



**Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemakingsdepartement**

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

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Chancellor Machel served faithfully in crucial ambassadorial role

Chair of Council, Mr Sipho M Pityana, has paid tribute to outgoing UCT Chancellor, Mrs Graça Machel for “serving “faithfully for 20 years” and enhancing “our reputation through her association with our institution”.

The university honoured Mrs Machel at a special graduation ceremony on 12 December. She has graciously declined the opportunity to be honoured at a formal farewell function.



In 1999 Mrs Machel became the first woman to be appointed Chancellor of UCT and the first black person to assume this role at the university. She was re-elected in 2009, and her second term will end on 31 December 2019.

“As the titular head of the university... Mrs Machel has been an individual of the requisite stature with exceptional personal qualities and integrity. She has embodied the values of the university and has garnered support locally and internationally to advance the mission of UCT as part of this crucial ambassadorial role,” Mr Pityana said in a message to the campus community.

- [Read the full message by Mr Pityana.](#)

At the special graduation ceremony, Mrs Machel was described as having been “really impactful in the way that she has engaged and held the community together”, being “a fantastic support to... the university” and being “strong on education but also very personable” by three of the four vice-chancellors she has worked with – Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, Dr Max Price and Dr Mamphela Ramphele.

Others who paid tribute to her were former Chair of Convocation, Mary Burton; former Dean of Law, Professor Hugh Corder; and former SRC President Insaaf Isaacs.

- [Watch the video messages.](#)

Addressing the congregation, Mrs Machel said: “I am a woman in gratitude. In deep, very deep gratitude for the privilege, the honour which I had to serve this institution for the last 20 years.

- [Watch Mrs Machel’s speech.](#)
- [Read her farewell message to the UCT community.](#)
- [Download photos of Mrs Machel.](#)



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Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Elijah Moholola

Senior Manager: Media Liaison and Social Media
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5674
Cell: (083) 981 7770
Email: elijah.moholola@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za