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UCT awards Vice-Chancellor's Medal to Nobel Laureate More than £17m raised for UCT projects under Sir Aaron Klug's leadership of trust

The University of Cape Town has awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Medal to Sir Aaron Klug, OM, FRS, Nobel Laureate, and outgoing chair of the UCT Trust in the UK. Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price presented the medal at the annual trustees meeting of the University of Cape Town Trust, a UK registered charity, in London on 19 May 2010.

Dr Price paid tribute to Sir Aaron's "enormous contribution" to UCT over the years. Sir Aaron was one of the founding trustees of the UCT Trust and held the position of chair from 1993 until this year. During his time in office, more than £17 million was raised for projects at UCT.

Dr Price said Sir Aaron had brought the full weight of his scholarship, distinction and ethical reputation to the trust, and had always been available to give advice and guidance. His wife, Liebe, had also played a guiding role behind the scenes.

After receiving his BSc degree at Wits, Sir Aaron studied X-Ray crystallography under Professor RW James at UCT and obtained an MSc degree. His PhD followed at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1953. He remained in the UK, developing a lifelong interest in the study of viruses. At the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, which he joined in 1962, he used methods from X-ray diffraction, microscopy and structural modelling to develop crystallographic electron microscopy, in which a sequence of two-dimensional images of crystals taken from different angles are combined to produce three-dimensional images of the target.

He was awarded the Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize from Columbia University in 1981. In 1982 he became Nobel Laureate in chemistry. Between 1986 and 1996 he was director of the Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge, and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1988. He was elected President of the Royal Society, and

served from 1995-2000. He was appointed OM in 1995 – as is customary for Presidents of the Royal Society. He is also a member of the Board of Scientific Governors at The Scripps Research Institute.

He was awarded the Order of Mapungubwe (Gold) in 2005 by South African President Thabo Mbeki.

The Vice-Chancellor's Medal is Sir Aaron's fourth UCT award. He has also received the President of Convocation Medal, the Chancellor's Gold Medal of Merit (1982) and an honorary doctorate (1997).

Caption (photo attached: Klug VC Medal)

UCT Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price (left) awards the Vice-Chancellor's Medal to Nobel Laureate Sir Aaron Klug, outgoing chair of the University of Cape Town Trust in the UK, on 19 May 2010.

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