

2022 – A hybrid celebration of Africa Month

One Africa – Together Forever

Theme: Celebrating African education as a conduit for African unity

On 25 May 2022, Africa will celebrate the 59th anniversary of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Since the establishment of the OAU and with the subsequent formation of the African Union (AU), member states have undertaken to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the people of Africa. They did so in awareness of the fact that – as the Cultural Charter for Africa states – “any people has the inalienable right to organise its cultural life in full harmony with its political, economic, social, philosophical, and spiritual ideas”.

The African (Banjul) Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Article 17, recognises that every individual shall have the right to education, and associates the intended realisation of this right with enabling individuals to participate freely in the cultural life of their communities. Furthermore, Article 17 of the Charter on Human and People’s Rights also links the quest for education for all with the promotion and protection of moral and traditional values as recognised by African communities and families.

Unsurprisingly, the AU – which is the successor to the OAU – is undertaking extensive work in education. Its initiatives include establishing the Pan African University and harmonising African higher education. In continuance of the UFS’ long tradition of commemorating Africa Day and the ideas underpinning it, the UFS will once again celebrate Africa in 2022. The highlight of the celebrations will be the Africa Day memorial lecture, hosted by the university’s Centre for Gender and Africa Studies on Wednesday 25 May 2022. The speaker is Prof Bagele Chilisa from the University of Botswana, a renowned post-colonial scholar, researcher, author, educator, and African thought leader. The title of her presentation is *Research and Knowledge Production: Africa and the Call for a Fifth Research Paradigm*. In this lecture, Prof Chilisa will make a clarion call for bringing in indigenous knowledges of the formerly colonised peoples of Africa and other knowledges from marginalised peoples of the world, to be recognised as knowledge systems fitting a unique paradigm on equal footing with Western paradigms, and not to be used as vignettes to decorate websites of global corporations.

The contributions to the 2022 Africa Month activities, which we will gradually add to this website in the course of Africa Month, highlight the university’s commitment to creating a diverse, challenging intellectual environment. Besides the Africa Day memorial lecture and various face-to-face functions on all three campuses, there will also be online content, which will be added together with recordings of select events to this website. As a

research-led university, the UFS strives to provide an environment in which new ideas are incubated and debated, contributing to its transformation process and African unity.