**THE LATE DR BUTI PHILEMON SKHOSANA**

On October 28, 2010 was a sad day for the Department of African Languages when a member of staff past away after a short illness. It is to my greatest sorrow and sympathy to announce the untimely death of Dr Buti Philemon Skhosana who was known as “Buti” in the department.

Dr late Buti Philemon Skhosana joined the University of Pretoria in the Department of African Languages of the Faculty of Humanities as a senior lecturer in January 1, 1997. He obtained a doctor’s degree in linguistics on the linguistic relationship between Southern and Northern Ndebele in 2010. He initiated that isiNdebele be taught at the institutions of higher learning, and took the lead in taking isiNdebele to the academic heights.

Through his hard work and passion for his language he motivated and mobilised the amaNdebele to re-position themselves in terms of teaching and learning and research at the institutions of higher learning by becoming the first isiNdebele academic lecturer in the world. Today we talk of the University of Pretoria being the only university in existence that has seen the need of teaching isiNdebele, one of the official languages of the Republic of South Africa behind Dr Skhosana’s scenes. He argued that even if the Constitution empowers isiNdebele to become an official language, the fact of the matter is that up till now it is considered a seriously marginalized language as compared to other African languages of South Africa let alone English and Afrikaans. Dr Skhosana believed that it needs to be taken into account that the isiNdebele speaking community should not be denied the opportunity to study and develop their language at the university level maybe due to political, economical and academic reasons.

The Department of African Languages has lost a friend, colleague and academic expert in the field of isiNdebele. The department also wants to extend a word of grief to his family members, relatives, neighbours and friends. May God give them spiritual support and strength during this grievous time.

The late Dr Buti Philemon Skhosana will be buried on Saturday November 6, 2010 at his home village, Kwa-Mhlanga at Kwa-Mhlanga Stadium. The funeral service will start at 07:00. And there will be a memorial service for him on Thursday November 4, 2010 at 10:00 in the Chapel at the University of Pretoria.