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Statement on the passing of struggle stalwart Dr Denis Goldberg

The University of Cape Town (UCT) joins the nation and the international community in mourning the passing of one of the greatest stalwarts in the fight against apartheid and UCT alum, Dr Denis Goldberg.

Goldberg was one of the Rivonia trialists along with Nelson Mandela, Ahmed Kathrada, Walter Sisulu and others. He had spent more than two decades of his life behind bars. As a UCT alum Goldberg represented the very best of the university's values and culture. Born in Cape Town in 1933, he completed his basic education in Observatory and then proceeded to study at UCT, where he graduated in 1955 with a BSc in civil engineering.

In 2019, the university was very pleased to bestow an honorary doctorate, DScEng (*honoris causa*) on a person of his calibre. On receiving his honorary doctorate, the struggle icon remarked: "I am very proud that my university, my alma mater, my sweet mother is, at last, recognising the fact that a guy who made weapons to put an end to the state violence, needs recognition."

UCT Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng commented: "The struggle icon and philanthropist will be remembered for his exceptional and selfless fighting spirit, activism and as being a symbol of a promise for a liberatory future. May his undying lasting legacy live on and continue to inspire generations for years to come. We celebrate the life and substantial contributions of an extraordinary South African."

Despite the multiple influential positions Goldberg held in the state and the ruling party, he always retained the ability to be deeply critical of those transgressing what he saw as the core values. He was a fierce critic of "state capture" by external forces, and of the degrading of the moral stature of the party he joined as a young man – for which he said he was prepared to die.

As one of the central figures in the liberation of our country, Dr Goldberg is considered a moral beacon for the new South Africa. Throughout his life he has been fearless in speaking truth to power.

- VIDEO: [Dr Denis Goldberg's UCT honorary graduation.](#)
- IMAGES: [A selection of Dr Goldberg's pictures.](#)

- AUDIO: [A short sound clip version of this release.](#)

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