



Media Statement

The South African Institute of Architects (SAIA) wishes to communicate with sadness, the passing of the SAIA CEO, Architect Mthembeni Mkhize on Saturday, 24th July 2021 at the Milpark Hospital, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa due to complications associated with Covid 19.

Mthembeni served in this capacity since August 2020 and during this short one-year period, he served the organization and the profession with selfless commitment and dedication in adherence to and guided by the highest standards of corporate governance and accountability. During this time as CEO, Mthembeni represented SAIA within other affiliate organizations of the Built Environment, primarily SACAP (South African Council for the Architectural Profession), CBE, (Council for the Built Environment), BEPG (Built Environment Professions Group), the 2020 formed Covid-19 Response Task team, now CASA (Construction Alliance South Africa) and many others. Among many roles he played, he previously served in the CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) as the project leader and scientific researcher in the Educational and Health Facilities Program of the Building Technology Division. He was a registered Professional Architect with SACAP and various institutions, locally and internationally.

Mthembeni belongs to the cohort of Black Architects who are the first generation to pursue architectural studies in the late 70's when he enrolled at the University of Natal, Howard College Durban Campus in 1978 during the dark days of Apartheid, when the architecture and engineering professions had been a preserve of white students only. This however, never deterred Mthembeni from pursuing a career in Architecture which he served until his unfortunate and untimely passing in service to SAIA. During his short-lived role as SAIA CEO, Mthembeni was the official link to SAIA international affiliate organisations, the UIA (Union of International Architects) and the AUA (African Union of Architects). All SAIA structures, the Board, SAIA Mancom, the SAIA Regions, the national office and the architectural profession at large, is saddened by his untimely passing and wishes to express sincere condolences to his family, his wife Lungi Mkhize, his four adult children and brother Jerome.

Quoting the chairperson of the SAIA Editorial Board, and SAIA Member, Roger Fisher, he had this to say: "My recent engagements with him were revealing of a person full of caring and humanity. It is a life stolen from us by this pandemic at a crucial time in the evolution of the South African architectural profession, where, I believe, he was poised to make a significant contribution".

SAIA will be hosting a memorial service in his honour in coordination with his family, **on Thursday, 29th July 2021**, also in celebration of his selfless dedication to the profession which he served until his untimely and unfortunate passing. **Further details will be announced soon.**

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For more information, please contact

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