



**8 October 2020**

## **UCT to host VC Open Lecture by UN Deputy Secretary-General on SDGs and a decade of action**

**14 October 2020 | 18:30 | Microsoft Teams | [Register online](#)**

University of Cape Town Vice-Chancellor (VC) Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng will host Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group Ms Amina J Mohammed, who will present the VC Open Lecture titled "Decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): So what?".

The lecture will underscore the pivotal nature of the current moment, with the world facing not only a pandemic but also an economic upheaval, climate disruption and rising geopolitical tensions.

Professor Phakeng said: "She will explain how the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs offer a pathway for recovering from COVID-19 and addressing the inequalities, vulnerabilities and fragilities that the disease has exacerbated or exposed. Finally, she will stress that despite the daunting nature of the challenges, transformation is possible, and in that spirit she will highlight examples of innovation and success that should give us all hope and spark global engagement across the Decade of Action."

This virtual lecture is part of UCT's VC Open Lecture series for 2020. The VC Open Lecture series was established to enable anyone in the community, whether they are connected to the university or not, to have the benefit of hearing first-hand from academics, researchers and innovators from South Africa, but particularly from those around the world, who have distinguished themselves in their areas of expertise.

Prior to her appointment to the UN, Ms Mohammed served as Minister of Environment in Nigeria, where she steered the country's efforts on climate action and on protecting the natural environment. She joined the UN in 2012 as special adviser to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, with the responsibility for post-2015 development planning. She led

the process that resulted in the global agreement around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the creation of the SDGs.

In the earlier stages of her career, Ms Mohammed served as an advocate focused on increasing access to education and other social services. She then moved into the public sector, where she rose to the position of adviser on poverty, public sector reform and sustainable development to three state presidents.

She was also an adjunct professor in Development Practice at Columbia University, and served on numerous international advisory boards and panels. These include the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, the Global Development Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the African Women's Millennium Initiative, Girl Effect, 2016 African Union Reform and the ActionAid International Right to Education Project.

Please [register online](#) to attend the lecture.

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***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

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