

## Installation as Chancellor of the Vaal University of Technology: Zwelibanzi V Mntambo

Congratulations to you, Rre Zwelibanzi Vincent Mntambo, our newly installed Chancellor of the Vaal University of Technology. Nhlangothi! Halala!!  
Mme Dudu Hlatshwayo, Dumela!!

Salutations to the Chairperson of Council, Professor Radebe, the Vice Chancellor and Principal, Professor Ndlovu, and your Executive team. It really feels good to be in the company of learned people like yourselves, professors! I come from a school of thought that believes that education, i.e. learning, is key to the advancement of a people.

Mme Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi Chancellor of the Nelson Mandela University and Rre Jabu Moleketi, Dumelang!

Greetings to the members of the VUT Council and Senate, the leadership and members of the labour movement, the Student Representative Council, Heads of Faculties, Staff, the Mntambo family, representatives from the 3 spheres of government, in particular the executive mayors who have joined us today, all dignitaries and guests ... Good afternoon!

I stand here as a proud South African, a former colleague and friend to the Chancellor whom I've known for more than 30 years!

To those of you who have yet to get to know Zwelibanzi Vincent Mntambo - first and foremost:

He is an African, the son of Ganuganu and Phokoane. Setlogolo sa Batshweneng!  
inNteth'ende njengecimbithwa!  
Lwandle aluwelwa, luwelwa zinkonjane!  
Nhlangothi!  
Mlondo!  
Msuthu!  
Vezi!

To borrow from the language of President Thabo Mbeki as cited from his speech "I am an African", and as attested to by Mme Geraldine in her address this morning, I can confidently state that Zwelibanzi draws his being from the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever changing seasons that define the face of our native land"!

Ke ngoana wa moAfrika, and one we are all so proud of! He has earned the space he occupies today as the Chancellor of this august institution!

What are the characteristics that define Zwelibanzi?

He is a patriot, a scholar, a business leader and a gentleman. He embodies the constitutional values of human dignity, equality, non-racialism, tolerance, rationality, harmony and inclusiveness. He fights for the truth. He will not tell you what he thinks you want to hear!

Likewise, don't tell him what you think he might want to hear! Tell him the unembellished truth, which truth he will appreciate and defend. He is solutions driven! He will deal with what you have placed before him in the most rational manner, sensitive to the context within which advice is being sought from him. However, remember as you seek his counsel that context is everything! It informs every decision, recommendation, and advice given!

He is a team player, a pragmatist! His leadership style being that of a servant leader who sets objectives and then gets the whole team to own and achieve those objectives. He is a versatile leader, making his presence felt at the helm, at the rear, alongside those in the middle... a man of and for all seasons of leadership.

He is a man of integrity and sound character, doing as he says he will do. A God fearing man, a man with a sense of humour, a family man, an inclusive South African!

Chancellor, this institution has been standing for the past 50 years. It has an illustrious history of being a trailblazer in the field of technological education! Your responsibility is to take care of that which has been placed under your care!

Zweli, you are now part of an institution that, in 2023, had a total headcount of 19 731 students, the majority being undergraduates (95%). These are local and international students.

VUT has strategic partnerships with among others, various universities in South Africa, the South African Technology Network, the Department of Higher Education and Training, the South African Quality Assurance, the National Research Foundation, the Innovation Hub, and a plethora of professional bodies.

Chancellor, to paraphrase from the Book of Esther and Mordecai's statement to Esther: **"Yet who knows, maybe it was for a time like this that you were made Queen!"** In this instance, maybe it was for a time like this that you have been made Chancellor!

Put differently... and... to borrow from Franz Fanon's writings: **"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it."**

In context, the elections results of 29 May 2024 have presented you, VUT, under the stewardship of this Chancellor, with the opportunity to fulfil your mission! Technology has come into a time where its task is to propel humanity through rough seas, and broker a future that secures our planet and its resources for future generations!

The ball is in your court!!! Fulfil this mission!!

May the Good Lord be with you, Chancellor, and with your team, as you lead this institution into its ordained destiny as a premier institution of learning!!

**6 June 2024**