



**Remarks by the Executive Mayor, Alderman SP Mabilo
on the occasion Official Signing Ceremony of the Town and Gown**

Agreement between

**Sol Plaatje University and the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality
on the 13 August 2021.**

Programme Director, Director for Institutional Advancement, Mr. Qondakele Sompondo

Vice Chancellor, Principal of Sol Plaatje University, Professor Andrew Crouch

Council Members of the Sol Plaatje University

Honorable Members of the Mayoral Committee, Madam Speaker of the Sol Plaatje Municipality

The Acting Municipal Manager and your Executive Management Team

The University family at large and all respectable stakeholders.

Members and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, All listeners through hybrid technology, radio, social media and visual platform

All protocol observed

Warm greetings and congratulations are in order.

It is indeed with great humbleness and honor that I stand here before you all today, as we gather for the official signing ceremony of the City and Gown Agreement between Sol Plaatje University and the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality.

Programme Director, I acknowledge you for giving me the opportunity to address this dignified and respected gathering on this particular day. The day we are making a profound statement about the relationship between the University and the Municipality.

As we align ourselves at sharing the same name, identity and DNA with institution of Service of Excellence We are honored to be associated with the stature of a man of integrity, humanity, dignity, and a selfless patriot and an intellectual of note.

Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje, was not only a freedom fighter but a towering figure in the literature and academics. As both the first person to translate the Holy Bible in Setswana and to be elected as the first Secretary-General of the African National Congress.

I call this a profound statement, because, we are all here to witness the Sol Plaatje University and the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality publicly committing to becoming a truly African University, with its roots firmly planted in the City of firsts thus shaping the futures in the service of humanity.

The reconstruction of an identity which evolves from reclamation of our history and rewriting our own stories as Africans and as a City - **WHO ARE WE?** In justifying the need for Sol Plaatje University to reclaim its true history, it is important to understand **WHERE WE COME FROM.**

Not only is there no objectivity in the history taught to us but frequently there is an appalling misrepresentation of facts that is shocking even to the uninformed students. It is therefore imperative to mention that a lot of attention has to be compensated to our collective experiences both historical and in the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have to be truthful and admit that in recent years our city has faced serious challenges. However, it is through the establishment of a post-apartheid University in the Capital City of the Northern Cape Province, that our hearts and minds remain hopeful for a better future for our communities.

The partnership we are forming here today and beyond will focus on improving the state of our beloved City of firsts, identify areas that require information and development and to generate future research to enable the community to address their challenges.

Programme Director: As the local authority we cannot win the battle alone and it is through these partnerships with academia, business, civil society, provincial and national government that we are able to address systematic challenges in order to create a conducive environment for our people to live and thrive in.

We have seen that when local municipality and university bring forth collaborative efforts, the intention development fosters growth and prosperity for the larger community and all respectable stakeholders involved.

As the Executive Mayor, it is my hope that through this public partnership we create methodologies, concepts and ideas in order to develop and establish a sustainable planning structure for the municipality, build vibrant communities and lead dynamic city through the elements of Private Public Partnership (“PPP”) of its firsts.

It is important to note, honorable guests, that this is a significant partnership that aims to enhance the development of Kimberley as an international based university city, a status we undoubtedly and confident off. Also a destination for learning and success in the near future.

The initial goal for this collaboration was to identify the beneficiaries who have an interest in the development of relations between the university and municipal administration to precisely define the issues and interests of each stakeholder.

Throughout engagements between the University and the council of Sol Plaatje Local Municipality, we outlined our motivation for change as well as the capacity, values and principles for future actions, targeted at the resolution of problems and achieving a balance of interests.

I am confident that the implementation of this collaboration will become more structured and systematic. However, in order to guarantee timely and effective results for our city and our community, we will continue to engage with different sectors and fraternities together with the University for a long-term strategic approach.

The formation that has been established through this partnership will consist of the academic research from the university and professionals from our institution to support and develop innovations for our city and its surrounding areas with the additional engagement from the private sector collaboration.

The municipality has engaged training institutions that will look at training and developing youth in our city, to enhance the capacity of learners and graduates to positively contribute to their personal capacity and to develop our city into a Modern, Growing and Successful city.

There is huge unemployment rate in our city, in particular amongst the youth. Therefore it is our responsibility as stakeholders to join hands and strategize new ways of employment and entrepreneurship through research and information. As a municipality, we remain committed to rebuilding our city through strategic investments and economic opportunities and enhance efficiency and service delivery.

Programme Director, This year we celebrate under the theme, “The year of Charlotte Manya Maxeke: Realising Women’s Rights”. Therefore please allow me to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to all the Women, gathered here today, in our homes, streets, workplaces and those who are listening live on our local radio stations, may this be a Blessed and fruitful Women’s Month for each and every one of you.

Let us continue to embody the values of our liberation heroines who created a platform for greater gender equality. And may we continue protecting the rights for all, particularly women, youth and those living with disabilities, as we continue together with our social partners to battle the COVID-19 pandemic.

In conclusion, Programme Director, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of Council of Sol Plaatje Local Municipality to thank all Members of the Mayoral Committee, Speaker of Council, the Acting Municipal Manager and your Executive Management Team for support and diligence throughout this process.

In addition, I extend a token of appreciation to the leadership, management and staff of Sol Plaatje University under the stewardship of Vice Chancellor, Professor Andrew Couch for their commitment in officiating this partnership.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to those who have made this partnership possible and who have made the efforts to ensure that this is a celebratory day for the city, university and the community at large.

I thank you!



Vice Chancellor and SPLM team – Signing of TGA