

Press release statement

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**Message from the MUT Leadership on the Passing of His
Excellency Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi**

This morning, shortly after 6h00, the country was officially informed by the President of the Republic of South Africa Honourable President Cyril Ramaphosa of the passing away of his Excellency Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Founder of Mangosuthu University of Technology, Traditional Prime Minister of the Zulu Nation, and Founder and President Emeritus of the Inkatha Freedom Party. Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi was also a mentor, friend, philanthropist, and father to many South Africans. He meant so many things to so many people. Our thoughts and prayers are with his immediate family and children.

His passing has come as a shock to all of us because just last week we rejoiced when he was discharged from hospital and he rejoined his

beloved family. The community of Mangosuthu University of Technology is in grief.

On Sunday, 27 August, we – the staff and students of Mangosuthu University of Technology - celebrated his birthday on our MUT Radio, not knowing that the birthday messages he was receiving were to be his last. To his family, friends, MUT staff, MUT students and alumni, we say “*Uwile umuthi omkhulu*”, a big tree has fallen. The gigantic tree that Prince Mangosuthu was, spread its roots across South Africa and the entire African continent. When Prince Buthelezi established MUT in 1979 with just 15 students, he knew, as a visionary person, that this small institution would grow into a large educational organisation that would have the greatest impact on the poor and the marginalised. Today MUT has over 14,000 students and has produced more than 42,000 alumni who are employed across the world as industry and business leaders, as CEOs and as technical specialists in wide-ranging careers.

We thank God and the Buthelezi family for the gift that *Shenge* was. Prince Buthelezi was bold and knew how to use his network for the benefit of “*abantu abampisholo*”, meaning marginalised people and communities. He used this expression many times. It was indeed his compassion for the poor that impelled him to approach Sir Harry Oppenheimer of Anglo-American to provide seed funding for the establishment of MUT in 1979. Anglo-American continues even today to support MUT with student bursaries.

For our part, we are grateful that we were able to honour Prince Buthelezi when he was still alive at our 2022 graduation ceremony of the Faculty of Engineering, for his vision that led to the establishment of

MUT with the Faculty of Engineering as a founding entity. Today MUT is a proud technological institution with a strong focus on Science, Engineering and Technology (SET). All of us have known *uMntwana* as a person who always wanted nothing but the best for MUT. He was like a father who provides the best for his children and stands there to watch in awe as the children exceed all expectations. When MUT received the “Excelleration Award” from the National Research Foundation (NRF) in 2021, in recognition of the excellence of its research and the accelerated speed with which the turnaround happened, Prince Buthelezi wrote:

“I am proud of what MUT has accomplished. More than that, however, I am excited by what this means for the future. Seeing MUT come this far, I know that it has the potential to go even further. With the investments being made in research, innovation, and technology at MUT, I have no doubt that there will be more awards like this, and with the investments that are being made in international partnerships, it is clear that MUT is a rising star.”

Prince Buthelezi’s last meeting with us was at the inauguration of our Chancellor Mr Sandile Zungu, on 17 March 2023 at MUT’s Seme Hall. We were happy to meet him, and he also seemed very excited. This event was attended by more than 200 industry captains, MUT alumni, and all strategic stakeholder groupings. At this event, he urged all of us to lead this University to greater heights. His plea has not fallen on deaf ears. We will ensure that MUT continues to grow in strength and stature so that his legacy is honoured and protected.

The University will organise its memorial service next week after having made arrangements with the family.

May *Shenge's* soul rest in eternal peace. Lala ngokuthula, *Mntwana wakwaPhindangene, uShenge, Sokwalise, Phungashe!*

Shenge, Nqengelele kaMnyamana, Nandingamondi, Sondiya!

Submitted on behalf of

Mr Sandile Zungu, MUT Chancellor

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