

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

CONVOCATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES: Virtual Annual General Meeting of the Convocation of the University of Pretoria.

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, 19 October 2021 at 6pm

PRESENT: Prof Tawana Kupe (Vice-Chancellor and Principal), Prof Caroline Nicholson (Registrar), Dr Hinner Köster (Chairperson), Ms Nozipho Dlamini (Deputy Chairperson) and 120 members of the convocation online

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE

The President of the Convocation and Chairman, Dr Hinner Köster, announced that the meeting was duly constituted as there was a quorum across all platforms.

Dr Köster welcomed all Convocation members, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Tawana Kupe, the Deputy Chairperson of the Convocation Advisory Board, Ms Nozipho Dlamini and the Registrar, Prof Caroline Nicholson, who were all part of the AGM program of speakers that evening in the studio. Dr Köster also welcomed the university's Executive. He mentioned that he had officially welcomed the newly elected Convocation Advisory Board members at a board meeting but he wanted to again congratulate them on their appointment and expressed appreciation for their willingness to serve in this capacity. Ms Nozipho Dlamini would introduce each board member later in the meeting.

Dr Köster informed the Convocation that one of the board members, Mr Louis Cloete, and his wife, tragically passed away earlier in 2021. He expressed his condolences and acknowledged Mr Cloete's huge contribution, not only in alumni circles, where he served as TuksClub 60+ Chairman, but also in the broader Pretoria community.

2. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONVOCATION

2.1 Dr Köster began with a few opening remarks – he said that although the Covid 19 pandemic brought disruption and it required overcoming new challenges, it taught the university how to adapt and broke physical barriers in global education. He quoted the Vice-Chancellor's earlier report, saying: "For the first time in more than a year, higher education institutions can begin to envision a new future – one that explores alternative, innovative and accessible modes of teaching and learning." This is true, he added, not only at university level but at most educational institutions. Based on the report, Dr Köster also indicated that UP had been unshakable in its pursuit of

excellence and unremitting in its exchange of ideas, and that its standing in the country and on the African continent, as a leading academic institution, was yet again confirmed by the Centre for World University Rankings, which placed UP among the top universities in South Africa and Africa.

2.2 Dr Köster took a moment to encourage all Convocation members that had not sent questions previously, to post questions in the comment box. Before the official President's address, he introduced the three speakers for the evening in order of their participation.

Firstly, Ms Nozipho Dlamini, Deputy Chairperson of the Convocation Advisory Board. Ms Dlamini is a mining engineer with more than 13 years of experience in the mining sector. She is the Technical Services Manager at South Africa's most productive underground coal mine and leads a diverse team of professionals that includes mining engineers, geologists, surveyors, rock engineers, environmentalists, and business improvement change agents. The team continues to set new benchmarks in challenging conditions by applying innovative solutions and a high-performance culture. As a trained Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, she has a passion for improving business performance and processes and has won a Best Improvement Project award. Ms Dlamini has lectured on quality management at the University of Pretoria's Graduate School of Technology Management, where she continues to supervise and examine master's research dissertations each year.

Through her many accomplishments, Ms Dlamini continues to have a growing impact in the coal-mining sector, challenging the status quo in a male-dominated industry. She serves as Vice-President of the South African Colliery Managers' Association, a professional body for managers across the coal industry, and is the first woman to hold this position in the organisation's 40-year history. She also serves on several advisory boards in academia and industry. Ms Dlamini holds a BEng in Mining Engineering, along with honours and master's degrees in Technology Management, all obtained at UP.

Secondly, Dr Köster introduced the Vice-Chancellor and principal, Prof Tawana Kupe. Prof Tawana Kupe has been the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Pretoria since January 2019. He holds a master's degree in English from the University of Zimbabwe and a PhD in Media Studies from the University of Oslo, Norway. Two honorary doctorates were bestowed on him: in Humanities from the Michigan State University and from the University of Montpellier in France. Prof Kupe has been the Africa Co-Chair of the Australia-Africa Universities Network (AAUN) since 2019. He has a notable publication record in his primary discipline, media studies and journalism. Prof Kupe played a vital role in establishing innovative initiatives at the University of the Witwatersrand, the latest being the Africa Centre for the Study of the United States in 2018.

Prof Kupe is an active member of several civil society organisations, including the amaBhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism, and has been Chairman of the Board of Media Monitoring Africa since 2005. He is also Co-Chairperson of the Kifra Prize Selection Committee coordinated by the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences in Rwanda. Prof Kupe is a member of the Council of the International Association of Media and Communication Research and the Association of Commonwealth Universities Council. He is a sought-after speaker, academic expert and regular commentator on media performance issues on radio, television and print publications for local and international media. He has also been a columnist for several newspapers and magazines in South Africa.

Dr Köster went on to introduce the third speaker, Prof Caroline Nicholson, the Registrar of the university of Pretoria. Prof Caroline Nicholson was born in Scotland and immigrated to South Africa with her family at the age of 7. When she had

completed her schooling, she proceeded to the University of the Witwatersrand where she first completed a BProc and then an LLB degree. Immediately after completing her legal qualifications, she served her articles of Clerkship with a general law firm, (Chernin's) located in Hyde Park Corner, Johannesburg. During her articles, she completed both her Attorney's Admission and Notary Public Examinations and was admitted as a practicing attorney and Notary Public.

Not long after completing her articles, Prof Nicholson determined upon an academic career and she moved on from Chernin's to South Africa's largest Higher Education Institution, The University of South Africa. She remained at UNISA for 12 years, during which time she progressed from lecturer to senior lecturer, teaching modules in Introduction to South African Law, Legal Philosophy Private International Law, and Comparative International Law. She was also a founding contributor to the Diploma in Gender Law. During her years at UNISA, Prof Nicholson completed a research Master's in Law in the field of Banking Law and a Doctor of Laws in Comparative Conflict of Law, focussed on the topic of International Parental Child Abduction. In 1999 Prof Nicholson moved to the University of Pretoria (UP) where she remained for 15 years. During her time in the UP Faculty of Law, Prof Nicholson progressed from senior lecturer to Associate Professor and then Professor. She completed training as a family mediator and conducted outside work in the field. She also completed the Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa Postgraduate Diploma in Alternative Dispute Resolution (with distinction), selecting international commercial arbitration as the elective component.

Prof Nicholson taught in Roman law, Comparative Law, Introduction to Law/Jurisprudence 101, and in the master's module on research methodology. She also served a four-year term as the first female Head of Department in the Faculty of Law at UP. In 2014, Prof Nicholson was offered the position of Dean of Law at the University of the Free State (UFS) in Bloemfontein, South Africa. She took up the position on 1 September 2014. She became the first female Dean of an Academic Faculty at the UFS and in the Faculty of Law. As Dean of Law at UFS, Prof Nicholson was a co-founder of the Free State Centre for Human Rights. She was also instrumental in having a Postgraduate programme in Alternative Dispute Resolution introduced and launched in the Faculty and, together with the Faculty staff, road-mapped a transformed LLB curriculum for implementation in 2020. She also served two terms as an Acting Judge in the High Court during her tenure at UFS.

2.3 Dr Köster said that in his first AGM address, he would present some background on historic events that resulted in the establishment of the University's new Convocation structure. He would focus on the election process, structures, purpose, vision, role, strategic goals and also the envisioned new future of the Convocation and its Advisory Board.

2.4 He explained that the Convocation is a legally constituted body, which includes approximately 300 000 alumni of the University as its largest constituency. The term "Alumni" refers to all persons on whom the University has conferred degrees or to whom it has awarded accredited diplomas registered on the University's Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM); as well as all persons who commenced their studies at now defunct institutions succeeded in title by the University of Pretoria (and are commonly referred to as pipeline students), who have successfully completed their studies at the University of Pretoria and on whom the University has conferred degrees or to whom the University has awarded accredited diplomas registered on the University's Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM).

2.5 The Principal, the Vice-Principals, members of the University's executive, the Registrar, deans of faculties, all current permanent academic staff, professors

emeriti, other retired academic employees and such other persons as the Council may determine; as well as all other persons who have obtained a qualification, as approved by Senate and Council, from the University, also form part of the Convocation. As a key stakeholder group, the Convocation has a vested interest in the stature and success of the University. In order to ensure that the Convocation structures are representative of all groups and support the University's vision, mission and strategic objectives as well as foster a sense of belonging and commitment towards their alma mater, the Council of the University approved a new governance structure for the Convocation in 2018.

2.6 Dr Köster gave further background on the establishment of the new UP Convocation structures that are regulated by the provisions of the UP Statute (2018) and the Institutional Rules of the University.

Historically, a number of Alumni groups were established, with some being well-organised and claiming to function independently from the University, and others struggling. The TuksAlumni Board was vested with the authority to appoint a number of members of the Convocation to serve on the University Council. In recent years certain groups attempted to consolidate their power to influence University decisions and policy. That caused tension between the various Alumni groups. The elections for members of the Alumni Board and Council (specifically with regard to Convocation members on Council) became largely politicised – to the point that formal UP policies and concomitant procedures were reviewed in the Equality Court. Polarisation and a lack of inclusivity hampered the University's efforts to engender a sense of unity and solidarity among Alumni members. The knock-on effect was significant. It diminished the Alumni as a source of vital support – both financially and in terms of their knowledge base – for the University.

2.7 The Council of the University decided to take pro-active steps to resolve the situation by amending the Statute as well as the Institutional Rules governing the election/appointment of the Convocation members to serve on Council. It was important to build on this development by changing the focus and basis of the interaction of Alumni and other members of the Convocation with the University.

2.8 Dr Köster emphasised that the University needs a credible Alumni structure that acts with uncompromising integrity – one that is strategically responsive. To this end, the Council of the University approved the establishment of the new structure for the Convocation of UP on 27 November 2017, which would incorporate the Alumni (including the TuksAlumni Association) as an important stakeholder group, and is focused on serving the best interests of the University.

2.9 In May 2019, after approval of the new governance structure for the Convocation, the University of Pretoria commenced the process of electing a new President of the Convocation. This position, which runs for a term of five years, had then been vacant since August 2017. The person who serves as President of the Convocation plays a pivotal role as Chairperson of the Convocation Advisory Board (ex officio) and as one of the four Convocation members on Council. As such, this person collaborates closely with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal and with the Registrar of the University.

Dr Köster also said it had been a great honour for him to be elected for a term of 4 years that runs until October 2024, after being Chairman of the Alumni Board since 2014. He believes it is imperative for UP alumni to give back to the University. His intention is to continue setting up formal alumni structures and committees that, besides a formal finance committee that has already been established for organised

and collaborative larger fund-raising efforts, also represent different interest groups that include business professionals, sport, culture and academics, and one that addresses increased active Alumni membership, under which alumni can provide support and input in various ways. Direct financial assistance towards, for example, bursaries, research and other projects, assisting with and supporting general fundraising efforts, mentorship programmes, opportunities for internships and guest lectures, alumni events and alumni chapters, are all ways for Convocation members to get involved to make significant contributions to allow UP to maintain its highly rated status in the global educational environment.

2.10 In many developed countries it is common that alumni make large financial and other contributions towards their alma mater and much can be learnt from those supporting models. In South Africa this is currently not necessarily the case, and even more need for alumni support exists as government subsidies to universities have been steadily declining.

2.11 Following the process of electing a new President, the process for the appointment of 12 candidates to serve as members of the Convocation Advisory Board commenced. This Board functions as an advisory body to the University and the Vice-Chancellor and Principal. Its primary objective is to ensure that all Alumni and other Convocation members work together to build a dynamic Alumni community and to support the University in its fundraising efforts. Following the voting phase that commenced on 7 April 2020 and ended on 24 April 2020. On 13 May 2020, the Members' Committee consisting of Ms Futhi Mtoba (then Chairperson of Council), Prof Tawana Kupe (Vice-Chancellor and Principal), Dr Köster (as newly elected President of the Convocation) and by invitation for part of the meeting, the Registrar, Prof Caroline Nicholson, appointed all 12 duly nominated candidates, to serve as members of the new Advisory Board. The Committee's decision was based on the outcome of the voting process and consideration of the experience, expertise, demographics and diversity requirements of the Board.

2.12 As specified in the call for nominations, members of the Board must represent the diversity of professions and subject disciplines of the University community and its Alumni. At least one of the appointed members must have expertise and experience related to the humanities cluster and at least one member must have expertise and experience related to the sciences, engineering and technology (SET) cluster.

2.13 Dr Köster pointed out that irrespective of the current demographic distribution of UP Convocation members, the outcome of the voting process still ensured that fair representation, of what is perhaps still considered the minority demographic group within overall UP Alumni numbers, was achieved in the new Convocation leadership demographics. Eight of the twelve (which is almost 70%) newly elected members of the new Advisory Board are representatives of designated groups, with Ms Nozipho Dlamini, also serving as the current Deputy Chair of the Convocation. The term of office of the successful candidates is effective from 18 May 2020 to 18 May 2024.

2.14 In accordance with the provisions of the Statute and the approved Institutional Rules of the University of Pretoria, Convocation members of the University of Pretoria were further invited to nominate three candidates from among the ranks of the Convocation to serve on the Council of the University of Pretoria for a four-year term. The required competencies for each of the positions were determined by Council and included:

- A qualified auditor (who must be a qualified and registered auditor or chartered accountant) with appropriate seniority and experience;
- A person with the appropriate qualifications, background and a proven track record in finance and investing;
- An experienced person with appropriate qualifications and relevant expertise in the IT and related fields (with specific expertise in data science and related technological systems as an added advantage).

2.15 Members of the Convocation were once again given an opportunity to vote on the suitability for appointment of each of the nominated candidates. The voting phase commenced on 11 May 2021 and ended on 25 May 2021 and was verified by the University's co-sourced internal audit partners. In accordance with the regulation, the Members' Committee, comprising of Mr Kuseni Dlamini (newly appointed Chairperson of Council), Prof Tawana Kupe, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, and Dr Köster, as President of the Convocation, met on Monday, 7 June 2021 to consider all the relevant documentation on the nominees, as well as the outcome of the voting process on the appointability of the nominated candidates with a view to making a recommendation to Council on the appointment of three Convocation members to serve on the University Council. All three of the appointments were made within the required areas of expertise and experience and the newly appointed Council members were duly allocated by Council to the appropriate Council Committees. After this voting process, Ms Carol Read (in the area of accounting and auditing), Dr Robert van Eyden (in the area of finance and investment), and Mr Daniel Fourie (in the area of information technology) were duly appointed by Council to serve on Council for a period of four years, from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2025. On behalf of the Convocation, Dr Köster congratulated all three on their appointment to Council.

2.16 Dr Köster briefly summed up the vision and provided some strategic overall goals for the Advisory Board's time in office. Firstly, the Board must ensure that the Convocation and the Alumni act in the best interests of the University and promote the stature and status of the University at all times. Secondly, due to their vested interest in the stature and success of the University, the Board must also ensure sufficient contribution from the Convocation and the Alumni so that the University's qualifications will retain their currency and will continue to be held in high esteem. Thirdly, given the stake that the Convocation and the Alumni have in the University, the Board must further ensure that the University draws on the matured networks and expertise of its Alumni to the benefit of the University and current cohort of students and finally, it must ensure that the Alumni are encouraged to invest their knowledge and experience in their alma mater – thereby cultivating and nurturing a sense of cohesion, belonging and loyalty – not only among Alumni but also towards the University.

2.17 Dr Köster discussed the benefits that the Convocation structure will hold: Firstly, it will centralise the coordination of the activities of Convocation substructures. Secondly, it will ensure greater cohesion between the members of Convocation substructures as well as between those members and the University. Thirdly, it will ensure enhancement of the stature of the University and finally, it will ensure encouragement in the linkage between the world of work and the University to the benefit of all. He also said it is important to note that membership of any Convocation governance structure is voluntary, without any remuneration attached.

2.18 Dr Köster explained what the UP-Convocation Structure would consist of: Firstly, the Convocation Advisory Board, which is an overarching advisory body that

would collaborate closely with the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, and which consists of a total of fifteen/sixteen (15/16) members that include:

- The President of the Convocation, who will serve as Chairperson of the Board and who will be assisted by the ex officio and twelve (12) elected/appointed members, with a Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Finance Officer elected from amongst its ranks.
- The Vice-Chancellor and Principal and the Registrar (ex officio) or their duly authorised representatives, and
- The Executive member responsible for the Alumni Relations Office (if neither the Vice-Chancellor and Principal nor the Registrar).

Again, it must be noted that Members of the Convocation Advisory Board are elected to act in their individual capacities and not as representatives of a particular stakeholder group.

The role of the Convocation Advisory Board will include the following:

- It will function as an advisory body to the University and the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.
- The primary objective of the Board will be to ensure that all Alumni and other Convocation members work together to build a dynamic Alumni community.
- The Board must support the University in its fundraising efforts.
- The Board will act as the official forum for all its members and foster a sense of belonging, and commitment towards their alma mater, and promote the positive image and reputation of the University.
- The Board may discuss any matter that relates to the University or is referred to it by Council, and regular reports of its activities will be provided to Council.
- The Board will oversee and guide the activities of the various Alumni Associations consisting of Regions/Branches, Clubs and Special Interest Groups, including Profession-based Alumni Associations, and report to the University Council on a regular basis via the President of the Convocation or the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.
- Finally, the Board will advise the Alumni Relations Office on relevant Alumni events and Alumni communications where applicable.

Secondly, the Alumni Associations, comprising Regions (Local, National and International Alumni Branches), Clubs and Special Interest Groups, including Profession-based Alumni Associations. These structures will be supported by an internal management mechanism, namely the Alumni Relations Office, which forms part of the Department of Institutional Advancement (DIA) and reports to the Director of University Relations who, in turn, reports to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal or a delegated member of the Executive.

2.19 The Alumni Relations Office (DIA) is the functional and management unit responsible for Alumni support. The responsible official is a UP employee and takes functional management responsibility for ensuring good communication with the various Convocation structures, that all the activities of the various structures are approved where required, and that the necessary support is provided as set out in the relevant Charters.

2.20 The Alumni Relations Office will be responsible for, inter alia:

- Providing guidance with regard to planning of activities (although a measure of uniformity is preferable, allowance must be made for the variety of disciplines and interests involved and such guidance should not be prescriptive in nature).
- Coordinating the annual plans of the Convocation structures.
- Coordinating the annual budget allocation and financial reporting in line with the policies of UP.
- In conjunction with the Convocation Advisory Board, it will also oversee the activities of substructures and ensure regular reporting on activities.
- Finally, it will be responsible to provide support with regards to information carried on the central database located at the Alumni Office.

2.21 Dr Köster thanked Prof Kupe and the Executive Management for all their hard work and expressed his appreciation on behalf of the entire Convocation community for the way in which they adjusted to the new challenges. He also thanked those Advisory Board members who had already become involved in key UP related activities. Areas of importance that were addressed in the few Board meetings they had held to date included:

- The new norm of future education methods, mainly driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, where the concern is that much would be lost if UP transformed to only distance education, as students crave human contact, and that all avenues should be sought to ensure that students could be on campus rather than solely working from home. It was emphasized that contact learning is important, not just for promoting entrepreneurship, but also for learning how to collaborate and understand cultural diversity, and for emotional intelligence, creativity and engagement. A blended, hybrid form of teaching therefore was proposed, with a good mix of online and contact learning
- Secondly, an important area of concern is the UP-student security on campus, with special focus on the Hatfield- and Prinshof campuses where a sub-committee had been formed under the guidance of one of the Board members, Mr Dawie de Villiers, together with Mr Sandile Mthiyane (UP Chief Operating Officer (COO)). They are working closely together with Mr Lukas Luckhoff, Chief Executive Officer of the Hatfield City Improvement District (CID) and Mr Johan Boonzaaier of UP's Department of Security Services.
- How UP had been navigating teaching and learning in the context of COVID-19;
- The UP Teaching and Learning Plan 2022 – 2026, ensuring that UP was keeping up with modern trends
- The importance of entrepreneurship and TuksNovation as one of the entrepreneurship platforms, where the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF, working with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), provided funding to UP to address youth entrepreneurship
- Signed agreements with several leading universities worldwide, that included a move to co-create programmes, and sharing expertise and knowledge
- Mounting levels of student debt and government's contribution to National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) students to facilitate their registration. The (un)affordability of student accommodation for students whose families were struggling to make ends meet and the socio-economic impact on students who live very far away from campus and who do not have access to technology and enough resources were also specifically addressed

- The maintenance of tight control on COVID-19 health and safety conditions at the institution and mechanisms adopted to encourage vaccinations;
- The impact of oversaturated degrees on the unemployment rate in South Africa
- The engagement in cultural diversity at UP
- Initiatives of UP involvement at school level
- The establishment of a fundraising task team

2.22 Lastly, Dr Köster thanked those in the larger community of Convocation members that provided activities that benefit the University. He hoped that more small advisory committees of specific interest groups could be established. It remains important that Convocation members contribute to the well-being of the University under properly aligned and governed structures. He encouraged Convocation members to get involved and reach out to him (via the Alumni Relations Office at alumni@up.ac.za) should they have any concerns or suggestions or if they want to contribute towards activities that will allow UP to further improve its highly rated status in the global educational environment.

3. INTRODUCTION OF CONVOCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

The Convocation Advisory Board members were introduced to the Convocation by Ms Nozipho Dlamini, Deputy Chairperson of the Convocation Advisory Board. They are as follows: Mr Winston Campbell, Mr Aobakwe Mongae Mr Chris Fismer, Mr David de Villiers, Mr Didcott Makheme, Mr Johann Scholtz, Mr Paul Ssali, Mr Wergelé McKenzie, Mrs Lucia Lesolang and Ms Nomsa Maseko Hlongwane. Ms Dlamini added that there was a vacancy created by the late Mr Cloete. A call for nominations would be published in 2022 to fill this position on the board. The alumni office would distribute more information.

4. ADDRESS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL

4.1 Prof Tawana Kupe, UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal, extended a very warm welcome to the Convocation AGM and alumni all over the world. He also acknowledged Dr Hinner Köster, Ms Nozipho Dlamini and Prof Caroline Nicholson. Prof Kupe said that he would highlight some of the things that were happening at UP. He would also speak about the manner in which UP is navigating various challenges. He mentioned the impact and disruption of Covid 19.

UP followed a hybrid teaching and learning approach. The questions arose whether UP was prepared for online teaching and whether everyone had access. The Executive decided that no student would be left behind. Laptops were provided for students. Though the start of the academic year in 2020 was delayed, the staff quickly adapted. The university was one of the ten academic institutions in SA to complete the 2020 academic year in 2020. UP runs a unique online model. UP has a strong academic program but it is not resting on its laurels. When the pandemic hit, UP used the notion that every cloud has a silver lining and that when a cloud comes one must re-imagine how to do things and look for opportunities to do better. UP re-imagines teaching and learning both for the current restrictive phase but also beyond this phase when vaccinations might become more common, and the pandemic is under control. UP is innovating a hyperflex model which will combine synchronous and asynchronous, online and contact teaching and learning in fascinating ways. A

new era of interactivity, creativity, flexibility and agility has come with re-imagining UP.

4.2 It is important that UP positions itself as a future-oriented university that delivers greater impact in society. This will happen in at least three ways: First, providing a high-quality education that is responsive to society's educational, professional and skills needs. Second, a university that co-creates knowledge through research that matters to solving local and global issues and third, a university that is engaged – not an ivory tower. At least 33 000 of UP's students are engaged either through formal courses or voluntary activities in community engagement projects where they give back to society. This benefits learners from marginalised communities and communities like Laudium and Mamelodi.

4.3 This re-imagined UP is part of the solution to SA, Africa and the world's challenges. UP provides high level skilled human capital in many sectors. UP is the largest and top Engineering school in SA and on the African continent. According to Government figures UP provides 28% of SA's engineers. For many years UP has been leading in the Accounting exams. UP produces more research than any other SA university. UP offers unique degrees e.g., the master's degree in tangible heritage conservation. UP's programs are universally ranked. One of the ranking agencies, QS, ranked the Law faculty number 60 globally. There are many more examples where UP offers excellent academic programs. 93% of UP's students are employed or studying further, 6 months after graduation. UP leads in providing entrepreneurship courses. UP has an incubator, Tuksnovation, and recently established a centre for the future of work. Curriculum transformation is important at UP, not just de-colonising the curriculum but also making the curriculum more relevant for the future. There will be three pathways for graduates in the future: get employed, create your own job or continue with higher education.

4.4 UP is a research leader. The virtual Convocation meeting was hosted from the Future Africa Institute, a conference centre, residential facility, research commons, and a collaborative space for research at UP in SA, across the continent and across the world. Researchers co-create knowledge that addresses global issues, from food security to climate change to smart transport systems, water, energy, etc. UP also has Engineering 4.0, a new facility that deals with issues that had arisen because of the 4th industrial revolution – that is, rapidly advancing digital technologies that change the way that we do things.

4.5 Many UP students and academics are winning awards and UP is doing well in rankings. In the Impact rankings UP is one of the top three SA universities for industry, innovation and infrastructure. UP is also in the top 25% of universities that produce research that creates real impact. In the ranking for the centre for World universities, UP was the only university that improved on its research scores. UP hosted five Nobel prize winners who addressed the topic of the future of work.

4.6 UP ran innovative campaigns like the LeadUP Events and launched a very informative Pod-cast series. UP is the kind of place that is relevant, responsive and engaged with society. Student life is bustling. Though Covid caused constraints,

sports bubbles were hosted, including the varsity cup rugby bubble. UP won the Varsity Cup rugby, netball and soccer. UP had winning stars at the Olympics, e.g., Tatjana Schoenmaker. UP markets itself well, at the MACE awards and won 16 awards.

4.7 There were some low points as well, Prof Christof Heyns passed away in March. He was a human rights defender, scholar, intellectual and Pan-Africanist of note. Although UP is doing well in fundraising and donations, national budgets were cut severely, and the university needs more funds. To this end, UP runs a major fundraising drive. Next year the university will launch UP Giving Days where alumni will also be involved. Phahama supports student meals and UP provides free sanitary pads.

4.8 UP runs a big transformation drive because it believes in diversity and inclusion. In 2019, the comprehensive Anti-discrimination policy was passed so that UP can be as diverse, inclusive and reflective of SA as it can be. The new COO, Mr Sandile Mthiyane, is transforming procurement to ensure that small firms can also win contracts. Suppliers should be diverse. There is also substantial transformation around re-imagining, re-positioning and ensuring that SA becomes a winning nation and Africa becomes a prosperous continent.

5. QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION

The Registrar, Prof Caroline Nicholson, facilitated the Question-and-answer session. The following questions were addressed:

- Approval of minutes of previous AGM

There had been no AGM since 2017, therefore there were no minutes for approval.

- To what extent does the UP-student mix reflect the overall demographics of the age group in SA?

Prof Kupe said that 65% of UP students are in the black demographic group. As SA is changing groups of matrices will be more diverse. UP values not just demographic diversity but inclusivity. UP is diversifying and has done well in gender equality, 55% of students are female. UP did an Institutional Culture survey asking people what their experience is of the university. That survey would be analysed and used to roll out institutional culture changes to enjoy the diversity of the demographic and age groups that were on campus.

- What is the Employment equity status of UP at the top, middle management and academic staff levels?

Prof Kupe said that the trend here was also that UP is diversifying. 52% of Top Management (Grades 1 – 4) are black and approximately 40% of them are women. The target for 2025 is to increase this. The yearly Employment Equity plan shows that UP is going in the right direction. Middle management (Gr 5 – 6) 42% is black and 40% is black women. Academics: 30% is black and what is noteworthy is the appointment of black academics to lead senior academic entities e.g., a young man of 32, Prof Charles Maimela, became the first black deputy dean of the top law faculty in Africa, UP Law, ranked number 60 in the world. Also, UP has appointed its first black female dean of the Faculty of Economic Management Sciences, Prof

Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu. The promotion of young black academics and women academics is increasing. 57% of researchers are women. Where UP still needs to make progress is on the percentage of black and female professors, where numbers remain low. But there are a number of programs in the pipeline and the numbers are increasing because of UP's commitment to diversity.

- What is the total procurement spend of the university per annum and in which sectors?

Prof Kupe said that he would give a broad answer because this is the stage of the year when auditing is being done on assessment of the total spend. The COO, Mr Sandile Mthiyane, has created a supply management committee to ensure that small and medium enterprises are prioritised and registered on UP's supply database. The procurement spend is approximately 2.3 billion and this goes across sectors: catering, accommodation, information technology, health and safety and training. Approximately 25% is spent with black-owned companies. This trend is going up due to measures that the COO put in place as well as transformation and diversification measures.

Prof Nicholson said some of these questions were actually addressed in both Prof Kupe's presentation and Dr Köster's. Prof Kupe addressed the plans to accelerate participation of small business at UP.

- What programmes are in place to impact marginalised youth in SA society?

Prof Kupe also addressed this earlier. Prof Kupe emphasized that youth unemployment is a crisis in SA, up to 50% in some estimations. SA youth need to be given skills to enter the job market or become entrepreneurs. At the Mamelodi campus there are several initiatives: the business clinic, Siyathemba Clinic for occupational therapy and a hub for veterinary services for local and surrounding communities. Prof Kupe said that there were discussions with the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust to open a pre-university academy for secondary school learners so that the youth is given the skills that are needed in the economy, to get good jobs and to improve their situation. UNICEF is giving UP more funding for entrepreneurship and digital skills because this culture of unemployment and the loss of the potential of so many young people is a threat to SA society. Society's problems are UP's problems.

- How will UP manage the leadership demographics of the UP alumni body to ensure fair representation, considering that white alumni numbers will be in the majority for the foreseeable future?

Dr Köster said thus that almost 70% of the current board members were from designated groups. He was comfortable that they were on the right path, the results were showing that the system is fair. Prof Nicholson added that the strong focus on ensuring that there is diversity in the representation was a reassurance to the convocation that this was not something that would be overlooked.

- What is UP's biggest challenges?

Prof Kupe replied that one of the challenges that was being addressed fairly well, was for UP to become a continentally and globally engaged university. Two to three years ago, UP was not where it should have been. Some of the progress is reflected in how UP academics, e.g., the late Prof Christof Heyns, Prof Kupe himself and other top academics were elected by fellow African and international scholars to lead international associations. That was more than just glory for those individuals,

because it often brought interesting resources to fund research, increased the sharing of information about UP and SA and spawned opportunities for students and academics to visit and train elsewhere, e.g., Michigan State University. Prof Kupe is Chairman of the African Alliance for Progress which consists of Michigan State University and ten African universities. They organise fellowships for young academics to develop their skills to become top academics and UP academics can benefit from that. Prof Kupe is the co-president of the Australia-Africa university network – money is provided to support academic research on major challenges facing the African continent. UP is one of three African universities represented. There is a long list of academics that are part of these associations. This networking brings intellectual stature – UP learns from others and vice versa, and staff and scholars get opportunities.

Prof Kupe mentioned Covid but said that in spite of its negative impact, UP did not lose anything. UP revised everything that was done and learnt from their peers. UP could weather the Covid storm because Council had the foresight to allow the investment of 100 million in 2019 to create a technology platform that was strong enough when Covid struck. He said that another challenge was that transformation was slow. UP picked up the pace – whether it was curriculum transformation or transforming UP's technologies. UP navigated rapidly changing technologies and how to harness them, whether it was for research, teaching or engagement.

- Will there be a mandatory vaccination rule for staff and students?

Prof Kupe replied that the answer was: “not now”. UP would not force anybody to vaccinate at this stage. Rather, scientific arguments would be used to persuade, encourage, and explain why vaccination is very important. Pandemics might increase and if people were forced, they would have an ingrained resistance against vaccines that could be necessary in the future. UP would only resort to mandatory vaccinations if persuasion, encouragement, peer engagement and understanding had failed. Prof Kupe did not foresee that happening. The unions agreed that UP scientists should be asked to explain to those who might doubt. Prof Kupe stressed that to doubt and be unsure is human but that those who doubt or are unsure should seek information.

- Do the university's international partners align with its drive to be both a global and local player?

Prof Nicholson pointed out that was a question that was also addressed earlier. Prof Kupe said that UP was part of so many networks e.g., the African Research universities association – an association of seventeen universities. Prof Kupe was recently elected to the board of the African Association of universities which is a continental association. UP is part of the Australia-Africa university network and Prof Kupe is the SA representative on the Austria-Africa university network. Prof Kupe listed agreements between UP and many international universities, e.g., Makerere, Ghana, Nairobi, Cornell, New York, Michigan State, Illinois, Leeds, Princeton, etc.

- How will UP prevent Government pressure to increase throughput by forcing it to sacrifice the quality of the degrees that it produces?

Prof Kupe said that UP reports honestly where it is not making progress. UP does not allow pressure regarding throughput. If that was allowed, UP would lose credibility. Prof Kupe stressed that a university falls or stands by its reputation. UP must be known as a university that does not manufacture high marks. If a person

does not do well, that person is helped. UP does not cook the marks or the throughput. Government knows that UP will resist this, as it helps nobody. Quality matters – quality knows no race, no gender, no continent. Quality is global and it is one's currency.

- What is UP doing to promote the globally acclaimed STEM approach to tertiary education?

Prof Kupe mentioned that the acronym is no longer STEM but STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. Prof Kupe mentioned the pre-university academy again. STEAM is important for the 4th Industrial revolution. What is needed in a future-oriented world is for people to have technology and technical skills, but they must also have human skills: engagement, emotional intelligence, sensitivity to others, they must appreciate diversity and being inclusive. Those attributes you learn from the arts.

- Has private school elitism replaced race-based selection?

Prof Kupe said that just before Covid, UP did a comprehensive biographical survey of all the students that the university recently admitted. UP students came from a diversity of the school system. He explained that there were students from private schools, but they were not the majority. If one looked at students that qualify for NSFAS, they constitute about a third of the students and another third of the students are the “missing middle”. The third of the students that pay for themselves are often from private schools.

Prof Nicholson thanked the audience for the questions they submitted and said if any questions were missed, the convocation could contact the university and the question would be addressed and an answer sent in writing.

6. CLOSING

In closing Dr Köster thanked everyone that attended the virtual 2021 Convocation AGM meeting. He especially mentioned the speakers: Prof Tawana Kupe, Ms Nozipho Dlamini and Professor Caroline Nicholson for their valuable contributions in making the historical meeting such a success. He also thanked Ms Samantha Castle for the professional way in which she manages UP's Alumni matters through the Alumni Relations Office.

Finally, Dr Köster once more encouraged the Convocation to reach out to the alumni office at alumni@up.ac.za, should they have concerns and suggestions that they would like to table at Convocation meetings or other platforms. Also, should they want to assist with fundraising, developing partnerships, support alumni events of chapters or mentoring of students.

Approved as a true reflection of the proceedings.

Dr HH Köster
President of the Convocation

Date: