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FROM SATN TO THENSA: THE TECHNOLOGY FOCUS BEHIND OUR CHANGE OF NAME

With **significant changes being made** to policy, curriculum, innovation and research agendas in the South African Higher Education sector, the South African Technology Network (SATN)'s strategic objectives, mission and membership were reviewed **in response to these developments**. Both President Ramaphosa and the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande made an urgent call to the South African Higher Education sector to focus on Science and Technology in order to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The SATN responded swiftly by launching several new innovative projects and initiatives not only as a response to the call but also to **meet the targets set in:**

- the National Development Plan (NDP)
- the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- the Africa 2063 Agenda

With its longstanding and strong partnerships with Business and Industry and its renewed focus, the SATN has **changed its name to Technological Higher Education Network South Africa (THENSA)**.

The South African Technology Network (SATN) was **established in 2006**, as a consortium by five Universities of technology in South Africa and in the following years, the **SATN provided a platform for Universities of Technology** to advance common interests, discuss matters pertaining to higher education and pool their existing resources to shed light on the dynamic research, innovation and knowledge amongst fellow member institutions. Post the mergers and the creation of comprehensive Universities, several institutions showed interest in joining the network. Hence the SATN grew from 5 Universities of Technology to the following within a period of 5 years.

THENSA's new member organizations now include

- 6 South African Universities of Technology
- 4 South African comprehensive Universities
- 1 African University

Our **desire to connect with Continental Technology focused institutions** has resulted in the Commonwealth Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) and its members are joining the ranks at THENSA.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to test our capacities as a country, **technology focused universities have been at the frontlines of the fight against the virus**, manufacturing personal protective equipment, ventilators, masks, and hand sanitors for South Africa's most vulnerable and impoverished communities and publishing research papers in this regard.

Under the guidance of THENSA, we hope that our member institutions and organisations will **continue to respond to the challenges** meted out by our new normal and offer the kind of research, knowledge, technology, and leadership necessary to help South Africa during this unprecedented crisis and into the future.

For more information on THENSA, please visit our website: www.thensa.co.za You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @THENSAZA



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