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SUBMISSION TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

1.1 The University system

It is important that the place and role of each university is clearly defined in the South African university system. In the initial vision which was formulated by the ANC for higher education, the starting-point used to be that higher education should form an integrated system. In the White Paper on Education and Training (15 March 1995) this starting-point is taken further in that the terms " education" and " training" are not only used conjointly in the title of the White Paper, but also form an important foundation for the new educational policy. This foundation is the integrated approach to education and training:

"Education and training are essential elements of human resource development. Instead of regarding these as parallel activities, the Ministry of Education is convinced they are, in fact, closely related. In order to maximise the advantages of this affinity the Ministry is committed to an integrated approach to education and training and thus regards this as an essential underlying concept for a national strategy for the development of human resources.

An integrated approach implies a view of the learning process which rejects a rigid division between "academic" and "applied", "theory" and " practice", "knowledge" and "skills", "head" and "hand". Successful modern economies and societies require the elimination of artificial hierarchies in social organisation, in organisation and management of work and in the way in which the learning process is organised and certificated. It requires citizens with a strong foundation of general education; who have the desire and ability to continually pursue learning, to adapt to new knowledge, skills and technologies and to develop these, to move flexibly between occupations, to assume responsibility for personal performance, to set high standards and to operate conjointly (sections 3, 4 and 5, Chapter 2 of the White Paper on Education and Training, 1995).

With this integrated approach to education and training the universities will obviously remain in a unique position as the category of education institutions where the most advanced qualifications can be achieved. University education is unique, also in terms of the symbiosis which must exist between university education and research in order to comply with the quality requirements of university qualifications. If the South African universities do not sustain these features which are unique to the international university system, they will progressively lose their essential role of contributing to the development of high level human resources of South Africa. The crisis of the universities in Africa is a warning example of such an inability (Universities in Africa, World Bank Technical Paper Number 194, William Saint, 1992).

On the other hand, the universities are inextricably part of the broad national education system of South Africa and each university as such should also function as part of the integrated framework as envisaged in the White Paper. The possibility that students could transfer horizontally as well as vertically within the educational system, requires that the universities become part of a new highly articulated educational system, where multiple points of entrance and exit will have to exist. This kind of system was strongly supported during the conference of the Committee of University Principals (CUP) held during July 1994 at the Pilanesberg Nature Reserve. The National Qualification Framework which was envisaged by the Department of Education (art 7, Chapter 2, White Paper, 1995) is likewise supported in principle by the CUP, in order to allow for universities to function in a scientific and structured way within an integrated educational system. The reservations expressed by the CUP were, however, conveyed to the Department of Education, and are supported by this University.

Within any national university system consisting of a meaningful number of universities, there will be diversity with regard to the different institutions. This diversity is one of the most important factors for a vital university system. With the emergence of the era of quality control in Higher Education, a trend has developed to define criteria on the grounds of which individual universities can be evaluated in order to determine its academic excellence. One cannot over-

emphasize the importance of advancing academic quality, however, certain negative consequences of this cannot be overlooked. One of these is the perception that the academic excellence of a university can be measured only by means of the "ideal model" of what a superb university should be. Millard (1983) stated the danger of this "ideal model" for the evaluation of institutions as follows:

"Normally this model has been someone's idea of a best college or of the better college. Thus, this definition is closely related to the definitional-descriptive concept of standards, and has all the elitism, rigidity and qualitative criteria that that involves. Where this definition is applied, the result is likely to be homogenization.... and disregard for the excellence in institutions or programmes of radically different types."

The approach in the White Paper on Education and Training is that the integrated system seeks to oppose the type of "homogenizing" referred to above. Therefore the new approach should definitely be supported. On the other hand, the new approach does pose a similar danger in the shape of another form of "homogenizing", namely an exaggerated measure of pragmatic orientation on all levels of education and training which might work through to curriculum levels of all institutions, from within the framework of the National Qualification Framework. The White Paper indeed refers to fears in this regard (Chapter two, sections 12, 13 and 14). However, the important role which the universities play both in their individual and collective context of prevention of homogenizing is not discussed in the White Paper.

An investigation of the Committee of University Principals has already made a contribution with regard to this in 1987. The report of this investigation by the CUP was accepted as a working document at the meeting of the CUP on 20 January 1988. Five guidelines providing a foundation for the place and role of individual universities, as well as for the system, were part of this report. The CUP decided the following:

*"Five proposed **guidelines** dealing with the functions of the university have been accepted by the CUP which recognizes that they have to be interpreted in the South African context to ensure that the university system in South Africa develops in such a way that any person with the ability to gain admission to a university and the wish to do so should as soon as possible be able to compete on equal terms to gain admission on grounds of merit and/or potential," (Interim response of the CUP, 1988).*

These five guidelines are of a very universal and basic nature, and particularly relevant for the positioning of a university within the societal structure in which it has to function, as well as a foundation for the characteristics of a national university system which has to comply with specifically South African requirements and conditions. As such these guidelines can provide an excellent framework for the National Commission for Higher Education during the time of reflection on the current as well as the future situation of the university system in South Africa, and are thus recommended to the Commission.

The five guidelines were accepted in 1989 as part of a set of starting-points for the long-term planning of the PU for CHE. In order to evaluate the current position of the PU for CHE within the South African university system, the University's viewpoints with regard to these five guidelines provide an important frame of reference. These will be discussed in the following subsection, together with the necessary renewals which are essential and desirable at this stage for each university in its own right.

The deliberations of the CUP concerning the university system in South Africa during the past decade reflected among other things the community of interest of the individual universities inside the system, as opposed to the individuality of each institution. In the report of the CUP it is indicated that universities are part of the larger societal order in which they function and with which they interact. Certain expectations are required from the university concerning its environment, and from within the university there are often different attitudes on how to react to external expectations. In line with the five guidelines which were formulated in the CUP investigation (CUP Report, Chapter 1, 1987), ten factors are defined which may often be considered as diametric opposites, but each one of these is on its own nevertheless also of essential importance for each university. The importance of such factors is also referred to in Chapter 2 of the White Paper on Education and Training, e.g. as

"academic and "applied"
"theory" and "practice"
"knowledge" and "skill"
"head" and "hand".

In the White Paper a rigid division between these factors is rejected because it could give rise to artificial hierarchy and class differences (White Paper Chapter 2, sections 4 and 5). In the White Paper the creation of an integrated system is suggested as a mechanism to oppose the forming of such hierarchies. The findings of the CUP investigation also support the systems approach, because all universities in South Africa belong to the same kind of institutions and because each one of them functions within the same broader societal order. However, the CUP Report emphasizes the diversity which exists inside the system, on account of the uniqueness of each institution. The way in which the system develops, should therefore take into account both the collective as well as the unique nature:

"The rapidly accelerating rate of change to which the social and cultural milieu of a university is exposed, requires moreover that the system of university education should not be forced into a rigid uniformity, but that it should be allowed the greatest possible degree of freedom for reactive and proactive action, as well as for individual adjustment and organic development," (CUP Report, Chapter 1).

The diversity in the system is also reflected in the relative positions occupied by the individual universities within the continuum between the factors which are intrinsic to each university as well as to the system of universities. In the presentation of the place and role of the PU for CHE this set of ten factors and five guidelines was taken as the terms of reference. These ten factors are:

"traditional identity" and "contemporary relevance"
"universality" and "particularity"
"autonomy" and "limitation"
"elitism" and "egalitarianism"
"corporation" and "community".

The relationship between each pair of factors forms the guideline which can, according to the decision of the CUP, be used as frame of reference by individual universities. The universal nature of these factors, and the guidelines which were created for these, make it possible to evaluate the South African university system in an international context. With the entry of the South African universities to the international ranks, such as, for example the International Association of Universities (which intends holding their next world conference in South Africa), the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the Association of African Universities, this context is exceptionally topical. We have already referred to Africa and the crisis in the universities of our continent. A distortion of the balance which ought to exist between the mentioned factors is often the underlying reason for this crisis. The following quote from the report of William Saint for the World bank serves to illustrate this:

"During the formative period for African universities, European linkages served to establish standards, insure access to international scientific information, train national staff, initiate research programs and provide a ready framework of reference for institutional development decisions.

There is much to suggest that African universities are nearing the end of their initial phase of development. A second generation of problems has begun to appear, among them issues of financing, relevance, efficiency, quality and university-state relations.

Africa's universities currently stand in crisis at a pivotal point in their development. The mandates given to them at independence now require reassessment as a result of the changes in the world, in Africa, and in the universities themselves. Internationally, the emergence of global markets has created a competitive world economic system characterized by rapid knowledge generation and technological innovation. These changes affect local labor markets and the type of skills they require. Within Africa, high population

growth rates and increased access to education have boosted the social demand for higher education, leading to rising university enrollments and a proliferation of tertiary institutions. Universities have also changed, becoming mass-based and diversified institutions operating under severe financial constraints."

Several of the factors which affected the development of universities in Africa, are very applicable to South Africa, also with regard to the new dispensation which we have entered. Therefore the experience of the university in the post-colonial era is of essential importance when the place and role of the universities in South Africa are discussed, especially with a view to the future.

The White Paper on Education and Training gives a description of the first steps of policy making by the Ministry of Education (White Paper Chapter 1, section 1). The national importance and directedness of this policy-making are strongly emphasized; these provide the most important foundation of the development initiative. It should be this way, and this approach is also supported by this University. It is to be expected that the recommendations of the National Commission for Higher Education will agree with this, judged by the wide mandate which is explained in section 72 of Chapter five of the White Paper for that sector. Concerning the universities, this national role that every institution ought to play will have to come under the searchlight. However, the international and universal character which should be an inseparable part of the university, should not be neglected. The way in which this balance is maintained, clearly emerges from the context of the five guidelines of the CUP Report of 1987. This will presently be discussed in conjunction with the place and role of the PU for CHE within the university system of South Africa.

1.2 Place and role of the PU for CHE: Context and viewpoints

1.2.1 Introduction

The terms of reference for the positioning of the PU for CHE falls, in the first place, within the context of the five guidelines of the CUP Report. This context was chosen, because it has been the framework within which the long term planning of the University has been done since 1989. Moreover, these guidelines are currently the only considered context developed and accepted as a working document by the CUP itself for the positioning of the individual Universities and the University system. Furthermore, it is being said from several quarters that South Africa is the gateway to development in Africa. This view is often also applied to the South African university system. In this regard the World Bank Report on African Universities is therefore particularly important, and is referred to a number of times.

1.2.2 First general guideline from the CUP Report:

Traditional identity-contemporary relevance

"As the institutionalising of the quest for scientific knowledge, the university should honour the need for relevance in such a manner that the social, economic and cultural needs of its environment are regarded in a serious way in its academic activities of Education and research, but without sacrificing the primary Education aim of academic expertise and intellectual creativity to the Education aim of ready task efficiency and recipe-based problem solving techniques, and without subordinating the pure academic research aim of development of science to, or to allow it to be replaced by, the more pragmatic research aim of answers to practical problems of short-term national or particular concern."

The quest for scientific knowledge, the practice of research and the symbiosis between research and education are the key elements distinguishing a university from other tertiary institutions, and in which the unique basis for the relevance of a university is situated. In this sense any university can only be relevant at the present time if it meets the universal requirements which distinguish a university from other tertiary institutions. Another important aspect is the degree to which universities are equipped and ready to address the requirements of the emergent technological era in its widest sense. Particularly in a future South Africa success in this can be decisive for every university wanting to play a full and equal part as university. As such the maintaining of high standards, a culture which strives towards excellence and an infrastructure, academic and other programmes which are in step with the

technological requirements of the times, are a fixed point of reference for the PU for CHE when dealing with the demand for relevance within the South African university system.

This emphasis on the traditional identity does in no way mean that relevant national needs can be ignored by the university. As a primary source of expertise the university should function as development agent in accordance with the actual problems of the time, the country and the people with a due sense of service. As such every university should give very serious consideration to the question of contemporary national needs, because irrelevance in this regard implies an essential threat for the right to existence of the institution. In case of irrelevance, the legitimacy of the university, public trust of the students and the society as well as the accountability to the state as main financier, become suspect.

In the White Paper on Education and Training the role which universities should play in national development is also placed in the context of the traditional identity (as contributor to the "world-wide advancement of knowledge") and contemporary relevance (the various "challenges which are required by short and long term policy responses" in the interest of the "national development") (section 64, Chapter 5 of the White Paper). This claim for contemporary relevance in the White Paper is often linked directly to the RDP (for example Chapter 1, section 1). The foundation provided by RDP is thus of particular importance with regard to the contribution to development required from universities. This will be elaborated in Chapter 2 of this submission to the National Commission.

Statement of viewpoint:

If the enormous requirement for development in South Africa as defined in the RDP, together with the diverse, albeit fundamental changes which take place nationally, in Africa and internationally are to be considered, it becomes clear that traditional identity as opposed to contemporary relevance should not be regarded as mutually exclusive concepts. Therefore it is the viewpoint of the PU for CHE that the future contributions from this University, as one of the high-level educational institutions of the country, will be located in the University's successful handling of the simultaneous requirements of contemporary quality and relevance: with insight, balance, seriousness and dedication.

Comment:

Within the Africa-context, as well as its effect on South Africa, the resultant polar tension between traditional identity and relevance is generally expressed in ideas such as Eurocentrism as opposed to Africanisation, or put differently: Universities in Africa as opposed to African Universities. In the report of the World Bank on the universities in Africa the following two quotes sharply illustrate the severe importance of this polar tension (here called "Culture of Quality" and "Relevance") for the long term success of a university:

"Creating a Culture of Quality"

What shapes the quality of the intellectual environment for higher education? In Africa, as elsewhere, quality is the product of a combination of factors. Principal among them are educational standards and incentives to uphold them, staff development and retention, educational inputs, research and postgraduate programs, and freedom of expression. The challenge of preserving quality within Africa's universities can appear daunting.

At a time when charges of corruption and mismanagement seem to be on the rise in Africa, renewed attention to the development and inculcation of professional standards can potentially pay long term capacity-building dividends by enhancing the quality of performance and the credibility of actors.

In academic environments, standards are reinforced at the level of the individual, the peer group, the institution, and the system. Although a wide range of institutional mechanisms exist to monitor and reinforce academic standards, an unwillingness to compromise on quality is an institutional value that must be regularly communicated by the university's chief executive.

Maintaining relevance

Research is the activity that sets universities apart from other educational institutions and affirms their relevance to society's needs. The revitalization of African university research requires a multi-faceted strategy which entails: (1) freedom of expression as a condition for critical independent thinking; (2) an institutionalized capacity to promote and manage research; (3) appropriate incentives and rewards for research outputs; and (4) guaranteed minimum funding for research from both government and donors.

What constitutes relevance within a particular university system is best determined by those concerned in each national context. At a minimum, relevance would seem to include educational choices that are germane to the national economy and not inconsistent with the prevailing labor market, some capacity for critical and innovative thinking on issues of national importance, the transmission of essential professional and cultural values, institutional process and behavior that equip graduates for leadership in society, and representation of the country's regional, gender and ethnic groupings in the composition of its staff and students, and in the content of the curriculum."

With regard to the first guideline it is clear that the actualization of the traditional identity of a university as response to the urgent development needs of the time, the country and the people should offer the foundation of being truly relevant in the national and international context. Where the National Commission for Higher Education will give prime attention to the importance of relevance, the role played by the traditional identity of a university may never be disregarded. A university system which does not accommodate both these factors will lead the universities on the road to irrelevance.

1.2.3 Second general guideline from the CUP Report:

Universality - particularity

"As centre and agent of cultural development the university should attempt to affiliate itself with the social and cultural values of its support communities, on condition that this particularising attachment to a group or groups does not inhibit the universal spirit and directedness which belongs to the university, but rather facilitate the advancement of a wider and more inclusive experience and expression of humanity in which any cultural borders are transcended."

Naturally each university is part of the universal system to which all universities belong, and each university also displays the features of that system. In the case of the PU for CHE there are, however, two uniquely special characteristics, namely the Afrikaans character and the Christian basis.

The motivations by which the University came into being have already been indicated, and the traditional Christian support community (which still is one of the major support communities of the University) has been mentioned elsewhere. The interests of these stakeholders are still maintained by council members nominated by, among others, the procurators of the Original Founders and elected by the Convocation (Alumni). These stakeholders expect that the language, tradition, aspirations and values of the University will be such that the particular cultural identity will remain. At the same time the diversity of the cultural character of especially the student community of the PU for CHE has greatly broadened over the last few years. The current situation of the PU for CHE can be described as an Afrikaans University with a multi-cultural student population. The PU for CHE can, as such, fulfil an important role in the university system. On the one hand the Afrikaans-speaking segment is part of the South African population, and an important part thereof. This group also needs to have institutions with which to identify. At the same time the cultural realisation of the different groups should occur in harmony with the cultural diversity which is such an intrinsic part of the South African population.

The PU for CHE therefore wants to make a meaningful contribution as an Afrikaans university and as educational institution to cultural aspects of nation-building. This can be achieved by the advancement of the cultural characteristics of the different groupings in the ranks of the students of the PU for CHE. At the same time an ethos is maintained at the PU for CHE in which appreciation is encouraged for the virtues of cultural diversity, which are an intrinsic characteristic of the South African nation. Although the core of the cultural character of the PU

for CHE is thus Afrikaans, and the desire is to maintain it like that, the multicultural composition of the student body of the PU for CHE makes it possible to make a unique contribution to the promotion of attitudes and values which are essential for a balanced South African nationhood.

The other particular characteristic of the PU for CHE is the Christian basis of this University.

The PU for CHE functions as a university within a broader South African society which has, according to indications, a predominantly Christian foundation of faith. As such there is in South Africa a large support community which associates with the Christian character of the PU for CHE and thus the University can fulfil its unique and proper roles with the acknowledgement of that support community.

The Christian character of the University is also expressed in its philosophy of science. In this philosophy of science the universal spirit and directedness which is characteristic of the academic activities of all universities is adhered to. On the other hand the Word of God is also recognised as a source of knowledge which provides insight and perspectives which are of decisive importance for aspects such as the purpose of science, ethical issues, boundaries and basic questions in science, the essence of science and prescientific presuppositions which are directional for science itself. In this regard PU for CHE forms part of the international university fraternity which shares a similar foundation and philosophy of science, as will be argued later in this chapter.

In the practical expression of the character of the PU for CHE full cognizance is taken of the present constitutional dispensation of our country, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this report.

Statement of viewpoint:

As academic institution the PU for CHE, like all other universities, should respond to the requirement of universality. On the other hand the PU for CHE came into being exactly because of its particular identity, especially concerning the Christian basis. This basis still constitutes its right of existence. On account of the fundamental, new circumstances and needs in South Africa and the responsibility of the PU for CHE as well, the PU for CHE will not give expression to this particular character so exclusively that these changing needs cannot be addressed concretely and adequately. This implies that the service field of the University will further be broadened and increased. The centrality of the character of the University implies that the University will have to be serious and dedicated with the preservation and actualization of its character, but will have to go about this with insight and balance, thus excluding any forms of extremism or discrimination. In a positive sense the PU for CHE can therefore provide an important contribution to the progress of a value system which this University regards as essential for the nation-building of a multi-cultural society such as South Africa.

Comment:

On more than one occasion the historically Afrikaans universities were in the spotlight and critical comments concerning the preservation of their Afrikaans character were made. The following quote from the NEPI Report is an example of this:

"The Afrikaans-medium universities, like the main other groupings of universities, are beginning to debate and consider what roles they can play in a changing post-secondary education (PSE) system. An emerging view of what the future role of the Afrikaans-medium universities should be can be summed up in the following way:

- Three interrelated problems (demographic, person-power and financial) suggest that South Africa must accept that it has too many universities in relation to other PSE Institutions. Universities are facing increasing demographic pressures because of South Africa's high birth rate in comparison with the developed world and some developing countries. Universities in particular are very expensive and have high proportions of their enrollments in areas that are not consistent with the personpower needs of the country. As a consequence the total of PSE enrollments assigned to universities should be reduced.*

- *Universities in South Africa will have to accept that there will probably be a role for at most two universities whose only medium of instruction is Afrikaans in South Africa in the future. Because white Afrikaans-speaking students are at present overrepresented in the university system, the remaining Afrikaans-language universities will have to become non-racial or multicultural and multilingual PSE institutions.*
- *The number of universities in South Africa must be reduced through processes of regional mergers, consolidation and rationalization. Some universities, including some Afrikaans-medium institutions, may have to be turned into technical universities or technikons, or even into the kind of community college needed to provide for mass PSE in South Africa.*

The points raised above make the formulation of a new language policy which represents the views of all South Africans an urgent need. This new policy will have to take account of the fact that most black students prefer English to Afrikaans as medium of instruction."

In this quote a number of important aspects are touched upon and these require further comment:

It is important that the Afrikaans universities will each formulate language policy in view of the role of English in higher education. The position of the PU for CHE will be discussed elsewhere in this report. It seems to be general practice that all the Afrikaans universities at present offer parts of their courses in English and there is not a single university with Afrikaans as the only medium of all educational offerings. However, it is clear that this double medium approach has particular limitations, especially with regard to the implications which it might have on the provision of staff and finally also on the cost of studying.

The data in the final report of the Sub-committee for Admission to Tertiary Institutions (Zuma Committee) of the Advisory Committee concerning the crisis in the Tertiary Sector (Carolus Committee) show that the universities of the former Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly) had, in 1995, an average intake of 58,3% white students, as opposed to only 0,8% at the other residential universities. It is hence clear that the former group of universities is already very well-equipped to respond to the educational requirements of a multi-cultural institution.

A research investigation of the University of Pretoria indicated clearly that the Afrikaans universities jointly play a leading role in the teaching of several high-level professional courses in South Africa as well as with regard to other aspects, such as scientific research. Any infringement of the university status of any Afrikaans university can be severely detrimental to their national contributions to high-level human resources. The importance of the capacity-building offered by these universities in the interest of the development of South Africa cannot be overestimated.

1.2.4 Third general guideline of the CUP Report:

Autonomy - limitation

"Universities must acknowledge that their autonomy should be exercised with responsibility and self-discipline, but universities should maintain their claim on institutional autonomy as an indispensable condition for the efficient practising of their academic functions, and thus for the determination of their place and role. At the same time they should acknowledge the limitations to which their decision-making competence is subjected."

The relationship between the autonomy and accountability of universities is such a topical issue that it was one of the three main tasks of the committee which advised the Minister of Education in 1993 concerning the crisis in the Higher Education. It is also linked to the governance of the individual universities as well as to the university system as a whole. Accordingly the CUP delivered an important contribution in this regard by means of the draft Universities' Bill (submitted to the National Commission for Higher Education by the CUP). The cohesion between autonomy and accountability form an important foundation for the suggested new university act. (The viewpoint of the PU for CHE is discussed elsewhere in this report.)

In the White Paper on Education and Training the traditional legal basis and the autonomy of universities are acknowledged and endorsed (White Paper Chapter 5, section 69). Yet the National Commission has to make suggestions on the governance of tertiary institutions themselves. Thus, in this report, an elaborate contribution is offered on the cohesion of autonomy and accountability within the institutional context.

Some general comments on the principle basis of autonomy are made here:

University autonomy is, in the first place, concerned with academic freedom. The viewpoint of the PU for CHE concerning this coincides with the basic starting-point which does not regard authority and freedom as two great opposing entities, but as two aspects which function conjointly. Freedom presumes the possibility of choice, albeit subject to particular conditions. As such this University will be accountable and responsible for the practising of its freedom. Its freedom is measured by factors such as its institutional being, basis, mission and service commitment. In agreement herewith it is accepted that authority is a given order of reality which implies that one has superiority over another, and accordingly constitutes an essential aspect on which the entire societal structure rests. For the University it means thus also an acknowledgement of real limitations imposed by structures such as laws of the country, statutorily stipulations and educational policy as well as expectations of society on the University. That is the reason why the University esteems respect in general, and respect for authority in particular, so highly. In the maintaining of authority, order is ensured, which is essential if the University wishes to fulfil its duty and by means of which it can realize its freedom as well.

University autonomy is not absolute, but is limited by the accountability of the university. Some of the aspects of liability are internal, such as maintaining quality in education, research and an internal culture of consultation and democracy. Other aspects of responsibility are more externally determined, such as responsible application of subsidy and other sources of income, functioning within the limitations of the general act on universities and responsibility towards social requirements in the contemporary circumstances.

Statement of viewpoint:

The viewpoint of the PU for CHE is that university autonomy is the inalienable right of each university, but that this autonomy cannot be absolute. It is limited by the inherent interrelationship of authority and freedom, as well as by the way in which a university fulfils its societal accountability.

Comment:

The influence that the policy of the former government had on the development of the university system in South Africa was fundamental detrimental in view of, among other things, the legal coercion for separate higher Education based on race - also on institutional level. At the workshop of the CUP in July 1994 the relationship between authority and universities was discussed on several occasions, both from this historic, but also from a future perspective. Two perspectives of international participants to this workshop supply an important contribution in this regard:

Prof. D. F. U. Ekong, Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities, mentioned the excellent quality of the university system in South Africa which will however be re-evaluated by the new government in South Africa from a political point of view. He continued:

"There is always the temptation everywhere for governments to attempt a quick fix solution to political sensitive problems. In this case a quick fix approach to the challenges would probably damage an outstanding higher education capacity which you have and which is a tremendous asset for the country. The universities therefore have a heavy responsibility to take initiatives to implement constructive and realistic measures so as to dissuade government from intervening in a manner that might achieve immediate gains but could lead to a set back in the long term for higher education in the country".

The relationship between the government and universities was also discussed by Dr. W. Saint of the World Bank. He wrote, among other things, the following on this topic:

"Although the Government had developed a framework (for policy decisions), the universities collectively do not seem to have a champion to promote their cause in wider forum."

In his publication on universities in Africa he had indeed previously indicated that one of the most important reasons for the decline of the university system in Sub-Saharan Africa happened on account of a distortion of this relationship:

"University/State Relations

Universities and the governments that support them exist in an uneasy and sometimes adversarial relationship across much of Sub-Saharan Africa. The principal sources of tension are governments' perception of the university community as a frequent locus of criticism and political opposition, the increased involvement of governments in university affairs, and the inability of governments to provide for the financial needs of universities on a sustainable basis.

The various university acts stipulate that African universities should be largely autonomous from government control. However, government involvement in the running of African universities has been a growing characteristic of government-university relations. Governments routinely appoint key university administrators and members of university councils. In many settings, governments may also mandate the closure of universities, determine the terms and conditions of staff appointments, set enrollment levels, and censor staff research, Education and travel agendas." (World Bank Technical Paper No. 194, 1992)

These two perspectives from Africa (Prof Ekong) and about Africa (Dr Saint) illustrate the observation that a distortion of the relationship between government and universities is currently probably one of the most important reasons for the crisis in which the universities of Africa find themselves. This relationship is of such a critical nature that it is also of crucial importance for the planning of the future governance of the universities in South Africa.

1.2.5 Fourth general guideline from the CUP Report:

Elitism - egalitarianism

"The advantages of studying at a university should be accessible to all who have the ability, aptitude and interest, taking into account the financial limitations to which universities are subjected and the nature and extent of the personpower needs in which universities have to provide, and on condition that the ideal of academic quality is not surrendered or attenuated in the pursuit of equal opportunities and the widest possible access."

This guideline strives to create a balance between the accessibility of a university and the supplying of quality higher education, subject to the implicit assumption that massification of education gives rise to decrease of quality. The present South African constitution guarantees **equal access to basic education** for everybody. This constitutional right is not directly applicable to higher education, but is of vital importance in higher education. In 1994 it was addressed by the Sub-committee concerned with Access to Tertiary Institutions to advise the Minister of Education about this issue. In the analysis of the accessibility crisis at South African universities the sub-committee found that the most basic aspect of this issue is the simultaneous advancement of increased accessibility, especially at the universities of the former Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly), together with the guarantee of quality education to students with low matric symbols. The last-mentioned students predominate at universities of the former Department Education and Training. The finding of the sub-committee was:

"Increased black, and particularly African, access to higher education has occurred primarily through UNISA, Technikon SA and VISTA and by rapid growth, often beyond physical and human resource capacity, at a number of institutions with predominantly black enrollments. Changes in enrollment patterns at residential institutions with a predominantly white student body have been significant at many institutions. Nevertheless, African students enrolled at the 10 previously "House of Assembly"

residential universities constituted less than 10 % of the African students at university in 1993.

The subcommittee believes that it is important to recognise that enhanced black access to predominantly white institutions is only part of the access challenge. While it appears as if most African students achieving A, B and C aggregates in DET examinations, and most African students matriculating from other authorities are enrolling at predominantly white institutions, the predominantly black institutions face the great part of the access challenge of rising demand for entry from low D and E aggregate students. How the higher education system meets this dual challenge is one of the most fundamental issues for future policy," (Report of the Subcommittee on Accessibility to Tertiary Institutions, 1995 in CUP Circular 119/95).

The most important recommendation of the subcommittee to the Minister of Education was:

"The major proposal is that a Ministerial policy statement on access to universities and technikons in 1995 be developed and that it be discussed as widely as possible with key stakeholder groups, particularly the student sector, with some urgency."

These two quotes clearly illustrate the seriousness of the problem between accessibility and quality education on the one hand, and the absence of a policy and mechanism on how to attempt to solve the problem on the other hand.

In the White Paper on Education and Training two basic starting-points are formulated, which offer a point of departure in order to address the problem, namely:

(1) Mobility and articulation

"The System must increasingly allow access to high quality education and training opportunities for all children, adolescents and adults and provide educators with the means to move easily from one learning context to another, so that the possibility of life-long study is enhanced" (White Paper Chapter 4, section 6) .

and

(2) Flexibility and open learning systems

The new education policy

"must supply an increasing variety of learning possibilities, which will offer students more flexibility in the choice of which, where, when, how and with what pace they learn" (White Paper Chapter 4, section 6)

and

"open education is an approach which combines the principles of learning-centredness, life-long study, flexibility of study provision, the removal of obstacles with regard to study, the acknowledgement of credits of former study experience, the provision of study assistance, the construction of study programmes with the expectation that students can pass, and the maintaining of strict quality assurance in the design of study material and support systems. South Africa can profit from world-wide experience over several decades in the development of innovating Education methods, including the use of accompanied study, and the appropriate use of a variety of media, which gives practical expression to the principles of open education" (White Paper Chapter 5, section 25).

In the ranks of the Committee of University Principals three basic decisions have already been taken which agree with these starting-points in the White Paper, namely (1) that the institution of a National Qualification Framework is supported in principle (for mobility and articulation), (2) that a Unit for the Promotion of Quality (for quality insurance) is established and (3) that distance education by open learning systems is promoted at all universities.

This approach which is envisaged for the future is directly linked to the practice which has already been established at the PU for CHE, namely differentiated education presentations (full-time, after-hours and flexi-education), increased accessibility linked to a process continuous evaluation and accreditation by formal agreements for co-operation with other

educational institutions. This will be discussed in detail in the following section and elsewhere in the report.

An aspect on access to the PU for CHE which should be referred to concerns the Christian foundation of the University. A common perception is that students at the P.U. for C.H.E. are selected on religious grounds in order to obtain access to the University. The reality is:

"Nobody shall be prevented from becoming or remaining a student at the University or from obtaining a degree or diploma on the grounds of his religious conviction" (Section 25(2) of the Private Act of the PU for CHE, Act No. 80 of 1993).

It is expected, however, that all students who study at the PU for CHE should respect the Christian character of the University and promote a culture of learning at this University as outlined by the relevant policy documents of the University.

The first aspect is a juridical stipulation which has been valid for the PU for CHE since 1921 when it received state recognition as one of constituting colleges of the University of South Africa. The second aspect is an arrangement which should prevail at every educational institution, namely respect for a culture where the institutional ethos and value system should promote the educational mission and culture of learning of the institution.

The current situation of the PU for CHE is that more than 95% of the students confess the Christian faith as their own. Thus it is clear that the PU for CHE definitely provides in a real need for university education on a Christian basis which exists in South Africa. The fact that students of other religious persuasions have studied successfully at the PU for CHE, indicates that the application of the Christian value system does not have a discriminating effect on the students.

For admission to the PU for CHE the requirement of minimum standards on school level naturally applies. Fundamentally the University admits to the reality of the variety of gifts and aptitudes in individuals and thus the orientation of the University is to support students to the achievement of their intrinsic ability in its normal education task. Also the University views its duty as the creation of opportunities, so that the student is broadly shaped as a person to be equipped to the requirements of society. In its role as University, aspects such as the provision of suitable accommodation, opportunities for social diversion, facilities for cultural activities as well as for the practising of official and recreational sports are regarded as very important, and these are viewed as essential elements of support for the educational task of the University.

Within this tradition the PU for CHE has over recent years already begun to establish itself as a university with a meaningful multi-cultural component. The backlog of the black schools required a more egalitarian admission policy in order to accommodate students from those ranks at the University. This has made the establishment of courses for communication skills and limited bridging courses essential. In the recent past especially the public and private sectors established bursary and loan programmes to allow these students admission to universities. The insistence on wider access will increase further. All of this can lead to the University's shifting increasingly away from the elitist pole, towards the pole of egalitarianism.

With regard to this guideline the balance between openness for adequate access and preservation of standards for completion of the qualification should thus be maintained. The former is important in view of the need for training and development in the country, and the latter to maintain the academic quality and integrity of the PU for CHE.

Concerning the international context, the need for the elitist aspect of universities will increase rather than decrease, in view of the particular requirements as well as the potential of the technological era. A university which does not comply with this may within decades not be worthy of the appellation of 'university'.

Statement of viewpoint:

The PU for CHE stands firm when it comes to the maintaining of high academic standards, also seen against the background of the increasingly urgent need for tertiary education in the South African population. However, to make entry to the University more accessible, an openness with regard to a flexible admission policy, together with limited and selected support programmes in certain fields of study, is necessary. The educational policy of the PU for CHE is aimed at ensuring that, over the entire period of

undergraduate study, support and standards will function simultaneously, in such a way that increasing academic immersion will take place during the period of study and that high quality will be assured with regard to all qualifications which are obtained at the PU for CHE. Here the important requirement should be added: that the University's academic focus remains on the requirements of the technological era.

Comment.

Like the rest of Africa, South Africa has an enormously high rate of population growth. Furthermore the increase in the population is supplemented by immigration from Africa, so that this component will, according to estimations, constitute more than 10 % of the population of South Africa by 1995. For the universities, this fact places much pressure on increasing accessibility, which leads to massification of higher Education. The danger of deterioration of quality and dislocation to fields of study with fewer career possibilities is not imaginary. The profile of the universities of Africa is an example of this, which requires serious reflection from the South African university system:

"The university student population in Africa increased by 61 percent between 1980 and 1990, rising from 337 000 to 542 700. In spite of this impressive growth, access to higher education remains more limited in Africa than in other regions in the world. Accordingly, African efforts to expand the comparatively small human resource base of skilled professionals are certainly justified. Nevertheless, the rapid rise in enrollments has fostered associated problems which contribute to the current need for higher education reform. Among them are unbalanced financing among levels within the education sector, excessive numbers of students in lower cost social science and humanities disciplines, declining educational quality, and growing graduate unemployment. Ironically, efforts to expand tertiary enrollments under conditions of severe budget constraints may actually increase - not reduce- the shortage of specialized skills, as deteriorating educational quality leaves graduates poorly prepared for professional employment" (Report of the World Bank, 1992).

1.2.6 Fifth general guideline from the CUP Report:

Corporation - society

"As a legal entity the university ought to acknowledge its dependency of and responsibility towards the state and its legal ordering. The university is, however, not only constituted as a legal entity; it is also by its nature a society of seekers of the truth which, in free and open dialogue, with academic integrity, fulfils a role as a conscience of the state and society".

In this guideline the relationship between the society of academics and responsibility towards the state and society is discussed. Aspects like the political-ideological position of the state, the academic priorities of the university towards state-defined national priorities, and the spending of public funds which were received as subsidy, are applicable here .

In historical terms, the PU for CHE was sustained materially for the first half century of its existence (1869 to 1919) by the financial support of its support community only. It was thus a private institution. Since 1921 the University has received state subsidy as a college (1921-1951) and afterwards (1951- the present) as a university. During this period of more than 125 years the country has been governed by a variety of governments - some of which were more and others less sympathetic towards the character of the University. In its relationship with the state the University has always acknowledged its dependence on the state and its legal ordering. However, the University has never regarded itself as an instrument of the establishment or dismantling of any political ideology. The University always strove to work benevolently together with the government of the day by making its expertise available. Neither has the University hesitated to voice evidence when policies developed in such a direction that they were in conflict with the principles on which the University as society of educators and students was based.

During 1994 the PU for CHE commemorated the establishment of the University 125 years ago. This celebratory year coincided with the transition to the new democratic South Africa on 27 April 1994. As part of the commemorations in 1994 comprehensive reflection took place concerning the socio-critical role of the PU for CHE over the past few decades and the way in which the University lived out this role in particular, and the implications of the Christian

character in general. In several formal and informal forums attention was given to this issue. From the reflection a critical self-evaluation followed which culminated in a formal viewpoint developed at a special meeting of the Senate. This viewpoint was passed on to the Council of the PU for CHE, which reflected on it in its own right. This led to the following public statement by Council on 24 June 1994:

"It is the viewpoint of Council that the new political era is entered with a spirit of purposefulness and enthusiasm and that the PU for CHE as a Christian university wants to be committed to its vocation within its society.. It is the intention of the University to serve the country and its people as an educational institution in response to the requirements of the time. It is the opinion of Council that the new constitutional dispensation will offer the right as well as the place for a Christian university to fulfil this role.

Council also reflected on the socially sensitive way in which the university should critique society.. With regard to the former political dispensation it is the considered opinion of Council that the University did often accept and apply the former government policy and frames of thought of the time within the limitations of human discernment. This policy has affected fellow South Africans deeply and did not always do justice to the Christian principles on which the University rests.

Council is deeply aware of the complexity and challenges of the new dispensation. For co-operation with the authority, as with all other members of society, constructive involvement and service are the University's point of departure, without ever becoming uncritically subservient.

In this festival year of the University, Council is once again deeply aware of the building work of the previous generations at the PU for CHE as a Christian university and of the dependency on GOD for the realising of this duty. As in the past the Christian basis will, as it is expressed in the motto IN U LIG (In Thy Light), still serve as conscience, but especially as inspiration to be serious about the ideal of the University," (Council of the PU for CHE, June 1995).

In this and other reflections at the PU for CHE the endeavour is still towards the statement of principled basic viewpoints, inclination to critical thinking and academic integrity and dignity. On this level of balance, between the independence and accountability as a legal entity as well as an academic society the University views its place and role towards the state, including any government of the day, and will accordingly direct its strategic planning in that light.

Concerning the accountability with regard to state subsidies, the University has reasonable autonomy to apply these according to its own discretion. Directives still valid at present are: the requirement that all funds are annually accounted for according to SAPSE rules, the use of external auditors for control purposes, the limitation not to use subsidies for purposes other than the primary functions of the University and the responsibility of the University to maintain procedures which evaluate management's accountability for funds. With regard to all these aspects procedures and structures have been created over the past few years to make the spending of funds as transparent as possible. This has meant a strong move in the direction of the management of the university funds according to business principles and control of cost-effectiveness, measured by acceptable norms applicable to a university.

The decrease in state subsidy has currently reached levels which very concretely restrict the normal functioning of the University as an academic institution of high quality. Council accordingly accepted that an entrepreneurial orientation be established at the PU for CHE. This will be discussed in more detail elsewhere in this report (Chapter 4). The financial implication of this is that the PU for CHE accepts becoming increasingly less dependent on state subsidy. Increased financial independence of the PU for CHE is a logical consequence.

Statement of viewpoint:

Within the framework of fulfilling its responsibilities as a legal entity and in the realising of its character as a society of scholars, the PU for CHE strives towards a balance between openness and boundaries, transparency and confidentiality, a service-orientation and witness-bearing through action. This balance is promoted by the acceptance of responsibility, normative responsibility, applicable communication, a

participative management style, principled thinking, the realising of core values and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Comment:

With the decolonization of Africa the new governments have in a variety of ways impinged on the legal position of the universities. The consequences of this for the development of the university system have already been discussed elsewhere in this report. The way in which these operations were executed, is described in the following quote from the report:

"The composition of university councils - the primary policymaking body of a university - has proved a major point of contention. Although academic staff and student representatives in council are usually elected by their respective constituencies, key members of the council, including the chairman, are often appointed by the head of state. Governments have also mandated expansion of university enrollments without regard for university capacity to absorb the increased numbers or to provide them with a minimum standard of educational quality.

Governments control the policy environment for higher education in three basic ways. First, they set access policy. Second, they control the sources and mechanisms of finance. Third, governments determine the extent to which universities possess the administrative flexibility to reallocate budgets internally so as to provide incentives or to put efficiency savings to other uses" (Report of the World Bank, No. 194, 1992).

Because the deterioration of the university system in Africa is a well-known phenomenon, it is remarkable that a policy suggested for the future of higher education in South Africa is in many respects identical to the above-mentioned. This suggested policy on government control on the universities formulated in the NEPI Report is as follows:

"Provision must be made for a PSE system in which individual institutions have maximum academic freedom but a limited form of autonomy. Universities, for example, cannot be permitted in a future system to exercise the full range of decisions that they have under the current system. A choice will have to be made between a system in which the government exercises direct control over individual PSE institutions, and one where the state supervises the system through the mediation of a national educational council and by means of, for example, financial 'leverage'" (NEPI Report).

The mechanism of financial 'leverage' is a euphemism for financial "punitive measures". This mechanism according to which government can exercise coercion on individual universities by means of the reduction of subsidy, was also discussed by specially invited external participants in the CUP conference of July 1994. Especially the international guests responded to this concept with astonishment, such that Prof. Ekong, Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities, afterwards referred to it in his final conclusion with regard to universities which did not strongly support the vision of the government:

"I should not penalise those universities that may be seen as not contributing much towards attaining that vision. Rather, I should provide incentives to make it attractive for them to participate in the programme and to reward those that make the most progress" (Proceedings of the CUP Conference 1994).

1.3 International institutional associations of the PU for CHE

1.3.1 International context of universities with a religious foundation

As the only South African university of which the Christian foundation is entrenched in the Private Act of the University, the PU for CHE is often regarded as an anomaly in the national university system. A research project conducted by senior academics of the Faculty of Law of the PU for CHE in 1993/1994 addressed the occurrence and position of character universities in international context. The basic conclusion of the investigation is that character universities abound internationally. This is particularly true in the case of universities with a religious foundation. Some of these institutions vary from private institutions like colleges and universities in the USA to fully-recognized and state-funded universities, for example in Belgium and the Netherlands. However, the approach to the managing of character

universities differs from state to state. The following relatively comprehensive quotes from the executive summary of above-mentioned research report give an indication of this:

The following countries were visited and investigated with a view to particularly the responsibility of the state; the legal status of universities and the approach to character universities:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| • England | • The Netherlands |
| • Ireland | • USA |
| • Israel | • Canada |
| • India | • Belgium |
| • Germany | • France |

The specific aim was to compare systems where circumstances occur which can be compared to the South African society concerning the management of a particular religious foundation, language and culture within the higher education system.

The **management** of higher education in the different countries is closely related to historical development and constitutional foundations. It varies from considerable state control to no state control.

Concerning the **legal status** of universities, the following was found:

- Statutory arrangements on the legal status of universities occur in France (Loi sur l'enseignement superieur), the Netherlands (Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijke Onderzoek), Germany (Hochschulrahmengesetz and legislation of federal states), Canada (provincial legislators), USA (federal states), Belgium (decree of Flemish community) and Israel.
- Although the Rijks-universities in the Netherlands are typified as public legal entities in private law, it is not clear whether they are considered state organs. However, the staff are civil servants. The particular universities are defined as legal entities in private law which are controlled by the foundations or societies from which they originated. The relationship between university and staff rests on a service contract in private law (collective labour agreement).
- The question surrounding the legal status of universities in Canada was pertinently scrutinized in the important ruling of **McKinney v Board of Governors of the University of Guelph** 1976 (1990) DLR (4th) 54. In a very comprehensive and well-considered ruling, the **Supreme Court of Canada** ruled that the university is not a state organ and that the **Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms** in the **Constitution Act, 1982** which applies to the government only, does not apply to universities.
- The reasoning of this case is of great import for the South African situation because it takes a direction opposite to the American Law concerning the doctrine of **state action**. The court uses a *structural or institutional* test rather than the *functional* test which is applied with the doctrine of **state action**.
- Although state universities in the USA can hardly function without state involvement due to their dependence on the state authority, it is doubtful whether they function as state organs because the staff are not regarded as civil servants and as there is a large measure of autonomy and academic freedom. Private universities in the USA are not accountable to government but do have to comply with accrediting requirements.
- The statutorily recognised universities in France are public national institutions by definition which render a public service, in contrast to the private (Catholic) universities that do not have the authority to award degrees and that receive less state funding.
- In Belgium (Flanders) only five Dutch language universities (including one free and two Catholic universities) are recognised by decree and they are treated equally concerning funding.

- All university staff in Germany are civil servants and are remunerated by the state. The universities are thus directly under state control (except for academic freedom).
- The Irish constitution identifies two types of universities (**universities** and **designated universities**) and a third type, namely **recognized universities** which are recognized by the first two. In Ireland the older universities are based on royal charters while others were established by ecclesiastical decision and are linked to universities as recognized institutions, while the newest universities have founding laws.
- Apart from the universities in England which are founded on charters there are universities which were established in terms of 1988 and 1992 legislation. As incorporated companies in terms of the **Companies Act 1948-1985** they enjoy a larger degree of formal autonomy than they previously had as local government institutions.
- In India some "central" universities are mentioned in the constitution while others receive recognition by the **Universities Grants Committee** or are established by government or state legislation. Apart from the statutorily recognized universities in India there are also private colleges which were founded by stakeholders and which receive financing from public funds. They have to comply with public guidelines.

Concerning the foreign approach to character universities, with the exception of Germany and Canada, recognised character universities occur in all the other systems investigated. In the systems where character universities are found the managing of issues like governance, personnel appointments, student admission and state financing differ greatly. In particular, the following four groups can be distinguished:

1. Equal state financing

- In the Netherlands and Belgium there are state-financed character universities which are based on a specific religious foundation. The *Gecoördineerde Grondwet* of 1994 in Belgium and the *Nederlandse Grondwet* both contain stipulations that religious beliefs must be honoured in education, but that there must not be discrimination on the basis of religious convictions (principle of equality).

It is confirmed in the Netherlands by the *Wet Gelijke Behandeling* of 1994 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of religious convictions, race, sex, and nationality and marital status, but which makes specific provision that distinction on the grounds of religious convictions with the appointment of staff and student admission is permitted at *bezondere universiteit*. In terms of the Dutch *Wet op Hogere Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek* of 1994 these *bezondere universiteit* (the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, the Katholieke Universiteit of Nijmegen and the Katholieke Universiteit Brabant at Tilburg) are, however, public legal entities in private law in contrast with the *rijksuniversiteit*, which are legal entities in public law. It makes an important difference concerning the autonomy and management of the *bezondere universiteit*, although they are on an equal footing with the *rijksuniversiteit* concerning state financing. At the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam a distinction is made on religious grounds with the appointment of staff and the student statute determines that students must honour the foundation of the university. At the Catholic universities a distinction is made in "sensitive" subjects like philosophy on the basis of religious conviction, but with student admissions this is not applied strictly.

In Belgium the Katholieke Universiteit Louvain and the Katholieke Universiteit Brussels (like other Belgian universities) are public universities and no student screening takes place on a confessional basis. At Louvain staff are required upon appointment to sign a document that they will do or say nothing to the detriment of the character of the university, but this is not required at Brussels. These universities are, however, financed by the state on the same basis as the neutral universities.

- In Israel, character universities are fully supported by the state. Preference is, however, given to institutions which uphold the Zionist ideal by promoting the Jewish religion, language and culture.
- Since independence, indigenous languages and cultures have been emphasized in India. The Constitution of 1950 provides that character universities are permitted and that such institutions may not be discriminated against with regard to funding.

- In terms of the federal *Constitution*, 1950, education in India is on the list of both the central government and the states. It is the task of the central government to determine and co-ordinate standards in institutions of higher education and to establish scientific and technical institutes. Some so-called *Central Universities* are mentioned in the constitution and fall under the central government (while the so-called “deemed universities” fall under the states). Furthermore, so-called *institutions of national importance* are mentioned in the constitution. They resort under the central government and are focused on research but they can also award degrees. The *Universities Grants Committee (UGC)* was established as an autonomous legal entity in terms of the *UGC Act*, 1956, by means of which the central government fulfils its constitutional duty concerning education.

2. Privatised or with reduced state financing

- The USA is the country where the strictest distinction is probably maintained between neutral and character universities. Due to the absolute distinction between church and state in terms of the first amendment of the American Constitution no religious activities may be performed with state money.
- In France, higher education is financed by the state as a public service and complete religious, political and ideological “neutrality” is required. The state has a monopoly on the awarding of degrees and titles and only (secular) scientific norms apply. Catholic universities do exist in Paris, Lyon, Angers, Lille and Toulouse. These tertiary institutions are not, however, officially recognized as universities and they have to award degrees and titles through co-operation agreements with recognized secular universities.

3. The English model

Denominational influence in the English higher education prevailed strongly up to the 19th century by the association with the *Church of England* (the history and establishment of Oxford, Cambridge and London Universities bear testimony to this) but currently it plays no role in the academic aspect of things at neutral universities. The style of many of these universities is still typically Christian and even pronounced neutral universities have ministers in their service and make their facilities available to churches and religious groups. Some even have affiliated denominational colleges with themselves or proclaim proudly and with personal confession that the university had been established in observation of Christian neighbourly love. Institutions with ecclesiastical and gender-specific characters are still in existence (which are often affiliated with neutral universities) and can preserve and expand their foundations and such institutions may not be discriminated against with regard to the awarding of funds.

4. No character universities

There are no character universities in Germany, but interest groups (like private donors, churches and community groups) exercise an informal influence, for example by means of the composition of electoral colleges with respect to the compiling of a shortlist from which professors are appointed.

Although there are no character universities in Canada, religion-directed education in theological colleges and schools is permitted. The *Constitution Act* of 1992 and the human rights codes in the different provinces determine that no form of discrimination may be applied in the appointment of staff or admission of students, but that “special interest organizations” are provided for to serve sectarian interests. At such organizations, as well as in the theological colleges, distinction may be made on the basis of religious convictions as long as it takes place *bona fide* and fairly with regard to the nature of the service.

Conclusion

It was concluded that it is difficult to deduce generally valid principles from the above-mentioned with regard to character universities. However, it is clear that character universities are financed equally compared to state universities in particular systems without surrendering much of their autonomy concerning their foundation. In all these cases, the state applies only a few measures concerning the manner in which state money must be applied and the maintaining of general standards.

1.3.2 International associations for character universities

1.3.2.1 Academic associations

As in any other subject discipline, there are various international societies to which academics who associate themselves with the religious aspects can belong. From the membership lists of such organizations it is clear that the members are from both character universities and secular institutions. Some of these associations are often sectarian or have strong biblicist points of departure. However, others have high scientific stature and enjoy wide international support and recognition. An example of this is the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA) as appears from the following:

"The American Scientific Affiliation (ASA) is a fellowship of men and women of science who share a common fidelity to the Word of God and to the Christian faith. It has grown from a handful in 1941 to a membership of 2 200 in 1987. The stated purposes of the ASA are 'to investigate any area relating Christian faith and science' and 'to make known the results of such investigation for comment and criticism by the Christian community and by the scientific community'.

Full, voting membership is open to all persons with at least a bachelor's degree in science who can give assent to our statement of faith. Science is interpreted broadly to include mathematics, engineering, medicine, psychology, sociology, economics, history, etc., as well as physics, astronomy, geology, etc.

As an organization, the ASA does not take a position when there is honest disagreement between Christians on an issue. We are committed to providing an open forum where controversies can be discussed without fear of unjust condemnation. We feel that this is a necessary environment for any process of arriving at truth and understanding."

Since ASA does not accept institutional membership, the PU for CHE is not associated with it. However, individual members of the staff of the PU for CHE are members of ASA.

1.3.2.2 Institutional associations on a character foundation

Various international associations exist which institutions of higher education can join. The largest of these is probably the **International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU)**. More than 140 academic institutions of higher education from more than 30 states are associated with it. Some of these institutions are recognized internationally as among the foremost, for example the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium. Membership to IFCU is determined as follows:

"For admission to full or associate membership, it is required:

- a) That the university or institution fulfil the following qualifications:
 - 1) A scientific work of quality and sufficient material means;
 - 2) A Christian inspiration, not only individual, but also of the community as well;
 - 3) A continuing reflection in the light of Christian faith upon the growing treasure of human knowledge;
 - 4) Fidelity to the Christian Message as it comes to us through the Church;
 - 5) An institutional commitment to the service of Christian thought and education.
- b) that it be established in accordance with existing civil and ecclesiastical laws;
- c) that it be recommended by **two full member** universities of the federation at least one of which being located in another country.

Through the range of activities available within the IFCU, member institutions play a more effective role at the international level, thus pursuing the advancement of knowledge in the light of the Gospel, collaboration among Catholic Universities, and the promotion of the quality of Catholic Higher Studies and a more just and human world in accordance with the purposes of the Federation."

As a university founded on a Reformational Christian Foundation, the PU for CHE is obviously not a member of IFCU. There is, however, liaison with IFCU on management

level. Furthermore, the PU for CHE has an agreement of co-operation with the Catholic University of Leuven (CU Louvain) and staff of the PU for CHE, are also alumni of CU Louvain. Over the years there has been extensive co-operation between academics of both universities and staff of CU Louvain have received recognition at the highest level from the PU for CHE with the award of a Ph.D. degree **honoris causa**.

Within the Reformational Christian tradition of the PU for CHE the University is an institutional member of the **International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE)**. The following relatively long quotes from the introductory brochure and statutes of IAPCHE illustrate the context of the association and are important for the evaluation of these aspects of the international and character profile of the PU for CHE:

1. History of IAPCHE

The association began in 1975 at the International Conference of Reformed Institutions for Christian Higher Education. The first conference was called by Potchefstroom University, South Africa, to consider "Christian Higher Education - The Contemporary Challenge".

Subsequent conferences dealt with "Justice in the International Economic Order", at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, in 1978; and with "The Challenge of Marxist and Neo-Marxist Ideologies for Christian Scholarship", at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, USA, in 1981.

In 1981 the conference was re-organized at the International Council for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education, with a view to establishing an international association of Christian Scholars.

The International Council arranged for two conferences. The first, held in Breukelen, The Netherlands in 1984, dealt with the topic, "Critique and Challenge of Christian Higher Education". The second was held in Lusaka, Zambia, and considered to theme, "Rainbow in a Fallen World: Diversity and Unity of Christian Higher Education Today".

*The proceedings of the conferences were published by the respective organizations. The International Conference co-operated in the publication of a periodical called the **Circular**. The International Council published a periodical titled **Bulletin**.*

In 1987, at the international conference in Lusaka, the dream of an association of Christian scholars and institutions was realized with the establishment of the International Associations for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE).

2. Basis of the association

Academic work is recognized as an expression of life commitment to God the Creator, through Jesus Christ, in power of the Spirit. Science and scholarship cannot have a neutral, uncommitted character but should be pursued from a biblical perspective in accordance with the following bases:

- a) *The quest for truth in education and scholarship presupposes the meaningful character of the creation which is upheld by the Creator for the sake of his creatures. To his human creatures he has given a variety of cultural tasks which require education and scholarship.*
- b) *The interpretation and understanding of the truth is radically distorted by sin. For that reason, true knowledge is possible only because of God's grace which has triumphed in Jesus Christ. At the same time it should also be recognised that God's grace is the source of truthful insights that arise outside of Christian scholarly endeavor.*
- c) *By the Holy Spirit, Christ calls and directs his people in the renewal of their educational life so that the contribution they make can strengthen the people of God world-wide and be of service to all mankind.*

- d) God reveals in Scripture the true meaning of creation, sin, redemption, and service. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are consequently authoritative for education and scholarship.

Accordingly, this International Association is hereby established for the promotion of Christian higher education founded on this basis.

3. Purposes of the association

This association is organized for the following purposes:

- a) *To promote communication and co-operation among those scholars who are committed to and involved in Christian higher education and/or research around the world. The commitment to Christian higher education which the association seeks to promote will manifest itself in a variety of ways in different parts of the world: but it will entail purposeful efforts to promote the reformation of scholarship on an biblical basis, will contribute to the Christian service of society because of its recognition of its biblical mandate to bear testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ in the world, and will seek to determine the meaning and consequences of Christian principles as they apply to a variety of national situations in a changing world.*
- b) *To promote biblically grounded, critical analysis of distortions of the truth in the contemporary world. Special attention should be given to those ideologies which are prevalent in today's society, such as secularism, Marxism (including its theory and practise of class struggle), racism (including institutionalized forms of racial discrimination such as apartheid), nationalism (as the idolising of national self-interest), and militarism (including trust in armaments for national security); and to distortions of truth such as rationalism (including the idea of the autonomy of reason), scientism (including the idolising of scientific method), and historicism (including the relativity of norms) which are encountered primarily within the context of scholarship.*
- c) *To sponsor and co-ordinate conferences and other activities that bring Christian scholars and educators together from around the world, with a view to enhancing the international character of Christian higher education.*
- d) *To publish a newsletter witch will facilitate international communication among the persons omitted to the work of Christian scholarship and Education.*

4. The international scope

*As the name of the association indicates, it is international in scope. It is the global community of Christian scholars and the institutions they serve which we in turn wish to serve. This global scope follows from the nature of the Christian academic enterprise itself. Education and scholarship are necessary to help equip the people in the variety of cultural tasks that they perform. Christian scholarship should therefore be undertaken as a **communal** enterprise, one that should serve the entire community of God's people and all of humankind. It should be undertaken in a joint international effort in which scholars in one field of learning interact with those in other fields. This communal character should extend across continental and cultural borders. Christ calls us to this task and enables us through the Holy Spirit to perform it within the larger mission of the people of God.*

The international scope of the association means that there is a great difference between some of the larger institutions that have been active in establishing the association and are mainly situated in the West, and the young and struggling schools in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The difference pertains not only to size and resources in terms of staff, library and buildings, but also to the stage of development of the ambient society. This development includes the institution's relation to the state (which may recently have attained its independence) and to the church community (which may have a much shorter tradition than churches in the West and a stronger sense of missionary responsibility).

It is also true that committed scholars in many countries have had insufficient opportunity to work communally in searching for the Christian approach to scholarship and education. Many Christian scholars work in state-supported institutions or government agencies that are not committed to any one religious orientation and may even be atheistic in approach.

The differences in the international scene become evident in arranging joint activities for the entire international constituency. The purpose of the association, as described above, is to "seek to determine the meaning and consequences of Christian principles as they apply to a variety of national situations in a changing world". Since the context differs so greatly from place to place, what may be of service in one area is not always certain to be so in another.

In line with the international nature of IAPCHE members of the current executive come from academic institutions in the USA, the Netherlands, Kenya, Peru, Costa Rica, Indonesia, the Philippines, Canada and South Africa.

Apart from the normal participation of the PU for CHE in the activities of IAPCHE the University also undertakes an active role of liaising and training with like-minded institutions in Africa. Currently the PU for CHE offers an internal certificate for Tertiary Didactics over one year. Three lecturers of the mentioned institutions in Africa are at present receiving this education at the PU for CHE.

1.3.2.3 Other institutional associations

Due to the political history of South Africa during the past decades it was not possible for the PU for CHE to join other international associations. The University has, however, applied for membership to the

- Association of African Universities
- Association of Commonwealth Universities.

It is envisaged that the PU for CHE will be able to make contributions through these associations in the African context, and also internationally within the Commonwealth of countries.

1.4 Current profile of the student composition of the PU for CHE

1.4.1 Macro-trends

A relatively comprehensive report must be delivered annually in the SAPSE surveys on the current situation at each university, including the composition and size of the student population at the university. Therefore it will not be discussed here in detail, but the macro-trends will be highlighted.

The PU for CHE is the twelfth-largest of the residential South African universities. In 1995 the 10 000 mark was passed for the first time with a total of 10 156 students, of whom 8196 are enrolled at the Potchefstroom Campus and 1960 at the Vaal Triangle Campus. In total 77,2% of these students are white. At the Potchefstroom Campus these students make up 82,0% and at the Vaal Triangle Campus 56,7% of the whole. The finer subdivision of students is indicated in Table 1. From this Table it is clear that both Campuses already have a substantially multi-cultural student composition.

Table 1

Student composition

Students	University as a whole	Vaal Triangle Campus	Potchef-stroom Campus
White	82,0	56,7	77,2
Brown	2,5	1,3	2,3
Indian	0,6	0,3	0,5
Black	14,9	41,7	20,0

Table 2

GROWTH RATE OF BLACK STUDENTS AS OPPOSED TO GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS

	All Races						Black Students					
	Potchef-stroom	% Growth	Vaal Triangle	% Growth	Total both Campuses	% Growth	Potchef-stroom	% Growth	Vaal Triangle	% Growth	Total both Campuses	% Growth
1982	6066		833		6899		19		1		20	
1983	6417	5.79	1044	25.33	7461	8.15	20	5.26	2	100.00	22	10.00
1984	6742	5.06	1204	15.33	7946	6.50	16	(20.00)	6	200.00	22	0.00
1985	7374	9.37	1432	18.94	8806	10.82	38	137.50	11	83.33	49	122.73
1986	7447	0.99	1705	19.06	9152	3.93	67	76.32	20	81.82	87	77.55
1987	7243	(2.74)	1878	10.15	9121	(0.34)	117	74.63	23	15.00	140	60.92
1988	7277	0.47	1923	2.40	9200	0.87	187	59.83	76	230.43	263	87.86
1989	7019	(3.55)	1787	(7.07)	8806	(4.28)	198	5.88	58	(23.68)	256	(2.66)
1990	7024	0.07	1791	0.22	8815	0.10	225	13.64	52	(10.34)	277	8.20
1991	7207	2.61	1779	(0.67)	8986	1.94	277	23.11	74	42.31	351	26.71
1992	7871	9.21	1586	(10.85)	9457	5.24	387	39.71	263	255.41	650	85.19
1993	7910	0.50	1684	6.18	9594	1.45	565	45.99	444	68.82	1009	55.23
1994	7947	0.47	1841	9.32	9788	2.02	828	46.55	629	41.67	1457	44.40
1995	8196	3.13	1960	6.46	10156	3.76	1218	47.10	817	29.89	2035	39.67

Table 3

NUMBER OF ENROLLED STUDENTS PER RACE AND CAMPUS FROM 1982 TO 1995

Year	Potchefstroom					Year	Vaal Triangle					Grand Total
	White	Black	Coloured	Indian	Total		White	Black	Coloured	Indian	Total	
1982	6042	19	2	3	6066	1982	832	1	0	0	833	6899
1983	6392	20	2	3	6417	1983	1042	2	0	0	1044	7461
1984	6719	16	4	3	6742	1984	1198	6	0	0	1204	7946
1985	7303	38	29	4	7374	1985	1421	11	0	0	1432	8806
1986	7343	67	30	7	7447	1986	1685	20	0	0	1705	9152
1987	7061	117	54	11	7243	1987	1849	23	6	0	1878	9121
1988	6985	187	92	13	7277	1988	1830	76	17	0	1923	9200
1989	6724	198	82	15	7019	1989	1711	58	18	0	1787	8806
1990	6699	225	88	12	7024	1990	1715	52	23	1	1791	8815
1991	6814	277	100	16	7207	1991	1672	74	32	1	1779	8986
1992	7339	387	131	14	7871	1992	1288	263	31	4	1586	9457
1993	7170	565	162	13	7910	1993	1198	444	35	7	1684	9594
1994	6925	828	173	21	7947	1994	1180	629	26	6	1841	9788
1995	6722	1218	204	52	8196	1995	1112	817	25	6	1960	10156

The first student from a population group other than whites enrolled at the PU for CHE in 1972. The legislation and other factors which have restricted the growth in student numbers to the universities of the former Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly) are well-known. Although a considerable number of these limitations were still valid during the eighties, the increase in multi-culturalism at both Campuses of the PU for CHE has sharply increased over the past decade, and especially during the nineties. This is indicated in Table 2 for the period 1982-1995. As indicated in Table 3, the students come from all the population groups, with students from Indian and coloured communities in the minority.

1.4.2 Demographic trend

Because the North-West Province and Gauteng are the two most important areas of origin of students of this University, the demography of these two provinces will be considered.

1.4.2.1 Demography of the North-West Province

The North-West Province has a population of 3,5 million which grows at 3,5% per year, which is considerably higher than the national average of 2,44%. Only 8,6% of the population of the country lives in North-West. By far the greatest percentage of the population is black (90,23%), followed by whites (8,36%). With 34,72% of the population under the age of 15, the North-West Province also has a particularly young age structure.

In 1993, the greatest concentration of the population appeared to be in Odi 1 (509 380), Klerksdorp (344 795), Potchefstroom (199 006), Mmabatho/ Mafikeng (188 377), Rustenburg (134 400), and Brits (119 901). On account of economic and other considerations rapid urbanisation and migration at present being experienced. In Klerksdorp the black population has, for example, increased from 168 580 in 1985 to 311 865 in 1991, or by 88%.

Nearly 53% of the households of the province live in poverty (in others words a household income of < R9 000 per family per year). The low level of social prosperity is reflected by the dependency burden of 1:6 in the North-West Province and by the unemployment rate of

27,0%. The Human Development Index for North-West is 0,57 (RSA=0.69), which places the province sixth of the nine provinces.

Thirty-eight percent of the population of the province is illiterate, as opposed to the national average of 25%. The child mortality rate is high, 42/1 000, and the province has a low number of doctors per patient: 0,2/1 000.

1.4.2.2 Gauteng

Gauteng has a population of 6,9 million (or 16,8% of the South African population) which grows at a relatively low rate of 1,29% per year. The province has the highest income per capita, the highest urbanization rate, the second highest literacy rate (69%) and the lowest dependency burden. Thirty-six comma nine percent of the GNP of South Africa is produced in Gauteng.

However, the above-mentioned statistics conceal the disparities which exist in Gauteng. Relative abundance and extreme forms of poverty exist next to each other in urban areas like Sandton and Alexandra. There are also significant imbalances and inequalities between the white and black populations. The population growth rate of the blacks is significantly higher than above-mentioned average for Gauteng, and the black population group is also significantly younger than the white population group.

1.4.3 Demography of the PU for CHE

1.4.3.1 Numbers, growth and population composition

The total number of students of the PU for CHE increased by 1 341 from 8 815 in 1990 to 10 156 in 1995, implying an annual increase of 2,42%. The increase in student numbers can, however, mainly be ascribed to the increase in the number of black students which increased from 277 (3,14% of the total in 1990) to 2 035 (20,03%) in 1995 and to 2 322 (22,86%) if the brown and Indian students are included. Actually, the total number of white students decreased from 8 414 in 1990 (95,45% of the total) to 7 834 in 1995 (77,15% of the total). This decrease can be ascribed to the decrease in the number of white students at the Vaal Triangle Campus, which decreased from 1 713 in 1990 (95,75% of the Vaal Triangle total) to 1 112 in 1995 (56,73% of the total).

In 1990, 95,45% of the students of the PU for CHE were white while only 3,14% were black. In 1995 77,15% are white and 20,03% black. The ratio displayed the most dramatic change at the Vaal Triangle Campus where the percentage of white students decreased from 95,75% in 1990 to 56,73% in 1995 and the black students increased from 2,90% to 41,68% over the same period. On the Potchefstroom Campus the black students increased from 3,20% in 1990 to 14,68% in 1995 (or 17,98% if the brown and Indian students are included). The total number of brown students more than doubled, but at 229 they still constitute only 2,25% of the total.

At this stage it is still difficult to predict the growth of the student numbers and the composition thereof for certain, because it is not certain if the number of black students will continue to increase at this rate. On the Potchefstroom Campus the growth in the percentage of black students still increased over the past five years from 23,11% in 1991 to 47,10% in 1995. On the Vaal Triangle Campus the growth has levelled off after a sharp rise in 1992 to 29, 89% in 1995. The total increase of black students has slightly levelled over the past three years, but was still at 39,67% in 1995. It is clear that the growth in the university population lies in black student numbers, and that, with the decrease in numbers of white students the ratio will continue to change in favour of a larger number of black students.

1.4.3.2 The origin of students

The students at the PU for CHE are mainly from the Western Transvaal region (34,41%) and from former PWV (33,84%). Unfortunately statistics based on the new provincial dispensation are not yet available, but it is clear that North-West, Gauteng, the Eastern Transvaal and the Northern Province jointly generate 77,58% of the University 's students. The Free State (11, 54%) and Kwa-Zulu/Natal (6,66%) also supply meaningful numbers of students.

There are clear differences in the origin of the students of the two Campuses of the PU for CHE. In the case of the Potchefstroom Campus the greatest percentage of students (42,17%) come from the immediate surroundings, namely the former Western Transvaal region, followed by Gauteng with 24,72%. The latter two jointly supply two-thirds of the total number of students at the Potchefstroom Campus.

The main source of students of the Vaal Triangle Campus is Gauteng, which makes up 71,99% of the total. The Vaal Triangle also gets 19,90 percent of its students from the Free State. Jointly the latter two areas supply 91,89% of the Vaal Triangle Campus's students.

Although the geographic origin of students of the PU for CHE is thus closely related to the surrounding areas, the reality is that approximately two-thirds of the students of the PU for CHE come from **outside the North-West**. Although the number of student from distant areas is relatively lower (e.g. Western Cape and Natal) the total profile of the geographic origin of students of the PU for CHE displays a **national picture** rather than a regional picture. A survey of motivations of new students who come to study at the PU for CHE indicates that the Christian character, high academic standards and financial considerations are among the most important reasons for studying at the Potchefstroom Campus.

1.4.3.3 Undergraduate and postgraduate students

In 1995 68,0% of the PUK 's students were undergraduates and 32,0% were postgraduates. The relationship is identical for both Campuses, which can be considered as a positive factor, especially if it is considered that the Vaal Triangle Campus is still a relatively young campus.

1.4.3.4 The home language of students

The home language of 72,93% of the students at the PU for CHE is Afrikaans. Tswana (8,27%) and Southern Sotho (6,65%) are also large percentages. The home languages of 79,95% are Afrikaans, English and other "European" languages and for 20,05% it is black languages.

An analysis of the language distribution of the two Campuses indicates conspicuous differences. On the Potchefstroom Campus students with Afrikaans as home language (78,76%) dominate by far, followed by Tswana at 9,25%. On the Vaal Triangle Campus the two most important languages are Afrikaans (48,57%) and South Sotho (30,10%). English (6,28%) and Zulu (6,17%) also make major contributions.

It is important to note that a change in the composition of student numbers also has the consequence of a change in language distribution. The dominance of Afrikaans at the PU for CHE has, for example decreased from 86,76% in 1992 to 72,93% in 1995. The position of black languages has increased during the same period from 6,77% to 20,05%. In this regard the contribution of the Vaal Triangle Campus is significant.