**EASA President Report**

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT - 2015

Presented by Dipane Hlalele

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the Education Association of South Africa conference in 2016. Conferences of an academic nature always provide valuable opportunities. This conference presents a great opportunity for you to meet scholars in your field and you may be able to put some faces to names from publications. It further provides a great opportunity to network, thereby meeting the leaders in your field, collaborators as well as potential supervisors or graduate students. Conferences also enable researchers to keep abreast of all advances in their field, presenting cutting edge research usually on a variety of subjects. We hope that you will be treated to exciting and excellent talks. Whilst listening to the talks is extremely valuable, hallway conversations can be even more fruitful.

The theme of the current conference is: ‘Dealing with educational inequalities in the age of measurement in South Africa – chasing numbers versus supporting students to succeed’. Educational inequalities are a global concern. Contrary to what is generally applicable in many of the emerging economies of the world, South Africa’s school enrolment rates are very high into the secondary school years. However, one of the striking observations regularly made is the disparities in education provision between urban and rural areas. Therefore, much effort is desirable beyond providing physical access to school grounds is desirable. The challenge is to build on the post-apartheid successes in not only increasing average years of schooling for the population so that most youth complete secondary schooling, but providing quality education that gives the citizens of this country the fairest possible shot at survival. Many believe that this dream is achievable. The harder issue, which arises in the international milieu and in South Africa too, is the importance of improving the quality of education.

Two of the many challenges that face South African education manifested themselves in *#FeesMustFall* campaign as well as the Annual National Assessments (ANA) debacle in 2015.

I, in anticipation, wish to extend my gratitude to the keynote speakers who will be sharing their experiences and wisdom with us. Keynote speakers are known for their energizing and inspiring prowess, providing useful information as well as offering reassurances, clarity and influencing opinions.

I also want to thank Cape Peninsula University of Technology for hosting the conference under the stewardship of Prof Monwabisi Ralarala. A few scholars of note will also be receiving medals at this conference. The EASA family salutes them!

Dr Dipane Hlalele

EASA Chair 2015