STELLENBOSCH FORUM, 2011-02-17

Verwelkoming en inleiding deur prof H Russel Botman,
rektor en visekanselier van die US

Lesing deur: Prof Sandy Liebenberg van die
Universiteit Stellenbosch (US) se Fakulteit Regsgeleerdheid
Onderwerp: 'Die gebruik van grondwetlike regte en instellings
om sosio-ekonomiese geregtigheid te bevorder'
Plek: Ouditorium van die JS Gericke-biblioteek, US

Dankie, voorsitter. Goeiemiddag, almal. *Molweni. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.*

Kollegas, Maties, dames en here, baie welkom by die eerste Stellenbosch Forum van die jaar. Hierdie lesingreeks bied aan personeel en studente van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch (US), sowel as lede van die publiek, die geleentheid om meer uit te vind oor die relevante, wêreldklas navorsing wat hier gedoen word.

Die sprekers word gewoonlik versoek om hul akademiese onderwerpe só aan te bied dat dit toeganklik is vir nie-deskundiges. Dit bied dus die ideale geleentheid vir kritiese debat en interessante besprekings oor dissiplinêre grense heen.

Hierdie inisiatief het sy onstaan gehad in 1990, maar die tradisie van die oop gesprek strek natuurlik veel verder die geskiedenis in as net 21 jaar. In antieke Rome sowat 2 500 gelede, was die forum die hart van die stad en die gemeenskap. Dit was meer as ŉ mark waar handel gedryf is in goedere – *it was a marketplace of ideas*. Dis waar debat gevoer is oor belangrike kwessies wat die burgers van die Republiek geraak het.

In die Afrika-konteks word sake van gemeenskaplike belang tradisioneel bespreek by ŉ *indaba* of ŉ *lekgotla* of ŉ bosberaad.

Wel, hier is ons nou vandag saam in die Stellenbosch, en op die agenda is ŉ baie belangrike kwessie wat ons almal raak – veral in ŉ jaar van plaaslike verkiesings – naamlik sosio-ekonomiese geregtigheid. En wie beter om daaroor met ons te praat as iemand wat die nuwe Suid-Afrika se grondwet help skryf het?

Professor Liebenberg served as a member of the Technical Committee advising the Constitutional Assembly on the Bill of Rights in the 1996 Constitution of South Africa.

She now holds the HF Oppenheimer Chair in Human Rights Law in our Law Faculty, and is co-director of the Faculty's post-graduate research project on Combating Poverty, Homelessness and Socio-Economic Vulnerability under the Constitution.

This initiative forms part of Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project, which is, as you know, is a university-wide effort to use our academic and scientific work to address some of the most pressing developmental needs around us in South Africa and on the rest of the African continent.

Before joining Stellenbosch, Professor Liebenberg had founded and directed the Socio-Economic Rights Project based at the Community Law Centre of the University of the Western Cape. She was involved in several ground-breaking cases, including:

- *Government of South Africa versus Grootboom; and*
- *Minister of Health versus Treatment Action Campaign*

She serves on the editorial board of the "South African Journal on Human Rights", the "African Human Rights Law Journal", the "Human Rights Law Journal" and "Speculum Juris". She is also Chairperson of the Board of the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa and a member of the Advisory Board of the Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution.

She has published widely in the field of socio-economic rights, and is the author of the recently published book, entitled "Socio-Economic Rights: Adjudication under a Transformative Constitution".

Professor Liebenberg is dus nét die regte mens om met ons te praat oor hoe grondwetlike regte en instellings gebruik kan word om sosio-ekonomiese geregtigheid te bevorder.

Ek stel haar graag aan die woord …