

Address by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Technology, Innovations and Partnerships (TIP)- Prof FAO Otieno

at Research Open Day at Durban University of Technology

on the 17th November 2011

The Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Executive Deans, Senior Directors, Directors, Professors and Associate Professors, Senior Colleagues and Colleagues at DUT, Staff, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen

I thank all of you for finding time to join us on this important occasion, DUT Research Day. I am even more grateful to you all given the time of the year.

On the 29th April 2010. During a function to recognize rated researchers at DUT, I made some remarks regarding our research and innovation involvement and outputs at DUT. Over the past eighteen months, we have tried to streamline a number of activities and to create an environment in which research and innovation at DUT can flourish. We sincerely believe that these efforts, which were meant to lay the foundation for takeoff, are yielding positive results. As always, we are critically aware that many brains are better than one and so we leave our doors open at all times for any suggestions that can help us improve the research culture and outputs at DUT. We look forward to such suggestions.

Today, we are gathered here to witness the efforts of many at DUT (many across the range) as they display and talk to their research activities. We sincerely wish to thank them for this

As we move into 2012, we need to strengthen the foundation further and where the foundation is in place, we should start to build and make progress towards meeting the various expected benchmarks in terms of research and innovation outputs for DUT by the DoHET. As of now, we remain far behind the expected outputs per staff member, for example, in publications outputs, we made just over 45 units as to what should have been about 300 units, a deficit of 255 units. In monetary terms, this is

about R30 million, money that the university could do well with. I appeal to us all to work towards reducing this deficit.

We can continue to moan and cry about the fact that we were a Technikon and that Research and Innovation was not part of our culture but unfortunately, this will not help us in any way. The rest of the country and indeed the world will march on. What we need to do is to start to march and catch up with our colleagues. It may take time and effort but we sure need to start the march. That time has come and it is now.

If one looks at the Annual Research report of DUT for 2009 and the soon (infact has just been) to be launched 2010, you will notice some improvements over the 2008 figures. As many if not all of you will be aware, we have at the TIP offices initiated a number of activities that should from now into the future change the research and innovation landscape significantly at DUT. These are primarily contained in Project 500 (sometimes referred to as Project 300- the details of which are available in a separate documents but which essentially aim to increase the number of outputs at DUT by a further 300 in five years time). We invite you all to critically look at these reports and to be part of their implementation. There is something for all of us. It will be exciting for all. We are convinced that this will be sustainable and place the university on a firm footing both in terms of research and financially.

In preparation for the exciting times that we face in 2012 and beyond and in recognition of the efforts that all of you will have put in as part of Project 500 and indeed as part of personal growth for each and every one of you, we had proposed from 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2011; and thereafter annually, to make certain awards in various categories available for all staff. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Outstanding University Senior Researcher Award,
- Outstanding University Junior Researcher Award,
- Outstanding University Research Initiative Award,
- Outstanding University Female Researcher Award,
- Research Group of the Year Award,
- Innovator of the Year Award,

- Outstanding Creative Outputs of the year Award,
- Outstanding Researcher in Each Faculty,
- Outstanding Published DTech Student of the Year Award,
- Outstanding Published MTech Student of the Year Award,
- Vice Chancellors Research Award.

The details of each of these and the criteria and conditions to each award were communicated to all staff at DUT during the year and we look forward to honouring the various recipients in February 2012. We further urge each one of you to start building your profiles so as to partake of each of these for 2012 at the start of January 2012. Each award will have a certificate and certain monetary value attached to it.

I invite all staff at DUT to assist us by joining in these ventures.

Once again, thank you all; thank you all for coming, thank you all for supporting research and innovation at DUT. I further wish to thank Prof Jamila Adam and her Team of Institutional Research Day Committee for the excellent work in coordinating and putting what is potentially a very exciting programme of activities together. From TIP, I wish to thank Ms Vaneshree Govender and her team for the coordination of the same and Prof Moyo and the Research Office staff for the excellent work towards organizing this event.

As we close, I take this opportunity to wish all our Christian members of staff and those who celebrate Christmas - a Merry Xmas and to you all a good festive season and May 2012 be what we all wish for.

God Bless DUT, God Bless South Africa and God Bless Africa.

I thank you all

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