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Message by Dr Bismark Tyobeka: Memorial service, 26 October 2022

Dear family members, colleagues, students, and friends

Thank you for joining us.

Today, we are coming together in remembrance of all our colleagues and students who have lost their lives during the 2022 academic year. It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the North-West University community has lost 10 staff members and 16 students during this year. My sincere and deepest condolences to the bereaved families, colleagues, friends, and classmates. May God continue to bless you with the strength to deal with the grief, and may HE make all your wishes come true.

As part of the university's values and ethic of care, the University Management Committee resolved to commence with the practice of hosting memorial services on each of our campuses for staff and students who passed away during the academic year. This is envisaged to be an annual ceremony – starting this year – to remember members of our NWU community who have lost their lives.

Losing a loved one is very painful, and we all deal with these losses in a different way. However, one thing that can be certain is that we carry the memories of those we have lost in our hearts. We remember and celebrate their lives – the role they played in enriching our lives, and the difference they have made in our various spheres of life – our boardrooms, student centres, classrooms, sports grounds, and others. Nothing can ever replace or fill this void.

It is through the commitment and dedication of all our staff members and students, that this university is able to realise its dream of being an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care. Those who have passed away all played a part in helping us to achieve our dream, and for that we honour and remember them.

Any institution of higher learning has the responsibility to develop our youth. We must empower and uplift them because our students are the future of this country. Let us remember all who have passed away for the commitment they had for the future. Let us dedicate ourselves to ensuring that their commitment and dreams for the NWU are not in vain. Let us work even harder to deal with the issues that the North-West University and indeed South Africa grapple with daily, to create a better world for future generations.

I thank everyone who has joined us today on our three campuses. Thank you for sharing your loved ones with us as either a member of staff or as a student. Thank you for allowing us to be part of their lives. May you be carried and consoled in these

times of grief, and may you find comfort in knowing that the NWU will forever keep them in our hearts and minds.

I leave you with the words of a Hebrew proverb: *Say not in grief that they are gone, but give thanks that they were yours.*

AMEN