



## THE MANDELA RHODES COMMUNITY

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Lesotho King and Prime Minister respectively to open Mandela Rhodes Summit on ethical leadership at the National University of Lesotho on the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

His Majesty King Letsie III will officially open the Mandela Rhodes Summit in November, the annual gathering of the Mandela Rhodes Community. Keynote speakers also include Prime Minister Dr Tom Thabane and Mr. Mangangole Tsikinyane, the Chief Financial Officer of Lesotho Revenue Authority.

“This is a turning point for our fledgling alumni organization,” says Suntosh Pillay, chairperson of its Board of Directors. “For the first time we are hosting the Summit and our annual general meeting outside of South Africa, as we evolve into a truly pan-African network.”

Esteemed writer, Prof. Njabulo Ndebele will also deliver opening remarks at the Roma campus of the National University of Lesotho (NUL), who won the bid to host the Summit. Founded by Nelson Mandela, the Mandela Rhodes Foundation (MRF) has been offering scholarships since 2005 to post-graduate students from across Africa. “We are the alumni of the MRF, and continue to aspire towards the goals of developing exceptional leadership capacity in Africa,” says Pillay. “This summit hopes to draw, re-imagine and inspire innovative models of leadership relevant for the African context.”

The theme for the Summit centres on ethical leadership, human rights and economic and social development. Other luminaries who will participate in panel discussions include Dr. Lits’abako Ntoji, Examinations Council of Lesotho-CEO, Prof. M. Lephoto, Pro-Vice Chancellor of NUL, Mr Robert Likhang, the Chartered Accountant and Life Coach, Dr. Maluke Letete, Political Economist and lecturer, Adv. M. Khesuoe, Mr Mpho Vumbukani, Managing Director of Standard Lesotho Bank, and Prof. Kananelo Mosito, Law Veteran.

Conference coordinator Tsepang Majara, a 2009 Mandela Rhodes Scholar, said that the Mountain Kingdom is eager and ready to host the continent’s best and brightest minds. “I feel so happy that Lesotho will be the first country outside South Africa to open the doors to host other African countries. I am more excited because my people are very supportive and can’t wait to interact with the Mandela Rhodes Community and the guest speakers”.

The Summit will also officially induct the current cohort, who comprises 51 Scholars from 14 African countries. Previous summits have included keynote addresses by Graca Machel, Jakes Gerwel, and Zackie Achmat.

**END.**

The Mandela Rhodes Community  
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**ABOUT MANDELA RHODES COMMUNITY:**

The Community envisions itself as a socially relevant and reliable source of intellectual and passionate leadership, and hopes that this event brings together educational and business institutions, communities, high scholars, academics and the general public.

Suntosh Pillay, Chairperson of the Board of Directors and a Durban-based psychologist, says that “the Community is incredibly diverse in nationalities, cultures, political affiliations, educational histories, and ideologies. These differences are our biggest asset and exemplify a pan-African unity in diversity. We have been most successful when we function as a platform for debates, most notably at our annual conference which is a key networking space and idea incubator, having had notable speakers such as Grace Machel and Zackhie Achmat; and via online media. Our aim is to position the Community as a space for non-partisan intellectual and progressive debate. But beyond words and ideas, we hope to inspire ourselves and others towards enacting change”.

**ISSUED BY:**

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