



Introduction to Julius Osega Memorial Lecture
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The Julius Osega Lecture is an annual lecture on governance and human rights in Africa, held within the framework of a consortium of 13 African universities that present the Master's programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa (HRDA). The University of Pretoria, where I am based with the Centre for Human Rights, and the University of the Western Cape – this year's hosting institution – are part of this network, which stretches from Ethiopia (Addis Ababa University) in the east to Senegal (Université Gaston Berger) in the west.

Julius Osega was a graduate of the Master's programme. After graduating, he returned to work with the Uganda Police Service. He was promoted to head the Human Rights Complaints Desk — a position he held until he was deployed to Darfur as part of the African Union force. He was also the Deputy Acting Commissioner for the Legal Department in the Uganda Police Service. At the time of his death he held the rank of Police Superintendent and upon his death he was posthumously promoted to the rank of Senior Superintendent.

Julius was killed on 8 July 2008 while on patrol duty in Darfur. He had been deployed to Darfur as part of the UNAMID peacekeeping force. Julius had earlier participated in training police in Somalia. As you all know Somalia has been one of the most violent countries in Africa.

Julius epitomised the true human rights lawyer. He did not shy away from danger in his efforts to promote human rights and democracy. It is the zeal that he had for promoting a culture of human rights that saw him serving in dangerous places such as Darfur and Somalia. His contribution to human rights and democratisation will be remembered especially because he dedicated his life to police work. In Uganda he is remembered for his efforts in addressing allegations of human rights violations by the Ugandan Police. He was also involved in human rights advocacy, through sensitising the public about their human rights.

Julius could have easily pursued a career in academia, non-governmental organisations or international organisations where life might have been considerably more peaceful. His academic credentials could have served him well if he chose such a career. However, he



focussed on work within the police. His decision to remain in the police service hopefully contributed to highlighting issues of human rights in the various capacities that he served.

In recognition of his efforts to promote human rights, Julius was posthumously awarded the Vera Chirwa Award in 2009 by the Centre for Human Rights. He was selected on the basis that he epitomised the true African human rights lawyer as he showed courage and unwavering commitment to improve the lives of people in Africa.

It was in view of his dedicated service to human rights and democratisation in Africa that the Centre for Human Rights thought it worthy to institute an annual memorial lecture in his honour, a moment which is intended to enable those of us present and others elsewhere to reflect on the values which inspired him and for which he died.

The lecture has been held by several partner universities across Africa including, the University of Nairobi, the University of Ghana, Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale Cameroon, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, and Makerere University.

We have been privileged and honoured that seasoned experts in the field have over the years been able to present this lecture. Some of them are Dr Solomon Dersso, Commissioner of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Africa; Prof Yash Ghai and Joaquim Chissano, former president of Mozambique.

To the Faculty of Law, Dullah Omar Institute, University of the Western Cape and Prof Lukas Muntingh and his team: Thank you for taking the initiative of hosting this year's Lecture, and for your dedicated professionalism in setting it up. The theme on which the Lecture focuses is indeed very relevant and timely. We very much look forward to this, the 2021 Julius Osega Lecture.