

**Welcoming address by Professor Russel Botman,
Rector and Vice-Chancellor of Stellenbosch University,
at the launch of the African Doctoral Academy,
Stellenbosch, 26 January 2011**

Good evening, everyone. *Goeienaand. Molweni. Habari. Karibu.* Distinguished guests:

- Ms Naledi Pandor, Minister of Science and Technology
- Prof Hennie Kotze, Dean of Arts and Social Sciences
- Prof Johann Mouton, Director of the African Doctoral Academy
- Dr John Butler-Adam, Program Officer of the Ford Foundation in South Africa
- ADA students
- Ladies and gentlemen ...

... welcome to a milestone moment for our continent, the launch of the African Doctoral Academy – the ADA. Allow me to briefly provide some context for tonight's events.

In the global knowledge economy of the Information Age that we find ourselves in, we need resourceful and engaged knowledge workers to help us unlock and exploit our potential as a continent. The African Doctoral Academy is where they will get the skills they need for this task.

The ADA forms part of Stellenbosch University's three-pronged strategy to help regenerate and shore up scholarship and research on the continent.

The first part is the Graduate School of our Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which recruits students and coordinate their studies. It opened its doors last January, and this year 26 students were awarded full-time doctoral scholarships, of which 22 are from African countries beyond South Africa's borders.

The second part of our strategy is the ADA, which provides support in research, scholarship, supervision and management. It aims to become the pre-eminent site for advanced research skills training and development on the African continent. But I am sure the Academy's Director, Professor Johann Mouton, will tell us more during his presentation later on tonight.

The third component of our strategy is the Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics (PANGeA). The institutions collaborating in this network are the universities of Botswana, Dar es Salaam, Makerere, Malawi, Nairobi and Stellenbosch. We have joined forces to learn from each other, develop our capacity together, improve our doctoral programmes and coordinate research.

These three initiatives – our Graduate School and African Doctoral Academy, as well as the PANGeA network – broadly form part of Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project. By following a science-for-society approach, we are working hard to bring about tangible change within communities, our country, our continent, the world.

Under the HOPE Project we have distilled from UN's Millennium Development Goals five themes to guide our core activities. These are the eradication of poverty and related conditions, and the promotion of human dignity and health, democracy and human rights, peace and security, as well as a sustainable environment and a competitive industry.

Our vision for our continent is a future free from poverty, where the human dignity of all people is protected, where our social and ecological systems are healthy, and where peace, security and democracy are safeguarded. The HOPE Project is the vehicle we are relying on to get us there, and the African Doctoral Academy is its engine.

My congratulations to everyone involved in putting the ADA together, and my thanks to all its supporters. For the sake of Africa's one billion people, may the ADA go from strength to strength.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me say again that you are most welcome here. Please feel at home, and if you need anything, just ask any Matie.

Thanks to the organisers for arranging what promises to be a wonderful evening. I trust you will make use of the opportunity to network and get to know one another.