

Press Release

Issued by Premier Sibusiso Ndebele on behalf of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government

KZN PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE SON OF THE PROVINCE PROFESSOR MAZISI KUNENE

On behalf of the Government and the people of KwaZulu-Natal I pass condolences to the Kunene family and friends on the passing away of the much beloved and well travelled Professor Mazisi Kunene.

We pay tribute to this renowned scholar whose literally works inspired our communities and contributed towards the social and political development of our new democracy.

Professor Kunene was a scholar and a writer of note who made his presence felt in universities and academic institutions throughout the world. At the height of the apartheid system he left the country to pursue and perfect his writing skills. He will be remembered for his analytical mind and his ability to create meaning out of words. His collection of writings in IsiZulu and English is a reflection of a man of his time.

He will be remembered for among others his epic titled, Anthem of the Decades, which was an epic dedicated to the women of Africa. He specifically dedicated this epic to the goddess Nomkhubulwane, as well as to Queen Nandi, mother of Shaka, and others which he termed the great “women of the African continent and their children”.

He wrote extensively about the African communities and especially the Zulu belief system, its philosophical basis, its culture, its poetry, its music and its meaning in relation to the universe.

His style of writing was in the class of the likes of Ali A Mazrui, Dr Nelson Mandela, Can Themba, and Wole Soyinka.

He has left a legacy of research and documentation which only the present and future generations of scholars can take forward.

His death is a great loss to the communities of KwaZulu-Natal. Professor Kunene has contributed not only to the democratisation of our country and Province, but helped shaped the dialogue and robust exchanges in academic, social and civil societies.

He will be remembered.

Our heart goes out to the deceased loved ones. The public will be informed about the funeral arrangements.

Hamba Kahle Professor Kunene.