



On 19 January 2008 the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology bestowed upon His Excellency Festus G. Mogae the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humanity at the university's graduation in Botswana.

Citation

H. E. Dr Festus G. Mogae

Former President of the Republic of Botswana

An extraordinary leader, yet a simple man of the people

This year marks 10 years since His Excellency President Festus G. Mogae took office as the third President of Botswana, the country's first technocrat whose tenure has been a remarkable period of economic progress punctuated with landmark policies that have transformed this small nation into a role model nation for the rest of Africa. But his influence upon the governance of Botswana goes far back beyond the decade that he spent at its helm.

In 1968 he was among a new breed of highly educated young politicians absorbed into service just 2 years after the country obtained its independence from British protection.

He had earlier spent many years abroad pursuing higher education at the North West London Polytechnic in England, earning an honours degree at Oxford and later receiving a graduate degree in developmental economics from Sussex University.

A strong love for Botswana, he is patriotic to the core

His return was certainly a rarity at that time when the brain drain of Africa's best and brightest was prevalent. But the love for his motherland was far stronger than any pursuit of material success overseas. And at that time Botswana was among the poorest nations in the world.

It was a shared vision of what Botswana wanted for their nation that gathered this corps of dedicated and highly committed people and it was pivotal in giving the country a base of efficiency and stability that today is the legacy that protects Botswana from the turmoil faced by others in the continent.

At the crossroads of shaping the nation's legacy of peace and stability

Mogae was there at this vital crossroads facing Botswana. His skills and knowledge in finance and economics helped shape the country as it stands today - a showcase democracy of the best of African governance.

Mogae has spent 40 years in government service beginning as a planning officer in the Ministry of Development and Planning (that later was restructured as Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in 1970) and culminating as its Minister in 1989 before assuming Presidency in 1998.

His positioning in the Ministry was strategic as both of Botswana's Presidents were also Ministers of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Mogae's climb up the corporate ladder of government has been nothing short of meteoric.

As a leader Mogae commands enormous respect through the way he lives his life. His relentless pursuit of inculcating the values of integrity and excellence are now accepted as no political hype but the inner convictions of a man who religiously believes in these virtues.

A man of courage and conviction willing to do what is right

In essence he is a simple, humble man who loves his people and who wants to do good by them. A rare human being, he is thoughtful and diplomatic who gives respect to all opinions. He has been known to say that no view is considered to be so foolish as to be unworthy of a fair hearing.

He is especially most concerned about the future of the country and his biggest battle has been against the spread of HIV/AIDS.

It took courage to stand up and tell the world that the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Botswana has grown to alarming proportions as one-third of the population is believed to be infected with the deadly virus.

It took courage to step forward and take the HIV/AIDS test so that he could inspire the rest of the country to do the same thing as he believed that the solutions lie in first identifying the issue.

It took courage to pledge a major portion of the country's annual budget to fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS. His groundbreaking antiretroviral drugs programme made Botswana the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to provide universal, free access to the medicines.

The Limkokwing University takes great pride in bestowing upon His Excellency this Honorary Doctorate for Humanity.

