



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
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Welcoming function for Prof Francis Petersen: South Campus
18 May 2017, 10:00
Madiba Arena, South Campus

Programme Director: Yes, now that is how we welcome you at the South Campus. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Are you fabulous today? I am excited. Welcome to the official welcoming of our new Rector, Professor Francis Petersen. Prof, we are so excited that finally this has come to the South Campus. We will now start with our programme for the day. If you don't have a seat, please find one as soon as possible, because we are now about to start with real business. This is a prestigious and joyous celebration for us at the South Campus, and I am going to call on our beautiful mother, our Campus Principal Daniella, to do the formal welcoming. Let's wave the flags for her.

Prof Daniella Coetzee: Good morning, sanibonane, dumelang, goeiemore, and a warm welcome to all of you at the university's South Campus. It is indeed a momentous occasion, and Tshego got you in the spirit to welcome our guests of honour – our new Vice-Chancellor, Prof Francis Petersen and his wife, Mrs Cheslyn Petersen – to our campus. It is also fitting – I don't know if you know this – that this is the first official function of the university in the newly named Madiba Hall on the South Campus. Welcome, Prof Petersen and Mrs Petersen, to this remarkable campus of a remarkable university in the equally remarkable city of Bloemfontein. By joining the UFS as our 14th Vice-Chancellor and Rector, you are about to embark on an unforgettable journey that will change your lives forever. Be warned. I would also like to welcome the following people who have joined us to welcome Professor Petersen. I apologise for the low number of students, but our students are mainly at off-campus sites, and the ones that are here, are studying for their exams. Thank you to those who came anyway. Prof Nicky Morgan, Vice-Rector: Operations, Prof Lis Lange, Vice-Rector: Academic, Prof Corli Witthuhn, Vice-Rector: Research, Dr Gift Vinger, Registrar: Governance and Policy, Dr Karen Lazenby, Registrar: Systems and Administration, Prof Johan Grobbelaar who is the president of the UFS Convocation, and then the deans and acting deans, Prof Gert van Zyl who is the Dean of Health Sciences, Prof Fanie Snyman: Theology, Prof Caroline Nicholson: Law, Prof Danie Vermeulen: Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Prof Millie Rivera: Acting Dean of the Humanities, Dr Petrus Nel: Acting Dean: Economic and Management Sciences. It is a lot of important people. Dr Milton Nkoane: Education, and Mr Pura Mgolombane: Dean of Students; Teboho Manchu, the Vice-Principal of the Qwaqwa Campus is also here; Anne Whaits, the Managing Director (South

Africa) Academic Partnerships; Silas Sebiloane from Old Mutual; Teboho Blantina Moleko, who is the Free State Provincial coordinator of the ETDB Seta; Mr SK Luwaca, President of the SRC at the Bloemfontein Campus; and Ms Surprise Manyaiyi, Vice-President of the SRC, who will deliver a message to you today. Also invited, and I am excited that they are here – we have invited eight schools from our IBP, the Internet Broadcast Project, to be here with their principals – so I am just going to mention the names and thank them for also making time to be here. They are from the Bloemfontein region of the project: Sehunelo, Atlehang, and Lekhulong Schools, thank you very much for being here. So, all of you, thank you for joining us on this beautiful campus of the university to properly welcome our Rector to the university, to the UFS family, and in particular to the South Campus strand of the university family. Prof Petersen is not only a celebrated academic, but also leader of note, and we at the UFS are privileged that he has chosen to move his family from the fairest Cape to this central, but significant spot on the map. We cannot compare with the beauty of the Cape, we know that, but Free Staters are well-known for their warmth and the fact that they are friendly people, and occasionally for their very bad rugby. During the recent graduation ceremony at Qwaqwa, Prof Francis addressed the graduates and he remarked that man is not an island. And although you meant this in a much wider sense, I think it is also applicable to the fact that this university has three campuses. Now, I would like to say something about the campuses. These campuses, all three campuses, reflect one vision and one mission. And this is embodied, among others, in the values that is placed on human togetherness and solidarity, plus social and historical divides, both in terms of our students and our staff, as well as the people that we work with outside of the university context. Through hard work and dedication, the UFS has travelled a long way on our journey towards understanding that we cannot operate in isolation. And although we are geographically divided in terms of three campuses, we accept that we need each other to be able to fulfil our vision and our mission. Today, I want to say to Prof Petersen, we as the South Campus pledge that we will support you as our leader and that we will take hands with all of the UFS family to enable you to fulfil your dreams for the university. You can rely on us to walk with you in this new chapter of your life. I recall that Nelson Mandela once called upon the nation as government, businesses, and communities to work together to educate our nation, and we will do just that. And then, in renaming the South Campus buildings, we chose to name this arena after Madiba, whose life and wisdom inspires everything we do on this campus. We believe it is – in the words of this famous leader – not beyond our power to contribute to creating a world in which all people can have access to good education. It is simply that, if we do not believe this, we have very small imaginations. At this campus, we constantly treasure Madiba's belief that education is a great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mine worker can become the head of the mine, and that the child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. So finally, it is what we make of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another. Thank you.

Programme Director: Thank you so much, Prof, for that encouraging and warm welcome. Prof, I really hope you can take off your shoes now and relax. The show is about to start. We will now have a musical item. Forgive me if I don't pronounce it well, it is a French musical item – from Verdi. Wow, thank you so much, guys, for that wonderful music item. We will now call the Vice-President of the SRC on the Bloemfontein Campus, Miss Surprise Manyaiyi.

Vice-President SRC: Thank you very much – and thank you to all the students and everyone who is sitting here. It is such a great privilege and an honour to be standing here today, giving this address on behalf of the SRC to welcome the 14th Rector of the University of the Free State. So, with these words, I say, Prof Petersen, welcome. One thing Prof Petersen and the SRC have in common is that we both came at a very interesting time. We came at a time of discomfort, where we as the SRC are fighting issues of financial exclusion and deregistration. One thing that we noted as the SRC and which we found quite commendable from the Rector, is that he was humble from the first day, humble enough to come to the students and try to understand on the ground level what their needs are. From the first day that he came, we were able to enter into engagements that led to our students not being financially excluded. And with that, as SRC we are saying that you are coming into a space that has a lot of issues, and if you are going to continue this way, engaging with the Student Representative Council and other student councils on campus, we will be able to move the university forward. So, as the SRC, our expectations and our plea is that we continue in the way we started, engaging with various student community leadership structures and always making sure that we are on the ground, so as to make us responsive to the issues that arise. From our side, as SRC, our vision is simple. We stand on the objectives of access, support, and success. With access, we want our students to be able to get equal access to the doors of higher education. With support, we want our students to be financially supported, academically supported, and also supported in the endeavours of leadership and other extramural activities. With success, we wish for all the students who enter the gates of the university, to leave the gates of the university having entered Callie Human. With these short words, we say to the Rector, welcome to the University of the Free State. We wish you all the best and we believe with the greatest conviction that for a leader appointed at this time, there could not have been anyone better. You are the one to lead us and we are saying as the SRC, we are willing to engage with you in every single matter that arises. We do not promise that we would not give you a headache, because this is the nature of the space we are dealing with, but we will cooperate and we will engage with you at every single opportunity that comes along. Welcome.

Programme Director: Thank you Surprise, for that wonderful message. We will now have a musical item, a Xhosa social song – which means Lovely people. Can we give them another round of applause? Wow, last round of applause. I would now like to call upon Dr Gift Vinger, the Registrar holding the portfolio of Governance and Policy, to hand a gift to Mrs Cheslyn Petersen. Let's give him a round of applause. Do you want to hear another musical item? Alright. Are you enjoying it so far? Let's wave those flags again. Your wish is my command – we will have another musical item, the Way of Love. Wow, can we wave those flags? That was Ms Ella Kotze. We are now getting to the most important moment that we have all been

waiting for. Professor Nicky Morgan, the Vice-Rector of Operations, will introduce our new Vice-Chancellor and Rector. Let's give him a warm welcome.

Professor Nicky Morgan: Good morning, everybody. You know, when I was young I have never said to people 'tsamaya' with all of those movements. When they say 'tsamaya', it is normally when they are very irritated with you. Tsamaya! So, you did it very well. You did it in song, so it was lovely. Let me just start with what I am supposed to do – to introduce to you our new leader. This is an unforgettable day. It is an unforgettable day, not only for the South Campus, but also for the entire university community. This is the second welcoming ceremony for Professor Petersen in the past week – he is keeping us very busy. The first of the three campus welcoming ceremonies took place on 11 May at the Qwaqwa Campus. The last one takes place tomorrow morning at the Bloemfontein Campus. The formal inauguration ceremony will also take place at the Bloemfontein Campus tomorrow in the late afternoon. It is also a privilege for me to attend this particular welcoming ceremony, as it is the first time since I joined the university that a ceremony of this nature is celebrated across three campuses, especially at the South Campus. I have the special honour of introducing our newly appointed Vice-Chancellor and Rector to the community of the South Campus. This is the 14th Vice-Chancellor and Rector, as you have heard. But, he is the 14th in the one hundred and thirteen year existence of the university. Let me tell you a little bit about him. Prof Petersen was born in Oudtshoorn and grew up in Malmesbury in the Western Cape, where he also matriculated. He graduated from Stellenbosch University with a BEng in Chemical Engineering, a master's in Metallurgic Engineering, and a PhD in Engineering. He also completed a short course in Financial Skills for Executive Management. He brings to the position of Vice-Chancellor and Rector his extensive experience of leadership and management in both the industry and the academic sectors. This has been self-evident since January, months before he took up his position formally. It has become self-evident in the manner he has engaged with our student leaders on difficult issues. Before joining the University of the Free State on 1 April as Vice-Chancellor and Rector, he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cape Town. Other positions include Dean of Engineering and Built Environment at the University of Cape Town, Executive Head of Strategies at Anglo American Platinum, Executive Vice-President: Research and Development at Mintek, and Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering at the Cape Technikon, which is now known as Cape Peninsula University of Technology or just CPUT for those who know what 'kaput' means. Among others, he is a former Chairman of the Board of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, also known in short as the CSIR; a former non-executive director on the Board of Royal Bafokeng Platinum, and former member of the South African Minister of Science and Technology's National Advisory Council on Innovation – and you will hear a lot about innovation from this Vice-Chancellor. He is also a former member of the Council of the Academy of Science of South Africa, and a board member of the National Research Foundation. Prof Petersen is a registered professional engineer with the Engineering Council of South Africa. He has been a member of an International Panel on Sustainability for AngloGold Ashanti, a former adviser to the Anglo American Platinum Beneficiation Fund, and a fellow of both the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and the South African Academy of Engineers. Thank you very much.

Prof Petersen: Good morning, dumelang, goeiemore, it is just so fantastic to be here at the South Campus. It is not my first visit – I have in fact been here twice before I formally started on 1 April. We also had a very important two-day workshop on this very campus, and this is where the Integrated Transformation Planning Framework – which I will talk a little later about – was sort of born and conceptualised on this very campus. About a week and a half ago, I also visited the campus to meet the management team – Professor Daniella and her team – and I also went through, not the full campus, but at least aspects of the campus. I will obviously come back to have a proper tour of the campus. First I would just like to say, wow, it is just fantastic to have heard the musical items this morning, the fantastic audience, the engagement of the audience in the items, and I see a little bit of vibrancy among yourselves. I would just like to specifically welcome members of our Rectorate who are here this morning, members of the deans cohort, the various deans that are presented here, and also members of the executive of the Student Representative Council at the Bloemfontein Campus and the South Campus, thank you very much for being here and for the hearty welcome.

I thought that today, I am just going to have a conversation with you. I have been giving so many speeches the last two and a half weeks, and it has been a fantastic journey to have gone through the three campuses of the University of the Free State. I am sitting at the Bloemfontein Campus, the South Campus, and also the Qwaqwa Campus as Professor Nicky Morgan has indicated, where we also had a welcoming about a week ago. Although Professor Morgan has introduced me, I just wanted to start off by saying who Professor Petersen is, the one who will be working together with you to hopefully lead this institution to the next level. I am a person that I believe is very much a people's person, a person that would like to engage with our community, our staff, and our students, trying to hear and understand not only what the issues and the challenges are, but what contribution each of you can make to try and make this an even better place. I am also a person who had the privilege of working in various sectors of the economy. I started off in academia, worked in an academic environment, worked in an academic department, did some research, actually had a multi-national research team that incorporated students at master's and PhD levels from across the world, did some projects that cuts across the chemical industry, the mining industry, and also environmental engineering, and had the opportunity to present this at conferences and at universities across the world on various continents. I left that sector, and the reason why I left that sector was because I said to myself, it is important for higher education and in fact for each sector, but in this particular case, for higher education to know who you work with and why you are actually doing what you are doing. And I felt that having completed a degree, moving directly into higher education didn't provide me that background knowledge. So, I resigned from higher education and joined another sector of the economy, which we call the science council sector. That is the sector where you will find organisations such as the CSIR, the Council for Scientific and Industrial research, Mintek, the Agricultural Research Council, the Medical Research Council. The responsibility of that sector is to effectively take what universities produce, and try to take it a step further to make the output of the universities more useful for society, for industry, or for the private sector.

I have spent over four and a half years, close to five years in this sector, and this sector allowed me to engage with two other sectors. I worked very closely with

government and national government, as well as industry in the private sector. After that, I spent four and a half to five years in the science council sector. I joined the multi-national Anglo American Platinum, which is part of the Anglo American group, and this sector in fact taught me what life is all about. It gave me an opportunity to work in an organisation of 95 000 people, stretching in terms of business footprint over four provinces in South Africa and about 20 countries across the world. In fact, it also helped me to understand how differently people engage with one another. After spending some time in this sector, I thought it was time to go back to higher education, because at this point I felt that I have gained some experience, some exposure, some networks, and different thinking to be able to really work with our youth that enters higher education, in order to inform and influence curricula, to inform and influence different thinking, to try and explain to higher education that you are only one component in an inter-connectedness of entities which forms the economy. You are not the most important component, but we cannot have an economy without this component and we need to understand how those components are interlinked and intertwined. The other value which I could bring to higher education from that exposure is the fact that there is a thread that runs through all of these sectors – academia, the science council sector, government and private sector, or industry – all of them engage with people. It doesn't really matter what sector you talk about, the people are the same. What they want, what they request, what they aspire to, and how they would like to be treated in those different organisations, are all the same. The response of organisations in engaging with their people is different, but the outcome is often the same. Working with our people, our staff, academic staff, our support staff, and our students are immensely important, and how we treat them, how they treat one another, how we engage with the mission of the university, how we engage with knowledge, how we prepare our students for the workplace in a democratic society, are immensely critical. But I want to say more than that – the university isn't an island. I talk about the inter-connectedness of a university as part of the economy, and therefore about external linkages (the stakeholders) that we have with business, the political sector in Bloemfontein and the province, our alumni, our convocation – and I forgot to welcome our Chair of the Convocation here this morning – our graduates that have actually become our alumni, those are all important stakeholders and people that we must never forget. They are part of the broader university. So, this is the first message that I would like to convey to our audience this morning.

But let me return to where we are. We are on the South Campus, and I am actually glad that Professor Daniella talked about the University of the Free State as one university with three campuses. We have the Bloemfontein Campus, the South Campus, and the Qwaqwa Campus. The one thing that I would like to emphasise – and I do that all the time – is to indicate that we expect the same quality of output from all three campuses. The same level of excellence, because we are one university. The three campuses allow us a very spatial model, because they come with different sites where they are placed, different environments where they are sometimes operating and which allow us to provide distinctiveness, some level of specialisation that we utilise as a comparative advantage of that campus. The South Campus has that level of specialisation. They have a level of specialisation in open and distance learning, providing the project of which I am very proud – the Internet Broadcast Project. I will tell you more about this a little later. The type of people they have and the area where they are situated can also play a role in the direct

environment and communities surrounding the campus. This is a jewel within the University of the Free State. We will have to make sure that we support the South Campus the same way as we would support any department, any faculty, any of our other two campuses.

What I have experienced, was the management team. I didn't have the opportunity to meet all the people on the campus, but I met some of them. I was really impressed and struck by the level of passion, the level of commitment, the level of energy, and the pride in what they are doing here on the South Campus. If we are one university, it would be foolish from us as a management team not to leverage this in the other parts of our university. Therefore, the wonderful work they are doing in open and distant learning and in the Internet Broadcast Project is because there are a group of people behind the Internet Broadcast Project. The Ideas Laboratory is a group with a high level of passionate people and a high level of innovation within that group, and they develop software to deliver the Internet Broadcast Project to about 93 schools across the rural parts of the Free State. They touch the lives of about 80 000 learners, providing resource material not only to the learners, but also to teachers that link into that project. I think we should support that, we should try to see how we can expand that, but very importantly, we should try to share the underlying machinery, the technology, and also start to integrate this in the main programmes of the Bloemfontein Campus. The one aspect I have seen through engaging with this group of people and with the management team, is their total commitment to excellence. I will come back to the word excellence a little later, because that links to one component of my vision.

There is also exciting things in terms of growth on the South Campus. We have already built a new residence, there is another in the pipeline, and if I look at the infrastructure and spatial planning or plans for the South Campus, there is more to come. We have also engaged with a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics academy on the South Campus. It is a new greenfield type of project to see whether we can create an academy to support learners, not only in the immediate vicinity, but also broader, in order to develop a foci in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. I am not going to elaborate on that this morning, but you can watch the space and I assume and presume that Professor Nicky Morgan and Professor Daniella will tell you more about that in the weeks or months to come. So, there is a lot of excitement that is happening on the South Campus. We also use this specific campus as a gateway for learners or for students to enter the main programmes. I can tell you that the success we have achieved through this specific channel of students entering the mainstream programmes – it is just fantastic. In fact, students that have come through this programme often outperform students that haven't gone through the gateway programme, and this is something we will try to understand and learn from to see to what extent we can build some of those components into our mainstream. This is the reason, and this is how we operate as an integrated three-campus model, and this is how you should see the South Campus.

I would like to come back to the fact that we have one university with three campuses. The fact that we have this model, allow us to utilise the strengths of each of those components in a very diversified, specialised, and niched way. We can therefore try to create a whole that is probably more than the sum of the three.

However, we are trying to see to what extent we could utilise the specialisation, the niches, and the distinctiveness in a word that I would link to the second component of my vision for the University of the Free State. If you utilise the value of diversity, the value of differences, the value of distinctiveness, you could eventually create something that is much stronger than the sum of the parts. This is exactly what the three-campus model allows us to do, and this is exactly what the South Campus contributes to the University of the Free State as one university. I am also very much impressed with the level of technology used on this campus, the level of continuously challenging what they are doing, to see how they could improve themselves, how to better themselves, how they could create something new. When I visited the Ideas Lab about a week and a half ago, those people were bubbling with energy, and people were saying what more could be done, and how it could be done. This is also what I encapsulate in my vision for the University of the Free State – to always try to see whether you could think differently, challenge yourself, and continuously improve yourself in what you are doing, whether you are an academic, or whether you are a member of the support staff, or whether you are a student, a full-time student, a resident-based student at the University of the Free State, or whether you are a student that is a member of the University of Free State community through distance learning. Always try to challenge yourself. For lack of a better word, I use the word innovation to describe this component. Looking effectively at the South Campus, you aspire to excellence, and I have seen this through your distinctiveness in what you do, which is not necessarily a duplication of what we do at the other campuses. You add diversity to our thinking, but you are included as a full member of the university. And thirdly, you drive a very strong message of innovation, and you probably don't need me anymore, because you already articulate the vision that I have for the University of the Free State, namely academic excellence, diversity and inclusivity, and innovation.

So, I don't have to convince Prof Daniella, because you and your team are already on board and I am so looking forward to working with all of you – students and staff – to try and make this an even better university. Thank you.

Programme Director: Can we wave those flags? I am excited. Thank you so much, Prof, for that powerful message. I believe that we now feel part of the UFS. Don't you agree with me? Yes. We will now have a musical item by Mary-Jane Phahla, and the song is Celebration. Let's give her a round of applause. Wow, we are here to celebrate, aren't we? We are almost at the end of our programme, and I would now like to call the Campus Principal of the South Campus, Professor Daniella Coetzee, to give the closing remarks. Let's give her a round of applause.

Professor Daniella Coetzee: Thanks, Tshego. So, colleagues and friends, we have come to the end of this wonderful occasion. I'd like to thank a few people, but I would just like to add – Professor Petersen told us about his visit to the South Campus, but what he forgot to say was that we decided to put him in front of the cameras for the IBP, the Internet Broadcast Project, when he came. So, he delivered a really successful message to the 87 000 learners that we are reaching every day, and I think the learners from the schools that are here today, might have seen him before. So, we just offered him this job if he becomes fed-up with his day job. It was very successful. I also want to thank Prof Petersen for the inspiring message, and I think it was very special that he shared something behind the CV, obviously a very

impressive CV and all of that, but he came closer to us and shared some of his feelings and some of the things that he wants to accomplish or want to do together with us on the three campuses and the university at large. Thank you, Prof Petersen. I think the staff and especially the students who are here today, really appreciated that you took the time to speak directly to them. I also want to thank the artists who have made this a very colourful and vivid celebration. I want us to give all the artists a hand. Thank you, all of you. I also want to thank the organisers of these celebrations – the people behind the scenes who are making this happen. First of all, our Programme Director, Tshego Setilo, who is a senior staff member on the South Campus. Tshego is having a birthday today, so can we say happy birthday to him. Then also Joan Nel, Lacea Loader who is the Manager of Communication and Brand Management, as well as Leonie Bolleurs, and all their teams. It takes a lot of people to put a function like this together. Thank you very much for your hard work and your dedication. Thank you.

Programme Director: Thank you, Prof, for that. We have come to the end of our programme, but before we leave, we will sing the National Anthem. It will be sung by **Charlie Tiribulu** and the UFS choir, accompanied by the Brass Band conducted by George Forster. May we all rise for that.