

Executive which is relatively young; yet this youthfulness has been hailed somewhere else as a huge advantage.

After 11am all the delegation members, except the driver bringing the big token for the founder, were parking the vehicles at the MUT founder's offices where the meeting was to be held.

A seasoned reporter, Knowledge Simelane, was already there. As soon as the formal greetings were over, everybody filed in. The delegation was ushered into a huge hall, and was told the Prince would be joining them soon. After they had taken their positions, with the Convocation's Executive President taking a seat nearest to the one reserved for HRH, the Prince appeared from an inside door. The broad smile he offered gave assurance to all: "You are all welcomed!" This was followed by the formal greetings, with the Prince clearly recognising old friends, and acknowledging the presence of new ones.

The Prince then invited the Convocation President to state the reasons for the visit. Sandile informed HRH of Convocation's desire to assist the University to deal with a number of challenges, some of which are its huge student debt, the unavailability of funding for post-graduate students, inadequate resources, and need to acquire some land for expansion. The Convocation leadership requested the Prince to communicate with his networks, and see if they could assist in improving the situation at the University.

Prince Buthelezi said the visit was "historic, and impressive. I am humbled by your message, Mr Dlamini". Prince Buthelezi, who built 6 000 schools in KwaZulu-Natal, is a brilliant story teller and gave a long, clear history of the events that resulted in the founding of MUT. His point was that he has always been aware of the plight of the black people, and that education was going to provide a real improvement in their lives. Even before the meeting was over, he tried calling someone he thought could help. He relished the opportunity of once again helping MUT so it could continue to produce more graduates.

As a sign of great respect, and a clear indication that they would like the relationship with the Prince to continue, the delegation presented a cow to Prince Buthelezi, as well as a framed collage of pictures of the



*Former KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Mr Willies Mchunu, middle, shaking hands with Sandile Dlamini while other members of the Convocation look on. Mr Mchunu is a former Chancellor of MUT*

students that have graduated at MUT over the last few years. The Prince was more than elated. He spent time looking at the frame, which is a reflection of his desire to improve the lives of people through education. He also appreciated the cow gift very much, and said he might return the favour, in one way or the other.

The following day, the Convocation leadership visited Mr Willies Mchunu, the former Premier of KwaZulu-Natal. They had the same request for the former Premier, who is also the former Chancellor of the University. This time they emphasised the necessity of dealing urgently with the historic debt. Mr Mchunu was also more than happy to welcome the Convocation leadership. He commended them for the new tactics they were employing in dealing with the problematic issues that have bedevilled South African universities. "I really commend you young people for employing different tactics in dealing with the challenges. Although I am officially retired from government, I am still an active cadre of the ANC, and the general community. On that basis, I am going to consider your request for me to help," said the former Premier. Like Prince Buthelezi, the former Premier tried connecting them with an individual whom he described as someone that would take the lead in facilitating what was going to happen regarding the Convocation leadership's request.

The Convocation Executive leadership is waiting with bated breath for the outcome of the visits. In the meantime, they are continuing with their visits to strategic partners. The former Premier was more than impressed with the line-up of the people they intended to meet.