

HIGHWAY AFRICA TELKOM DINNER

Dr. Saleem Badat
Vice-Chancellor, Rhodes University

Settlers Monument
iRhini/Grahamstown

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INTRODUCTION

The members of the African Editors Forum, of the South African National Editors Forum, Prof. Berger, Mr. Kabwato and the organizers of Highway Africa, delegates to Highway Africa, sponsors, distinguished guests, molweni, good evening

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Rhodes University, to iRhini/Grahamstown, the Makana District, and the Eastern Cape; and to guests from other parts of Africa and the world, welcome also to South Africa!

The School of Journalism and Media Studies occupies pride of place at Rhodes University and on the African continent and we are honoured to once again host the 13th *Highway Africa* Conference, including the meetings of the African Editors Forum and South African National Editors Forum. Over the years, the Highway Africa conference has become a key event of Rhodes University, and its Pan-African nature gels well with our aspiration to be an outstanding African university 'which proudly affirms its African identity', and is

rooted in the aspirations, challenges and struggles of the continent.

The motto of Rhodes University is 'Vis, Virtus, Veritas - 'Strength, Virtue, Truth'. In my view the credo of the University is also highly apposite for journalists, media workers and the media. It directs us both to

- ★ Pursue the Truth that derives from knowledge, and understanding, and from open intellectual debate and the respectful clash of ideas, at the same time effectively discriminating between realities and perceptions, facts and opinions and making wise judgements based on reason informed by experience
- ★ To embody in our endeavours the Virtue of imagination, creativity, diligence and perseverance, and respect for human dignity, human rights, social justice and social compassion in the search for knowledge and the dissemination of information, and
- ★ To possess the Strength of conviction in our respective endeavours and the Strength of courage to educate, inform and 'speak truth to power', when

those in power must be reminded of their obligations and responsibilities; when they must be criticized for failings in public leadership and morality; when they must be rebuked for their disdainful treatment of citizens, and when they must be warned against obliterating the distinctions between political party, government and state, and using public offices for private gain.

I trust that the African Editors Forum enjoyed a lively and productive meeting earlier today and that of the South African National Editors Forum tomorrow will be the same.

Welcome again to Rhodes. It is a great privilege to have you in our midst.