

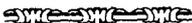
**THE ROLE OF THE
UNIVERSITY AND ITS
FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE**

**INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE
PAPERS**

**Prof. Walter J. Kamba
1931 – 2007**



THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND ITS FUTURE
IN
ZIMBABWE



International Conference Papers

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FOREWORD

by

Professor W.J. Kamba
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
University of Zimbabwe

This book is a record of the papers which were read at the Conference on the Role of the University and its Future in Zimbabwe, held on this campus in September 1981.

It was perhaps the most important Conference in the history of this University. It was attended by an impressive group of scholars from Africa and abroad, and Government leaders. The papers were highly scholarly and the debate which followed each presentation was very stimulating and thought-provoking.

This collection of essays constitutes a book of readings for students interested in problems of university development in Zimbabwe in particular, and in Africa in general, and those interested in university reform and the politics of higher education.

I must, on behalf of the University, express my gratitude to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for making it possible for us to hold the Conference, and subsequently for enabling us to publish these papers. To the participants who contributed immensely to the Conference; and to the Organising Committee for a job well done, I, also, express my profound gratitude.

CHAPTER 8

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE : FROM THIS TIME ON

*by Professor W.J. Kamba,
Principal and Vice Chancellor*

Over the last four days I have sat and listened and I have had a little time to reflect on the outstanding and well-argued papers that have been delivered and the high standard of discussion that we have witnessed at this Conference. I will not attempt to deal with individual contributions or individual comments made during this Conference. The University of Zimbabwe has had the opportunity of looking at itself critically, I hope, in the context of the broad Government thinking as articulated by the Prime Minister, and also with the benefit of national participants from outside the University and international participants we have been provided with an international dimension and experience. There can be no doubt that we stand to benefit enormously from this vast wealth of ideas and experience. If we can translate this wealth of ideas and experience into something concrete in our search for a new identity, then posterity can rightly regard this Conference as a major landmark in the history of the University marking the watershed between the past and the future. We are deeply indebted to all the participants at this Conference. The Conference is on "The Role of the University and its Future in Zimbabwe". The core of the theme of the Conference is change. To focus on change is not to be oblivious of some of the good work of the past, after all the need for change is because of the past and the present. The focus of the Conference has been dictated mainly by the fact that it is with change that this institution will be preoccupied right now as a matter of urgency and for a long time to come in the future. We are treated to a masterly and penetrating analysis of change by Professor Asavia Wandira in his keynote address on "The University in Times of Change".

The University of Zimbabwe was conceived and established in a particular political social and economic context. It operated since its creation in a particular socio-economic and political context. The vision and perspective of those who were concerned with the planning, was the future and operation of the University in the context of what they knew, what they were aware of, in the country of Rhodesia then. The University is in essence a social institution and those who work and study in it are members of society at large and some of the conflicts that occurred in the University in the past were in fact a reflection of the conflicts in the larger community. As indicated at the opening of this Conference some 18 months ago this country and the world witnessed a dramatic political change. We are seeing what many delegates have described as an unprecedented transformation of the social and economic context in which the University exists and operates. And the questions which we must ask are: Is the role of the University as conceived in the past its proper role in the Zimbabwe of today and tomorrow? Are the internal structures of the University, is the orientation of the University as a whole and of those who work in it, geared to cope with the unprecedented situation that exists? Change in the University is not change for its own sake; it is necessary change; change which should have occurred yesterday.

The University of Zimbabwe is the only University in the country. It is therefore the focus in the country of university education in general. The University dates back to the 11th February, 1955 when the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was founded as a non-racial institution to serve the whole of the then Federation comprising Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland. It enjoyed a special relation with the University of London, whose degrees it awarded until it became the University of Rhodesia in 1970. Similarly the medical school established in 1963 was affiliated to the University of Birmingham Medical School whose degrees it awarded also until 1970. At independence this year, the University assumed the new name of Zimbabwe. When the University

College commenced, there were eight faculties: Arts, Agriculture, Engineering, Commerce and Law, Education, Medicine, Science and Social Studies. Special mention should be made of the existence of the Institute of Mining Research which, as the name indicates, is essentially a research centre. The University College opened with a total of 68 students, 60 of them were whites and 8 were Africans. The white students remained in the majority until 1976 when the proportion changed and today the proportion is something like 70% black students and the rest, white and others.

Thus the University of Zimbabwe, as universities in almost all former British dependencies in Africa, is an importation from Britain. We imported the British model with all its essential attendant elements. Historically in Britain in particular and in countries of the western cultural tradition in general, the primary two-fold aim of a University is research and teaching. For a very long time the almost exaggerated emphasis on the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake as the main function of a University elevated the University to an ivory tower almost detached from the community in which it existed, observing society from up there. The rapid and intensive social, economic and political change, and the gigantic technological advances the world over during the last decades have led to a shift of emphasis and re-ordering of priorities and to a new relationship between the University and Society. Universities in the western world have had in varying degrees to come down to earth to play, and be seen to play, a role in the development of the community.

In Zimbabwe, prior to independence last year the forging of a close relationship between the University and the community, and between the University and national development, was inhibited by the nature of the social and political environment in which the University existed and operated. The University was in a sense an anachronism. Established by Royal Charter as a formally non-racial institution, it was at odds with dominant white Rhodesian politics. It was attempting to carry on in a society which was organised and ordered on a racial basis. This tension between the University and its social and political environment distorted its role in the community and the country: The University was not an integral part of our society. But now with the dramatic political change and the concomitant socio-economic change, I referred to earlier, and with the destruction of the society organised along racial lines, there is a need for a new orientation — a need for a radical orientation on the part of the University. The dramatic development must surely have an equally dramatic impact on the present and the future of this University and on its role in the development of the country. It must now have its feet down on Zimbabwean ground. It must have a new ethos, and, as I said earlier, it must be rooted in the new reality of Zimbabwe. To say this, is not to deny that it must also be conscious of the international dimension. There is therefore an urgent need for the University of Zimbabwe to play a more active and meaningful role in the development of Zimbabwe, and for the realisation of this contribution, there must be closer communication between the University and the government, between the University and the public at large and the need to work out effective means, effective machinery for such communication. It is also essential for the University to expand and expand rapidly to respond to the country's scarce resources. The country is, therefore, entitled to expect returns which contribute to the social, economic and cultural development and general welfare of its people.

Development embraces the challenges caused by the search for national and cultural identity, by the problem of poverty and the need for social adjustment and the problems of economic progress. Let me perhaps elaborate a little. Zimbabwe is, in a number of ways, a developed country. In the past the focus has been on a small economic sector at the expense of the large sector. Alongside what is a relatively small and highly sophisticated sector is a large underdeveloped or rural and peasant sector. This emphasis must have affected the role of the University in that context. These two sectors must now be integrated. As a result of the focus of Government policies on rural development, Zimbabwe desperately needs not only high level and highly skilled manpower, but also men and women who are well-equipped to contribute to the rectifying of this imbalance between these sectors of life and economy. The University has a vital part to play in the education and training of such young men and women. The University must be relevant in terms of its social context, in terms of the content of its curricula and in terms of the needs of the country, or to put it slightly differently, in terms of its contribution to national development.

In regard to the social context, surely there is an interaction and inter-connection between the social and cultural context on the one hand and what is taught, how it is taught, who is taught and by whom it is taught on the other. While it is true that there are certain subjects whose content is of universal validity, the effectiveness in transmitting the knowledge

The University must provide leadership in the area of research and should aim to place more emphasis on applied research, research directed towards issues that affect ordinary men and women. The University must now take a more active role in identifying and investigating development problems. There is already work in progress but some of this work is handicapped by the lack of funds.

The realisation of these objectives will, to a large extent, depend on the structures of government, and within the University, on the orientation of the staff, on their dedication and commitment to the University and its objectives and to the development of Zimbabwe. Staffing policy and practices must now be geared to the needs of the country. We cannot afford to waste our human resources. Without pre-empting what the Government proposes to do in its Act of Parliament to replace the Charter, departmental government needs to be reformed, and reformed quickly in order to ensure effective participation by all its members to the activities of the department and University. And I say, we must harness all available resources.

Democratization is not democratization for its sake. It is an instrument which if well used will certainly enhance the efforts of the University. The reform of departmental organizations will certainly affect the composition of Senate which is the supreme academic body in the University. The composition of Council, the supreme governing body is a University. The composition of Council, the supreme governing body is a matter for Government in its proposed Act. The fundamental issue is that the structure of the government of the University must be such as will enable it to realise effectively the objectives that I have indicated.

Service to the nation should cease to be an idea to be duly noted on rhetorical occasions. It should be an existential reality for the graduates, for the faculty and for all those who labour within the University. The teaching in the University should be such that it produces independent thinkers with the creativity to tackle problems. The last thing education ought to do is to adjust anybody to the appearance of a society which will not be there by the time he has become adjusted to it. The only constant variable in modern society is change, and change is accelerating at such a rate that a number of major cultural revolutions will take place in one's life time. Consequently, it is no longer functional to define the purpose of education as simply the transmission of culture. It must be the production of lifelong learners. The problem for educators is that of designing an educational system not for a known future but for life in a world characterized by continuing change and a rapid obsolescence of knowledge.

In the search for national cultural identity the University has therefore an important part to play in providing a sound intellectual foundation and leadership. It must act and has the human resources to act as a source of new ideas for the promotion of social cohesion. It must also show by example how social problems can be resolved. In this context it is absolutely important to emphasise that those who are committed to this ideal, have an enormous part to play within the University.

I have indicated that communication between Government and University is essential because the effectiveness of the University's contribution to national development, depends on the ability of teachers and students to discuss, evaluate, examine, re-examine, criticise and investigate ideas, and our analysis and evaluation of issues must be such as to make available to policy-makers material which will provide them with a number of possible options. We must be capable of providing the kind of information which will be at the disposal of all those engaged in the process of Government. This means we must promote effective understanding between the University and government, and also effective understanding between the University and the community. But of course for the University to do this it must enjoy a substantial degree of autonomy, autonomy which is compatible with the realisation of these objectives; autonomy which leaves it with means to be an effective institution to provide the policy-makers with a number of options.

I have clearly indicated that the University needs to expand if it is to meet the needs of the country. The total of enrolment of students in 1980 was some 2 240. This was comparatively small for the needs of the country. The University of Zimbabwe must therefore grow rapidly in terms of numbers, but more cautiously in terms of the range of disciplines. As a result of the political settlement at the end of last year, the intake was 800 and this was double that of the year before. The intake this year was of the order of 1 100 and the total number of students this year is some 2 525. The University will be growing at an alarming rate. We expect to reach the figure of some 5 000 the next 3 years. The increase in the student intake in the first year at the secondary school level, as I indicated at the opening, is a frightening one with the figure shooting from 20 000 to some 100 000 qualified students

seeking entrance to the University. This is an alarming rate of growth. I would estimate that a reasonable-sized University should be something of the order of 6 000. If we go beyond that, that would be the time for considering the establishment of a second University.

I have said that in terms of the range of disciplines, it is important that we proceed cautiously. We are reasonably well covered by the faculties that we have now. As our number one priority right away we wish to establish the Faculty of Veterinary Science. We have been carrying out extensive campaigning and negotiations and the indications are that we might have our first year intake in March 1982. Veterinary Science is essential to our cattle industry, not only if we are to compete in the outside market but also if we are to sustain production for internal needs. There are a number of other disciplines which are knocking at the door: mining engineering, and metallurgy. We will try what we can to establish these as soon as we can.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to emphasise here another point which I made at the opening, that is the effectiveness of the University's contribution to national development will depend to a substantial degree on the quality of the products that we turn out. It is essential that we produce good doctors, good engineers, good lawyers, good administrators. To do otherwise would be failure on our part to discharge our responsibilities and would in fact be a disservice to the country. I will again remind you, Mr. Chairman, and the audience that we must be wary of the outside expert who offers advice which may adversely affect the quality of our products, and then let us turn to him for his expertise. One of the characteristics of the third world country is its incessant dependence on foreign financial assistance and expertise. We have no desire to be condemned to the status of a third world country in perpetuity.

If independence is to mean anything, we must overcome importation of academic and technological expertise. We cannot achieve this unless the quality of our products is such that they can hold their own in the wider—world. The development of the University is dependent on the support of all those who work in it and the support that it receives from the Government and from international colleagues. Its development is also dependent on the availability of resources that will make this institution, the good institution it ought to be and the good institution which it must remain and to enable it to make fundamental contribution to the needs of the country.

Mr. Chairman, before I sit down, I must take this opportunity to say a few thank yous to various people who have played an important role in this Conference: To the Prime Minister for opening the conference and providing us with his thoughts on the part of Government regarding the future of the University; to the President, Comrade Banana, for attending the Installation Ceremony on Tuesday; and also to members of the Diplomatic Corps for attending the Installation Ceremony; to our International Visitors for their participation and contribution in the Conference; to the Mayor of the City Council of Harare for welcoming our guests and for attending several of our functions; to all the participants who have contributed to lively debate on the issues confronting our University; to Nedlaw group for their support; to Miss Mazoe for flowers, to Mr. Platt and his staff; to the Department of Culture in the Ministry of Education and Culture for the magnificent show that we witnessed last night; and perhaps most importantly to the Carnegie Corporation, without whose support the Conference would not have been made possible; but lastly but not least to the Organising Committee that has worked day and night to make what I should like to believe has been a successful Conference.

APPENDIX I
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

MONDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER, 1981

- 1600 Registration in Llewelin Wing.
- 1900 **Official Opening** by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Honourable Comrade R. G. Mugabe.
- 1940 **Tea Break**
- 2000 **Keynote Address** **The University in Times of Change** by Professor Asavia Wandira, Vice Chancellor, Makerere University.
- Chairperson** Professor W. J. Kamba, Principal and Vice Chancellor, University of Zimbabwe.

TUESDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER, 1981

- 1100 **INSTALLATION CEREMONY.**
- 1200 **Luncheon** Swinton Hall
- Address:** **The Role of Universities in Development: Some Philosophical and Sociological Considerations** by Professor Ralf Dahrendorf, Director, London School of Economics and Political Science.
- Chairperson** Professor G. Bond, Vice Principal, University of Zimbabwe.

TUESDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Session 1

- 1430 **The Relationship between the University and Government.**
- Speakers will consider ways in which the University and Government can work together to achieve national goals.
- Chairperson** Dr. C.M.B. Utete, Secretary to the Prime Minister, formerly Senior Lecturer in Political Science.
- Paper by** Professor H.H. Patel, Head, Department of Political Science.
- Discussants:**
1. Dr. N. Makura, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture.
 2. Mr. H.E. Muradzikwa, Lecturer, Department of Sociology.
 3. Professor M. Mugo, Dean of Arts, University of Nairobi.
- Secretary** Mrs. A. Mhute, Faculty Clerk, Commerce and Law.

- 1930 **Vice Chancellor's Reception.**

WEDNESDAY, 9th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Session 1

0830 **University Reform: Changing the University to meet new needs.**

Speakers will consider ways in which the University itself might reorder its priorities and organization so as to provide effective leadership in society. Problems of implementation of ideals will also be discussed.

Chairperson Dr. N.D. Moyo, Lecturer in Physics

Paper by Dr. H. Murerwa, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Manpower Planning and Development, member of the University Council, formerly Economic Affairs Officer with the United Nations Economic Commission in Africa, formerly Research Fellow, Harvard University, formerly member of the Editorial Board, *Harvard Educational Review*.

Discussants:

1. Professor N.D. Atkinson, Dean, Faculty of Education.
2. Dr. C.H.D. Magadza, Senior Lecturer, Department of Zoology
3. Dr. M.J.M. Sibanda, Secretary to the President, formerly Lecturer in History.
4. Mr. J. Gapara, Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education and Culture.

Secretary Mr. F.N. Murandu, Assistant Registrar, Faculty of Commerce and Law.

WEDNESDAY, 9th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Session 3

1100 **The University Curriculum and Research: Some Priorities.**

Speakers will consider ways in which the curriculum and research might be adapted to meet national needs.

Chairperson Professor Lyson Tembo, Director, Educational Research Bureau, University of Zambia

Paper by Professor Goldschmidt and Dr. R. Murapa.

Discussants:

1. Dr. E. Chanakira, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture.
2. Professor R. Harlen, Head, Department of Electrical Engineering

Secretary Mr. O. Maravanyika, Lecturer, Department of Education.

WEDNESDAY, 9th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Session 4

1430 **Higher Education: Some Comparative Perspectives, with emphasis on Third World Countries.**

What can we learn from the experience of other people in other lands regarding university development?

Chairperson Dr. C.C. Mutambirwa, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Zimbabwe.

Paper by Professor Philip G. Altbach, Professor of Higher Education and Social Foundations of Education, SUNY/Buffalo.

Discussants:

1. Professor T.O. Ranger, University of Manchester.
2. Professor Kund Erik Svendsen, Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen.
3. Dr. B. Siyakwazi, United College of Education, Bulawayo.
4. Mr. L. Pakkiri, Department of Economics.

Secretary Mrs. D. Patel, Lecturer, Department of Sociology

1930 Cultural Show presented by the Department of Culture.

THURSDAY, 10th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Session 5

0830 **The Relationship between the University and Industry.**

Speakers will consider ways in which the University and Industry can co-operate in research and in a variety of extension activities.

Chairperson: Mr. C.G. Tracey, Chairman, Zimbabwe Promotion Council.

Paper by Professor T. Palankai, Vice-Rector, University of Economics, Hungary.

Discussants:

1. Mr. T. Mswaka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.
2. Professor F.S. Bardo, Head, Department of Accountancy and Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Law.
3. Professor H. Onitiri, UNDP, Salisbury.
4. Mr. T.R. Masaya, Lecturer, Department of Economics.

Secretary: Mrs A. Mupawaenda, Assistant Registrar, Arts and Education.

THURSDAY, 10th SEPTEMBER, 1981

Closing Session

1100 *The University of Zimbabwe:
From this time on.*

by Professor W.J. Kamba,
Principal and Vice Chancellor.

1145 Closing Remarks Comrade Dr. D. Mutumbuka, Minister of Education and Culture.

Chairperson: Professor P. Makhurane, Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor-Designate, University of Zimbabwe.

APPENDIX 2

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

(Other than those on Conference Programme)

1. Professor Molefi K. Asante, State University of New York at Buffalo, currently with the Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communications.
2. Miss Gail Cooke, African American Institute, New York.
3. Dr. F.N. Getao, Kenyatta University College, Kenya.
4. Dr. R.C. Kapteyn, Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
5. Mr. E.K. Kigozi, The Regional Conference of East African Universities, Kampala, Uganda.
6. Dr. David Kimble, Vice Chancellor, University of Malawi.
7. Professor N.A. Kuhanga, Vice Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
8. Professor Duri Mahomed, Vice Chancellor, University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
9. Professor J.M. Mungai, Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Kenya.
10. Dr. A. Neville, Vice Chancellor, University of Dundee, U.K.
11. Dr. V.G. Nyirenda, University Secretary, University of Zambia.
12. Mr. F.N. Owako, Deputy Registrar, University of Nairobi, Kenya.
13. Professor J.M. Waithaka, Vice Principal, Kenyatta University College, Kenya.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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