



JOHN KGWALE TSEBE

John Tsebe studied at the University of the North (now University of Limpopo) from 1971 to 1974. After completing the BA degree he did post graduate studies in Library and Information Science (1976-1977). He is one of the first three graduates in Library and Information Science at the then University of the North (now University of Limpopo), taught by Prof Seth Paul Manaka, former University Librarian and first Professor of Library and Information Science at the University of the North.

John Tsebe was National Librarian and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) from March 2004 till February 2014.

He retired from the NLSA end of February 2014.

Before his appointment as National Librarian he was University Librarian at the then University of the North (now University of Limpopo) for 20 years. He worked in the Library and Information Services (LIS) profession for forty (40) years.

He holds a Master's degree in Library Science (MLS) from Syracuse University, School of Information Studies, Syracuse, New York, USA. He studied at Syracuse University, as a Ford Foundation Fellow. He also holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA. At Harvard he was a Harvard/South Africa Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government and a Masson Fellow at the Harvard Institute of

International Development, for a Mid-Career Master of Public Administration (M-C MPA) degree.

After completing his studies at Syracuse University he did intensive practical work at Mount Holyoke College Library, South Hadley, Massachusetts and after obtaining the MPA degree at Harvard University, he also underwent a very intensive practical training on academic libraries (strategic) planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard University libraries.

He was a British Council Fellow at the University of Wales, College of Librarianship Wales (CLW), United Kingdom, for the International Graduate Summer School (IGSS) in 1985. At IGSS he studied the following subjects:

- 1. Advance Management in Library and Information Services (LIS),**
- 2. Application of Computers in LIS, and the**
- 3. Theory of Information Science**

During his term as University Librarian at the University of the North, he served in Senate, the Executive of Senate and several Senate Committees of the University. He was the first Secretary General of the University Broad Transformation Committee addressing critical issues in the transformation of higher education in South Africa in tandem with the new Higher Education Legislative Framework.

He was extensively involved in different aspects of the overall University's Strategic Planning Processes and the University Executive Management activities.

As University Librarian he also assisted with teaching on a part-time basis in the Department of Library and Information Science at the university. He taught the following subjects to final year and post-graduate students:

- 1. Management Science and**
- 2. Research Methodology**

During his lectures he enthusiastically motivated students to aim for high level performance. He zealously encouraged them for potential future leadership in the profession.

John Tsebe played a significant role in the development of the South African Library and Information Services sector. He is one of the founding members of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) which is the national professional association for all LIS workers in the country. He coordinated the difficult but exciting and challenging process of drafting, presentation and facilitation of the ultimate adoption of the LIASA constitution.

As National Librarian he was always readily available to assist and support LIASA's sustainable development and growth both nationally and globally.

He served on the Boards of the South African Library and Information Consortia (SANLiC), South African Bibliographic and Information Network (SABINET) and the South African Book Development Council (SABDC). He chaired the Forum of University Librarians of South Africa (FULSA), which was a committee of heads of all university libraries in South Africa and he positively contributed towards the formation of the new Committee for Higher Education Librarians in South Africa (CHELSA) in tandem with the new South African higher education transformation imperatives.

He was a member of the South African National Heritage Council (NHC) Transformation Charter Task Team which drafted the transformation charter for the heritage sector in the country.

He was thereafter mandated by the National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS) to coordinate the process and the roadmap of drafting the Library and Information Services Transformation Charter for South Africa. This charter was finally completed in February 2014.

He was a committee member of the IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2007 National Committee. This World Congress successfully took place in Durban, August 2007.

In the African continent he chaired the Executive Committee of the Standing Conference of African National and University Librarians in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (SCANUL-ECS) for two terms (four years, namely, the periods: 1998-2000 and 2000-2002).

As Chairperson of SCANUL-ECS he represented this sub-region in West Africa at the SCAULWA (Standing Conference African University Libraries - West African Region) meetings in Ghana, twice.

He served as a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Standing Committee for National Libraries Section (2007 - 2011).

He was elected as the Vice-Chairperson (2006-2009) and in 2010 as the Chairperson of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL). He served in this position until his retirement in February 2014. CDNL is a committee of the executive heads of all national libraries of the world.

He served in the OCLC (Online Computer Library Catalogue) Members Council (in Dublin, Ohio, USA) as an alternate member till May 2009.

He was a member of the UNESCO Memory of the World (MoW) National Committee and the UNESCO Commission for South Africa till his retirement.

John Tsebe has travelled extensively to different parts of the world to encourage, develop and sustain global partnerships in the Library and Information Services sector.

He visited libraries and relevant government officials and organisations in: Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, The Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, The Netherlands, Puerto Rico, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States of America, Sudan and Ghana, and several other African countries, to develop partnerships and international cross-cultural understanding.

John Tsebe has some articles published and he also made presentations and read papers at national and international conferences/seminars/workshops in: Brazil, Bulgaria, Egypt, Finland, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Norway, Puerto Rico, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, United Kingdom, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

As National Librarian he also presented regularly at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, generally on the role of information and knowledge for Africa's development.

He has been recently elected as President of the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (**AfLIA**). AfLIA is a new continental initiative to strengthen the LIS sector in the African continent for Africa's development and sustainable growth.

John Tsebe was married to the late Vaidah Lindeni Ndhlovu Tsebe and they are blessed with a lovely daughter, Marta.

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