

Khalid Khan

I had the honour of being part of the liberation struggle to free our country. I grew up on the Cape Flats, in Cape Town which is regarded as the most violent city in Africa and the 8th most dangerous city in the world. It is here that I was shaped to oppose oppression. I believe that there can be no **“peace without justice and no justice without peace”**. I worked in solidarity with leaders from different backgrounds and belief systems, within the liberation movement to overcome the apartheid regime. The University of the Western Cape (UWC) emerged as the leading university that opposed injustice and brought hope to our country. I stood shoulder to shoulder with the late Prof Jakes Gerwel and others in facing the military might of our oppressors. UWC is my university, my alma mater and the cauldron where my ideas to oppose corruption were sharpened.

I decided to become an expert in entrepreneurial development and peace. I completed two economic degrees at UWC. I focused on private Sector Analysis, Investor Targeting Identification Strategies, Industrial Development Strategies, Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise Development as well as Peace Economics and Industry Research. I was also responsible for Workforce Development and Innovation. I implemented skills projects across industries from fish farming to the design and manufacture of tools in the engineering sectors. While I apply my specialist knowledge in the public sector, I continued to work in poor communities where I assist with self-reliance entrepreneurial projects and peace ambassadors programmes. It is important for unemployed people to obtain their dignity through self-employment and economic solidarity with one another. In this way, interlinking markets are created for families at the grassroots.

South Africa is regarded as one of the most unequal societies in the world. The oppressive consequences of colonialism and apartheid continue to create systemic problems for the poor, the destitute and the most vulnerable in society. In a post-apartheid period, UWC in particular has a divine duty to produce ethical leaders that will be focused on changing the patterns of injustice and inequality in society. Sinazo Raphahlela, my Convocation running partner and I believe that UWC must be a centre of academic excellence, human and intellectual development and be a beacon of hope. UWC should reflect a caring spirit towards its students, ensure that the right of its staff and academics are promoted and protected. The UWC leadership must not violate the rule of law and they must be held accountable. We must not allow our staff and academics to be fearful of losing their jobs if they speak out against irregularities at UWC. There must be genuine freedom of speech and fair labour practices and students must be given all round support with their studies and accommodation. Three high court cases ruled the conduct of the decision-makers of UWC, unlawful: **2014** Justice Schippers; **2016** Justice Gamble and **2020**, Justice Kollapen. In each of these three cases, punishing financial costs were awarded against UWC which has resulted in multimillion rand losses to the university. Funds were diverted from legitimate university functions to fund these costs.

Sinazo and I believe that Africa, the birthplace of all human knowledge must become even greater and we all have a sacred duty to make that possible. Sinazo and I will add great value to UWC and as an ethical team. We also represent inter-generational diversity. I will vote for Sinazo. I call on all those who will vote for me to vote for Sinazo Raphahlela. **Aluta Continua**