



“Iminingo”

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMUNIQUÉ

Thursday, 26 April 2019

AUTUMN GRADUATION SEASON

It's election season in South Africa! A particularly crazy one this year, I think.

There is heightened tension politically and otherwise. There is an upsurge of all sorts of demands and protests that stoke violence. Violent protests are being used to extract this or that concession from politicians that are wont to make gratuitous promises around this time. Lawlessness abounds. Closer to home, DUT was invaded, with not a whimper, on Tuesday, 16 April 2019!

The noble causes that our people protest and fight for and that they are angry and 'gatvol' about justify the violent means some often use to reach the noble ends. Nothing is spared from being exploited. Even the destitute flood disaster victims have to wait for the water supply to be restored until the demands of the workers are met. This has, sadly, become South Africa's way of life. A rather degenerative *zeitgeist*.

No wonder, threats to disrupt our graduation ceremonies next week and beyond are being issued profusely.

Graduation ceremonies are proud milestones of achievement for many students, their families and friends. I have officiated at many graduations and seen students at very close range as they graduate. I can imagine already the hairstyles the ladies will wear; those high heels that would make Marie Antoinette – the 18th century Queen of France who reportedly owned over 500 pairs of shoes – squirm with disbelief. The excitement and, sometimes, jubilant nervousness as their gait betrays their pride. The jubilation, sometimes tearful. The ululations and the praise singing by some family members out of years of sacrifice, strife and hope for a better future.

I cannot believe that some would wish to mar such a day just because they have their own noble demands. And, until theirs are met, the graduands' apparently ignoble hopes of graduating and getting employed could well be dashed. This (il)logic would be astounding had it not been irrational.

I wish to appeal to all those who plan to disrupt our graduations not to do so. With the strength of the Court Order we got earlier this year and all the security arrangements we will put in place, we will do our best to make our graduation ceremonies exciting and proud moments for our graduands and their families and friends. I also hope our graduands and their families will do their best to dissuade all those – who are members of some families and friends to our graduands - hell bent to mar their moment of glory just not to dare.

May I wish our graduands exciting moments of achievement? May I wish them great productive futures, prosperity and contentment?

I will certainly be waiting on the stage to share those exciting moments with them. I will certainly enjoy the innovative hairstyles and the shoes! *[I am not being sexist. For whatever reason, gentlemen's wear is rather boring to me.]*

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