms of references of regionalization became the first issues to be addressed through the weapon of education.

It was the interest of the whole Northern Transvaal community the University of Venda was established with an open policy and mission statement. In my presentation, I will later refer to the mission statement adopted by various structures within the University for our open policy in dealing with the issues of the liberation of our people.

As a young institution, one would always think that the limitations of the activities of such an institution would circumvent within the local communities and their needs.

However, much search for progress and competition in meeting challenges and demands of the entire nation along the Limpopo region has been a target for the establishment of the University of Venda.

The history of the University of Venda goes back to the year 1980. During this year, there were 148 Venda speaking students enrolled at the University of the North plus 83 bursarians of the Venda Government enrolled at other Universities.

At the request of the Planning Committee of the Council of the University of the North a Pilot Committee was appointed to investigate University Education in Venda. On recommendation of the Pilot Committee a branch of the University of the North was established in Venda.

Part-time lectures were commenced at the Venda Branch of the University of the North on 18 February 1981. The lectures were given by lecturers from the University of the North to 181 students. The Venda branch became independent from the University of the North on 6 November 1981 when the University of Venda Act (Act 19 of 1981) was passed by the Venda parliament on 06 November 1981).

The investiture of the first Principal of the University of Venda took place on 08 June 1982. It was at this time that the University moved to its own campus and the residences were occupied in January 1983.

The University installed its first Chancellor, the then Minister of Education, Honourable ERB Nesengani on 03 June 1993.

On 06 September 1986, Mr Z Nutsila, one of the pioneers of education in the Northern Transvaal, together with Prof. P W du Plessis, former Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of the North, were both invested as Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Venda.

The number of students registered increased from 394 in 1982 to 3 172 in 1991. At present the academic, administrative and service staff comprises of 149, 143 and 151 respectively. The total student enrolment for 1992 is 3 607.

The first phase (phase A) of the development programme of the University was completed during the second semester of 1986. It made provision for a multipurpose hall, a staff cafeteria, an office block, a women's residence and five lecture halls. Phase 'A' cost approximately R4 million.

The infrastructure like the access road, the gate, parking areas, sport fields, pavilion and other small developments like paving and the installation were also completed during 1986.

In 1987 the construction programme for phase B(1) started. This phase made provision for the official administration block and the natural science building, which was completed in 1988.

Phase B(2) construction which began in late 1988 make provision for the academic support buildings and library, which was completed early mid 1990 and early 1991 respectively.

Tuition is currently offered in the following : Arts, Business and Administration, Education, Law, Natural Science and Agriculture. At the University's first graduation ceremony which was held on 22 June 1985, the following degrees were conferred: BA - 93, B.Admin - 4, B.Luris - 5, BCom (Hons) - 4, MCom -1, Phd - 1 and University Education Diplomas - 19.

Degrees and Diplomas awarded up to date:

1985 - 126

1986 - 174

1987 - 282

1988 - 393

1989 - 338

1990 - 460

1991 - 564

1992 - 633

The number of total graduates produced in ten years is 2 970.

In an endeavour to develop the institution, a mission statement was adopted during the course of this year by various structures to redress the position of the University of Venda in the new South Africa.

The mission statement makes reference to the policy of open recruitment and employment, and student admission, where ethnicity, race, colour, sex and creed shall play no role. This in no doubt creates an immediate challenge to the University of Venda to accomplish mechanisms of adjustments to cater for universal needs.

As much as the University of Venda is located in the visible region along the Limpopo, the University has as part of its mission a commitment to utilise its unique geographical setting to engage in venture with institutions and communities beyond the borders of South Africa, and will establish and regularly reassess a set of objectives to ensure that the institution meets the challenges resulting from its mission.

Like in all other institutions, the concept of transformation is not new at the University of Venda. It has come to be part of our daily exchange of words in an endeavour to redirect the institution towards the people's needs.

Quoting from the Varsity Voice produced by the University of Durban-Westville, with reference to the process of transformation it is argued that "institutions of higher learning, particularly Universities, must transform themselves to facilitate current attempts at a national level to move towards a new society; to address and overcome the legacy of apartheid and to establish the economic reconstruction of a post-apartheid South African society"

The University of Venda has already begun to address this process effectively. A transformation committee has been established to look into the needs and the ways in which this University can be transformed into a people's University. Through the democratisation of all structures, the University hopes to achieve more than just unity of all the individuals in the institution. I have previously referred to the mission statement of the institution and this should serve to lead the way into the objectives and strategies of our transformation process.

Although the name UNIVERSITY OF VENDA still carries the connotation of a University serving a particular community, the University itself has already transcended over such implications.

More than forty percent of our student population and academic staff are non-Venda speaking. This is being facilitated by our ethos of non-racial by law and non-discriminatory by commitment. The University views sectionalism, whether religious, political or cultural, as antithetic to academic life. We therefore trust that with the transformation anticipated by all structures, the name UNIVERSITY OF VENDA will soon be changed to suite the ideologies and needs served by this institution.

The University of Venda hopes to serve as one of the most important, effective and powerful structures in the Northern Transvaal Region.

Not only has it realised ~~of~~ this need but also ~~as~~ set as one of its objectives to help establish and sustain proper development in co-operation with other neighbouring communities along its borders especially those along the Limpopo region.

Unemployment is rife in this area and the University cannot simply look at these populations without creating possible assistance mechanisms to facilitate development.

Now our mission to Zimbabwe, specifically to this International show. In the first instance, our participation to this show should be self-explanatory. We participate in this national or international event because we ~~so~~ highly recognise the importance of universality in the upbringing of every institution. The definition of University would be incomplete without reference to the idea collective participation. It is for this idea that the University of Venda would like to move, share the experience with other international institutions through possible means of interchange of ideas and expertise. We wish to pursue our view of the universal participation of an institution.

Our second mission to participate in this show is to establish friends for the University of Venda. We wish to share our academic life with the international community, above all create a rich environment of our student learning activities at this institution by linking with various institutions with similar interest.

This mission will be accomplished by linking some of our faculties, schools or Departments with those of other institutions with an aim to facilitate possible exchange programmes for both staff and students. These programmes will help all of us in furthering the achievement of intellectual objectives compatible with those of the universal fraternity of scholars. As such, the university's standards of achievement and integrity can be constantly examined.

The University of Venda has for this purpose established a committee which deals with links with the international institutions to facilitate possible contacts between institutions to facilitate possible contacts between our University and other tertiary institutions, for which it may ~~gain to do~~ ^{be beneficial}. I am glad the committee is part of the delegation today and will start the informal deliberations with most of you today. This day should then be taken as the day in which the University of Venda begins to quest for its share in the international pursuance of education. Dear comrades, at this moment I wish to officially inform you that the University of Venda wishes to propose links with your institutions and we shall be glad to receive follow-up letters, calls and visits from your institutions to our University for the benefit of our universal community. I have no doubt that this idea had already sweetened your ears and this is the reason why you availed yourself to this short presentation of the University of Venda.

The Acting Director of Public Relations and Development will be available at the University of Venda (stall number 67) until Friday 27 November 1992 and will appreciate meeting you and give you more information on the University of Venda.

THANK YOU ALL