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UCT to honour commitment to activism, the arts, law and economy

The University of Cape Town will this year award honorary degrees to seven highly esteemed and world-renowned figures for their significant contributions in their respective fields. The following recipients will be honoured at either UCT's June or December graduation ceremonies:

- **Mr Ahmed Kathrada:** life-long activist committed to achieving freedom in South Africa, former political prisoner and South African politician
- **Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke:** Constitutional Court Judge, Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa, Deputy Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission, anti-apartheid activist, former political prisoner
- **Dr Johannes de Villiers Graaff (posthumous):** Neoclassical welfare economist and former chairman of Nedbank
- **Professor John Wright:** Pre-colonial historian and retired history lecturer, well-known for his work on Southern Africa and on The James Stuart Archive
- **Professor Kenneth Reid:** Legal scholar and former law commissioner, Chair of Scots Law at the University of Edinburgh
- **Professor Okwui Enwezor:** Curator, art critic, editor, poet and writer specialising in art history
- **Advocate Thuli Madonsela:** Public Protector of South Africa

Mr Ahmed Kathrada

A veteran of the South African liberation struggle, Rivonia trialist, long-serving political prisoner on Robben Island and Pollsmoor Maximum Prison, ANC leader and Member of Parliament, Ahmed Mohamed Kathrada was introduced to politics as a child in Johannesburg when he joined a non-racial youth club run by the Young Communist League.

At the age of 17 he participated in the Passive Resistance Campaign of the South African Indian Congress and became one of 2,000 people who were arrested and imprisoned for defying a law that discriminated against Indians. This was followed by various arrests and charges until Mr Kathrada was sentenced in the Rivonia Trial to life imprisonment with hard labour, along with former President Nelson Mandela and ANC stalwart Walter Sisulu. Mr Kathrada spent 26 years in prison, 18 of which were on Robben Island.

While in prison he obtained four university degrees. Today he holds various honorary degrees. Soon after his release in 1989, Mr Kathrada was elected onto the ANC's National Executive Committee. In 1994 he was elected to Parliament and served as Mr Mandela's Parliamentary Counsellor. He was Chairperson of the Robben Island Museum Council until his term expired in 2006. Mr Kathrada received numerous awards, including Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe, the highest award bestowed by the ANC, and also the Presidential Order for Meritorious Service, Class 1: Gold.

In 2008, in pursuance of a life-long vision of a non-racial South Africa, the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation was established.

Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke

This nomination recognises Justice Dikgang Moseneke's fearless independence and commitment to justice from a very young age - as an activist, lawyer and judge.

At the age of 15 he was convicted of anti-apartheid crimes and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on Robben Island. There he completed his schooling as well as a BA and BJuris degrees from Unisa. After his release he completed an LLB and founded his own firm. A decade later he was elevated to Senior Counsel and played a central role in the drafting of the transitional Constitution of 1993. In the country's first democratic elections in 1994, he was Deputy Chair of the Independent Electoral Commission. In 2001 he was appointed to the High Court in Pretoria, followed a year later by his appointment to the Constitutional Court. In 2005 he was appointed Deputy Chief Justice.

Justice Moseneke has delivered a number of very important judgments on behalf of the Constitutional Court. He has conducted himself with enormous restraint and courtesy in fulfilling the duties of his office. On the bench, he is described as an eloquent and urbane participant in debates about the maintenance of the rule of law, democratic constitutionalism, and the transformation of South African society in line with the values of the Constitution. He is the living embodiment of those ideals, tolerant and caring in all he does, and an inspiration to many.

Dr Johannes de Villiers Graaff

Dr Johannes de Villiers Graaff is being honoured posthumously for his contribution to economics - internationally and locally – which stretches over half a century. He was, during a career of engaged scholarship, able to show the links between the abstract theory of classical welfare and the practical challenges of the real world. Dr Graaff's contributions to scholarship and to the practical affairs of South Africa have been remarkable.

The neoclassical South African welfare economist graduated with a PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1950, and attained greater eminence in academic economics than any other South African. His 1957 book on taxation, inequality and poverty, *Theoretical Welfare Economics*, is described in its preface by Nobel laureate Paul Samuelson as "a classic in its own time".

While Dr Graaff pursued a career in business (he was chairman of Nedbank), he continued to write on economic theory and was highly esteemed in the academy. Much of his work has addressed practical issues of income distribution and tax reform, and he was a member of the Margo Commission (1984), Katz Commission (1994 - 1997) and the Tax Advisory Committee. He also served on the Economic Advisory Council and the Competition Board.

Professor John Wright

UCT recognises the significant contribution Professor John Wright has made through his extraordinary scholarship on the pre-colonial history of Southern Africa and the significance of developing an archive that enables wider scholarship. His contributions have shaped this field and challenged the settler versions of history.

Professor Wright's scholarship has been dedicated to The James Stuart Archive – a central source for the history of southeast Africa before 1910. The archive is defined as a unique record of transcriptions made between 1890 and 1920, of the events and thinking that prevailed in the 19th century as described by the indigenous inhabitants of the region. Over the last decade or so the archive has become quite popular among lawyers and land claimants, because of the information it contains.

Through its careful editorial interventions and translations it has opened the material to researchers from a range of disciplines and enables scholars to move beyond colonial-era orthodoxies. While the first four volumes were published in collaboration with Colin Webb, Professor Wright has been responsible for all translation. He currently holds research posts at UCT and the University of the Witwatersrand.

Professor Kenneth Reid

Professor Kenneth Reid, a pre-eminent jurist, has played a pivotal role over the past two decades in the promotion of private law scholarship at a local, regional and global level. He is a graduate of the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh. He holds the Chair in Scots Law at the latter. As an internationally renowned scholar of property law and comparative law his work has had a profound impact on law and legal scholarship.

Professor Reid's most outstanding accomplishment has been the abolition of the feudal system in Scotland (2004). He was a Commissioner of the Scottish Law Commission and for a decade directed the drafting of the statutes necessary to replace the feudal system.

Professor Reid is also a leading scholar of mixed legal systems and this aspect of his scholarship has involved a number of South Africans. His collaboration with South African scholars (many at UCT) since 1994 has led to a number of productive joint academic projects, including the volume on *Mixed Legal Systems in Comparative Perspective: Property and Obligations in Scotland and South Africa* (Oxford, 2004).

Professor Okwui Enwezor

Professor Okwui Enwezor's scholarship has made an exceptional contribution to the international promotion of South African art and photography, and raised significant theoretical, historical and political questions in the process.

A curator, art critic, editor and writer whose practice spans the world of international exhibitions, museums, academia and publishing, Professor Enwezor's focus is African, European, Asiatic, North and South American art of the 20th and 21st centuries, the modern and contemporary art of Africa, and the contemporary art of the African diaspora. He also studies theories on diasporas and migrations, of post-colonial modernism and the architecture and urbanism of postcolonial African cities.

He is the Director of the Haus der Kunst in Munich, Germany, and the artistic director of

the 56th Venice Biennale, opening on 9 May 2015. He was the artistic director of the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale in South Africa (1996-1998), of *documenta 11* in Kassel, Germany (1998-2002), the Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de Sevilla in Spain (2005-2007), the 7th Gwangju Biennale in South Korea (2008) and the Triennial d'Art Contemporain of Paris at the Palais de Tokyo (2012).

Advocate Thuli Madonsela

Thulisile Nomkhosi Madonsela is being honoured for her courageous execution of the duties of the office of the Public Protector: achieving and maintaining the values of "accountability, responsiveness and openness", which underlie South Africa's Constitution.

Advocate Madonsela holds a BA in Law from the University of Swaziland and an LLB from the University of the Witwatersrand. Her career as a human rights lawyer, equality expert and policy specialist included her work as a technical expert to the Constitutional Assembly, contributing to the drafting of the final Constitution.

When Advocate Madonsela was appointed Public Protector in 2009, she faced a challenge to establish a truly fearless and principled pursuit of probity, efficiency and honesty in government at all levels of the public administration. She has pursued both the letter and spirit of her mandate with enormous vigour, determination and sensitivity. She has had to navigate immense obstacles put in her path, and has refused to be overwhelmed by both the number and seriousness of the issues that have been brought to her office for investigation. Advocate Madonsela has unremittingly promoted the values of the Constitution through her work, and has not shrunk from pursuing accountability, even when attacked by leading figures within the political establishment. Despite intense attention and the stresses of office, she has retained both decorum and a sense of perspective. She has become the symbol of the fight against corruption and abuse of power.

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