

## **Words from African ICOMOS experts in tribute to Professor Dawson Munjeri (1949-2024)**

Professor Dawson Munjeri, who sadly passed away on 29 April 2024 in Harare, Zimbabwe, was a brilliant African cultural heritage expert, who was renowned for his exceptional national and international career and his relentless fight for the preservation and promotion of African cultural heritage. He was a true role model for a whole generation of heritage professionals, both in Africa and the rest of the world.

To pay tribute to his memory, African experts from ICOMOS wished to pay their last respects to him with these words.

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*Farewell, Ambassador Professor Dawson Munjeri. Your legacy in heritage conservation inspires gratitude and admiration. Your wisdom, shared generously, nurtured our aspirations. Though you've left us, your spirit endures as a guiding light. Rest in eternal peace, dear Professor, your legacy lives on.*

- **Kagosi MWAMULOWE** - ICOMOS Zambia President (Zambia)

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*I first got to know about DR. Dawson Munjeri in 2001 during our short training programme in Mombasa, Kenya, under Africa 2009. He came to deliver a lecture on Sustainable Tourism; it was quite educational and fulfilling for me. Dr Munjeri was an academic phenomenon we know as "big masquerade" in the field of Museum, Heritage and Tourism and he would never accept the culture that despises and debases African culture. I was so excited during the short learning process that someone like him could stand up for Africa. Years later, we met again in Benin City for Benin City Walls and moats, Ekor and Udo city walls during the nomination process (even though it was an unsuccessful exercise).*

*He was a great source of encouragement for all of us he taught in Kenya. The major consolation I have is that he passed a worthwhile message to many of us in the area of building on the United Nations Development Goals of Sustainable tourism. I was shattered on hearing the news of his demise because I thought we could meet again, especially in his home country Zimbabwe. But that didn't happen in any case. I have the feeling, he was spared enough life to accomplish his assignment here on earth. He specially made full impacts at the national level as the Director General of the Museum and Monuments at Harare. Also, he made an appearance as a distinguished scholar and prolific writer but also as an outstanding teacher. RIP, DR DAWSON MUNJER!!!!*

- **Olakunle Williams MAKINDE** - Archaeologist, Curator and UNESCO World Heritage Expert (Nigeria)

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*Professor Munjeri was a man whose character one cannot put in a few words: eloquent, humble yet a stickler for detail, a mentor par excellence, his mind an archive of heritage*

issues... His legacy will live on in the lives that he touched. I am glad that I interacted with him at many levels.

- **Linda Malala MWANZA** (Zambia)

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*One of the world's best-known, highly respected and influential heritage professionals from Africa. His professional brilliance inspired many young professionals throughout the world. He championed and ensured that the heritage of Africa and its voice is heard and respected, despite the many international conventions which are largely biased towards the heritage practice of the west.*

*He was instrumental in many areas of the heritage field through capacity building in intangible and tangible heritage throughout the world. As a pan Africanist his work went beyond his country Zimbabwe. He ensured that African professionals understood the international dynamics of heritage and that as Africans they too had a part in sharing, commemorating and celebrating continent's heritage.*

*Prof Munjeri was an outstanding heritage professional and teacher through whose hands successive generations of heritage professionals passed through. He is a top scholar, whose publications straddled many related disciplines such as oral history, archival science, museology and heritage management. His influences at international level is reflected in the current Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. He tried to ensure that Africa's voice and concerns are reflected.*

- **Webber NDORO** - Director, Heritage Centre, Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) (Zimbabwe)