

**From:** Eddy Maloka  
Johannesburg  
8 April 2021

**To:**

Ms Babalwa Ngonyama  
Chairperson of the University of Cape Town Council  
Cape Town

Dear Ms Babalwa Ngonyama:

**Re: Resignation as President of UCT Convocation**

It is with a heavy heart that I address this letter to you about recent events at the University of Cape Town (UCT). I do so reluctantly because I had high hopes for UCT especially with three powerful black women at the helm of its leadership. I had the privilege of presiding over the election of our new Chancellor and was looking forward to witnessing her inauguration.

Since I was elected President of the Convocation two years ago, I have been careful not to take sides in disputes at UCT over transformation. My view has always been that the President of the Convocation should not be part of the problem but a constructive player who is there to help the University and its various stakeholders find each other and the solution they need to move UCT forward.

However, events of the last few days have shaken me and made this posture no longer tenable. They left me wondering whether I am at the right place – at UCT of the year 2021; and whether I still have any value to add to the University and its Convocation. In my attempt to meditate over what transpired, I have not been able to explain to myself how a black female Deputy Vice-Chancellor who was the executive head of transformation efforts at UCT came to vacate her post so unceremoniously, and why

when her replacement is being sought, we opted for a retired white male when the University has so much talent for this portfolio in its midst.

I have a lot of respect for Prof. Martin Hall whom I was fortunate to know during my days at UCT. He is a renowned anthropologist and an accomplished leader in the higher education sector. I do not doubt or question his integrity, ability, and commitment. At the same time, I regard the portfolio of DVC Transformation to be very critical to our University that is still engulfed in the flames of "Fees Must Fall". The choice of the person who occupies it is as important as the terms of reference that brought it into existence.

The statue of Cecil John Rhodes is not just a physical object. It is also a representation of a mind-set that is colonial, a curriculum that is Eurocentric, and an institution that is unwilling to step out of its chequered past. For Rhodes to truly fall, our mind-set must change, and our University must turn its neck to face forward, in the direction of the future.

The mathematics of transformation just do not add up here! I am not just baffled by the choice and decision of the University and how this important decision was reached. I had always assumed that there was consensus at the top at UCT on transformation – on its necessity and imperatives. I had assumed that the disputes among University stakeholders were just over the modalities for achieving this goal. This assumption is now put into question, rendered untenable like the posture I had adopted as President of Convocation. I just do not see how I will continue to be part of a team that does not seem to have consensus among themselves on the basics of transformation – on its necessity and imperatives.

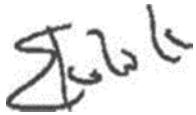
I am happy with what the Convocation achieved over the last two years. We made major strides towards merging the Convocation and the Alumni Association. I feel privileged to have been part of this transition and institutional reforms. I just regret that I will not be able to complete this process as planned as I am left with no choice but to step down as President of the Convocation with immediate effect.

Ms Babalwa Ngonyama

Page 3

I must thank members of the Convocation for entrusting me with such an important role at UCT and assure them that I am only stepping down from an elected position in the Convocation. My loyalty and commitment to UCT remain unchanged. I am forever grateful to UCT for its contribution to my personal development and continue to wish the University all the best in its endeavour to remain high, up there, among the best in the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Maloka', written in a cursive style.

Eddy Maloka

Cc -

- Chancellor
- Vice Chancellor
- Registrar
- Alumni Board
- Convocation