



### ***Brief reflections on my tenure as Administrator and the End-of-Year Message***

As 2024 draws to a close, I address you with a profound sense of gratitude and purpose. This communiqué marks my final message as the Administrator of Mangosuthu University of Technology, following the extension of my term by the Honourable Minister of Higher Education to 10 January 2025. It is both an opportunity to reflect on our shared journey and to express my heartfelt appreciation for the support, resilience, and commitment of the MUT community during my tenure.

Over the past two years, I have been privileged to serve as the Administrator of this remarkable institution. Together, we have navigated a complex and challenging landscape, achieving significant milestones while addressing deep-rooted challenges. I am proud to say that we have made meaningful strides toward fulfilling the mandate set out in the terms of reference for my appointment.

Key among our achievements has been the 5-Year Development Plan for the University, which has been developed in consultation with the Management and will be shared with all stakeholders in due course. We have also strengthened the governance systems, which are now more robust and aligned with the principles of transparency and accountability. The strategic realignment of some of the institutional policies has also laid a foundation for sustainable progress.

The recent institutional audit conducted by the Council on Higher Education (CHE), highlighted areas requiring immediate and sustained attention on the academic project of the University. The findings of this audit are not insurmountable; rather, they are an opportunity for introspection and concerted effort. With the dedication of our academic staff and the support of all stakeholders, I am confident that MUT will address these challenges and emerge stronger. The work in this area will remain a priority for the leadership team moving forward.

It is also important to acknowledge the hurdles we continue to face. The financial health of the University remains a concern, with 2024 ending in a deficit and projections indicating a similar outlook for 2025. This underscores the urgent need for innovative solutions to enhance revenue generation and optimize resource allocation. While the 5-year Development Plan that I am leaving the University with lays the foundation for the University to overcome these challenges, I have full confidence that the leadership and the broader university community will also rise to these challenges with creativity and determination.

Infrastructure development has also progressed more slowly than anticipated. However, the groundwork has been laid, and I believe the momentum will build in the years to come, ensuring that MUT's physical resources align with its ambitions as a leading institution.

Overall, our collective efforts have underscored the importance of quality education, which remains at the heart of MUT's mission.

None of the strides we took would have been possible without the unwavering commitment of the MUT community.

- To our staff, I extend my deepest gratitude for your dedication and hard work in driving the institution forward.
- To the students, you remain the heart of our mission, and your resilience, determination, and pursuit of excellence inspire us daily. Your achievements and growth remind us of the profound purpose of higher education—to empower future leaders and innovators who will shape our society.
- To our stakeholders, including the Chancellor, our alumni, and broader community, your support has been invaluable in shaping the future of MUT.
- To the Technical Team that supported me in performing my duties as Administrator over the past two years, your expertise and tireless effort have been instrumental in ensuring the effective execution of my mandate. Thank you for your commitment and professionalism.

I am especially grateful for the collaborative spirit that has defined my tenure. The willingness of the MUT community to engage in open dialogue and work together toward common goals has been instrumental in overcoming challenges and achieving progress.

As I prepare to hand over the reins to the new Council, I do so with confidence in MUT's ability to overcome its challenges and reach greater heights. The resilience, talent, and dedication within this institution are unparalleled. While my role as Administrator concludes, my belief in the transformative power of MUT's mission remains steadfast.

I urge all members of the university community to continue building on the progress we have made. The journey ahead will require collective effort, innovation, and unwavering commitment to MUT's vision and mission. I am certain that, with your continued dedication, MUT will not only address its current challenges but also thrive as a beacon of higher education excellence.

As I bid farewell, I carry with me a profound sense of gratitude and hope. Serving as the Administrator of Mangosuthu University of Technology has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my career. I thank each of you for the trust, support, and collaboration extended to me over these past two years.

May the year ahead bring renewed energy and purpose to MUT. Together, you have the power to transform challenges into opportunities and to shape a future of excellence for generations to come.

***Wishing you all a restful and joyous holiday season, and every success in 2025 and beyond.***

With deepest appreciation,

Prof. L.R. van Staden  
Administrator  
Mangosuthu University of Technology

**shape and own the future**

