

Launch of SU's new Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 at Staff Assembly

Endler Hall, Conservatoire of Music, Victoria St, Stellenbosch

(with simultaneous assemblies on Tygerberg and Bellville Park campuses via live webcast)

13:00–14:00, 24 July 2018

Remarks by Stellenbosch University Rector and Vice-Chancellor Prof Wim de Villiers

(Visit <https://youtu.be/C8WMgkpvOXo?t=11m14s> for a video recording of the Staff Assembly)

Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. *Molweni. Middag almal. Ek is bly om julle hier te sien. Dankie vir die belangstelling.* Greetings also to colleagues on our Tygerberg and Bellville Park campuses, and to everyone else following proceedings live over the internet.

This is a very exciting moment for Stellenbosch University (SU). In the year of our Centenary – as we look back on 100 years of history – we are also looking ahead to the future, figuring out where we want to go as an institution, and making plans to get us there.

I'm honoured to lead Stellenbosch University at this point in time, and very proud of all our capable and committed staff and students. Our people are our Number One enabler – without you, there is no University.

And therein lies the challenge for us all. You see, universities are institutions for the ages. For centuries, universities have done much to change the world. But the world is changing very quickly, and we too have to adapt or be left behind. So, it is the responsibility of each generation to not only focus on the here and now, but to leave a legacy for those who will come after us.

Ons voorgangers het juis dit gedoen. Dit is danksy die grondslag wat hulle gelê het dat Stellenbosch vandag 'n toonaangewende universiteit is wat 'n belangrike bydrae tot menslike ontwikkeling lewer, goed gekwalifiseerde gegradueerdes oplewer, innoverende en relevante navorsing doen en 'n groot impak op die samelewing maak. Onder prof Andreas van Wyk was ons padkaart die Strategiese Raamwerk vir die Eeuwisseling en daarná. Onder prof Chris Brink het Visie 2012 beslag gekry. En onder wyle prof Russel Botman het ons die Institusionele Voorneme en Strategie 2013-2018 gekry, met Visie 2030, wat ons gelei het om meer inklusief, innoverend en toekomstgerig te word as instelling.

I think we have done well, but the *Institutional Intent and Strategy* expires this year, so, in 2016 we started drawing a new road map for the University. This has now culminated in the new *Vision and Strategic Framework* that we are launching here today. It is our contribution to the unfolding story of our University; our legacy for future generations as we enter our next century as an institution.

It has been quite a journey to get to this point, and I want to thank our Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Strategy and Internationalisation, Prof Hester Klopper, for spearheading the process. It has been an inclusive, consultative process involving various stakeholders throughout the University – not only the Rectorate, but different levels of management in faculties, as well as our professional administrative support services (PASS).

Five task groups investigated major areas, namely what the university's values should be; the research themes we should be pursuing; our size & shape as institution; everything to do with the bursaries and loans we offer; and the performance indicators we should use to monitor and evaluate our implementation of the new framework. We are in the fortunate position that we could draw on considerable expertise throughout the University for these task groups.

And then, casting the net wide, all staff and students were surveyed on the University's values. Lastly, formal University structures provided detailed input. That's the Institutional Forum, as well as Committees of Senate and Council, and Senate itself, which all recommended the new vision and strategic framework to Council, which approved the document when it met just before recess.

So, where does our new road map point to? Where are we headed?

Our vision is bold – to become “**Africa’s leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society.**”

How are we going to get there? By pursuing six core strategic themes:

1. Delivering a **student experience** that is transformative
2. Following a **teaching and learning** approach that is networked and collaborative
3. Conducting **research** aimed at impact
4. Establishing purposeful **partnerships** and inclusive networks
5. Becoming the **employer** of choice in the higher-education sector
6. And working towards a **thriving** Stellenbosch University overall.

As you will see in the document and on the website (www.sun.ac.za), there are various other elements as well, besides the vision and core strategic themes. The University now also has a new mission; values; attributes; enablers; and strategic management indicators.

But what now? How is this going to be implemented? This was only Phase 1 – the development process to get us to this point. A very exciting stage will now unfold – Phase 2 (strategy uptake) and Phase 3 (alignment) running concurrently. What essentially lies ahead is a process of sense making. We need to now take this document and engage with it in our various environments. To flesh it out and give it meaning. To make it a living document – with each staff member and student not only talking the talk but also *walking* the talk.

Ons wil allermins hê ons nuwe Visie en Strategiese Raamwerk moet net lippetaal wees, blote woorde op papier. Ons wil hê dit moet 'n wesenlike verskil maak – nie net vir ons Universiteit nie, maar vir die samelewing in geheel.

Last week, in delivering the Nelson Mandela Centenary Lecture, former US President Barack Obama said, “Every generation has the opportunity to remake the world.” Colleagues, this is *our* opportunity. Our time. Our turn. Let’s make the most of it.

With our new *Vision and Strategic Framework*, Stellenbosch University is showing its commitment to being relevant to our context and of service to our country and continent – an inclusive, world-class university *in* and *for* Africa. It was developed taking into account South Africa’s National Development Plan, the African Union’s Vision 2063 and the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals.

What happens in the world shapes us, and what happens here at Stellenbosch University matters to the world. We are all part of something bigger. Our new *Vision and Strategic Framework* will take us forward together ... *masiye phambili* ... *saam vorentoe*.