**Citation: Charles David Nupen**

Charles David Nupen has played a pivotal role in the development of South Africa's system of dispute resolution both as a practising attorney, and through the creation of key dispute resolution institutions. At a time of heightened industrial conflict under apartheid, he laid the foundations for successful mediation and went on to establish South Africa's first national public dispute settlement agency, the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). Based on his experience at the CCMA, he assisted in the establishment of national dispute settlement agencies throughout Southern Africa and other parts of the world. Charles Nupen has dedicated his working life to the resolution of conflict.

Nupen was born in Durban and matriculated from Durban Boys High School. It was at the University of Natal (now the The University of KwaZulu-Natal), studying under the radical and charismatic political science lecturer, Richard Turner, that Nupen first became involved in issues of social justice. He, along with fellow students, created the Wages Commissions that were to expose poverty wages amongst black workers in South Africa. Nupen went on to become the President of the anti-apartheid National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). While President in 1974, he ran a campaign for the release of political prisoners focussing on Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki and Walter Sisulu. On 1st December 1975, Nupen and four other NUSAS leaders, were arrested and indicted for their activities under the Suppression of Communism Act. After a year-long trial, they were acquitted.

After several years of legal practice, most notably at the Legal Resources Centre, a public interest law firm, where he served under Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson, Nupen was appointed the executive director of the Independent Mediation Service of South Africa (IMSSA) in 1987. From 1987 to 1995, he steered IMSSA's growth into a national organisation, and conducted several hundred mediations and arbitrations across all sectors of the South African economy. He was the attorney in the matter of the historic Rikhoto versus the East Rand Administration Board which effectively dismantled a core pillar of the apartheid system by establishing that black contract workers from rural areas could qualify for urban residence rights.

In 1994 he was appointed as a Commissioner of the Independent Electoral Commission which oversaw South Africa's first national democratic elections. In 1995/6, under the auspices of the International Labour Organisation he assisted in the establishment of the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration, South Africa's first national public dispute settlement agency and then served as the CCMA's first executive director.

From 1998 to 2008 he directed technical co-operation projects in Africa for the ILO. He facilitated labour law reform projects and the establishment of several national dispute settlement agencies in Southern African countries. He initiated the development of a post graduate diploma in dispute resolution, in which four universities in the region co-operated to jointly offer the qualification. Approximately 180 graduates were deployed to staff the newly created dispute settlement institutions in the region.

Nupen facilitated important social dialogue initiatives in Swaziland and Zimbabwe and brought together senior representatives of the tripartite partners from fourteen SADC countries to explore harmonizing labour relations policy in the region and to examine social and economic compacting as a way of improving economic development. He arranged two study tours involving trade union and business leaders to Ireland, the Netherlands and the ILO to examine the impact of social compacting on economic performance. This initiative led to the establishment of the Millennium Labour Council launched by President Mbeki in 2000. He has conducted conciliation and mediation training in South Africa, the Philippines, Italy and the Republic of Ireland.

Since 2008 he has been consulting in the field of employee relations and has been involved in high-level interventions to resolve commercial disputes, labour disputes, and to address dysfunctional relationships and systems in corporate settings, in social institutions, and in professional service firms. In 2009 he received Tokiso's Mediator of the Year award. He is the executive chairman of a consulting company Stratalign. In addition to his consulting practice, in 2013 he recommenced legal practice as a director in the firm Harris Nupen, Molebatsi Inc. He is a Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (UK) accredited commercial mediator and he has served as an adjunct professor of law at the University of Cape Town.

He serves on the board of both Resource Africa, an NGO committed to promoting sustainable resource management to benefit rural communities in Southern Africa, and Ububele, an NGO serving early childhood development needs in Alexandra Johannesburg.

The University of Witwatersrand is proud to honour Charles Nupen for his lifetime commitment to the constructive resolution of conflict and for helping lay the foundations for the successful transition to a more participatory and co-operative labour relations system. He is a role model for generations of lawyers and continues to successfully mentor a new generation of lawyers committed to social justice. It is therefore befitting that the University of the Witwatersrand,Johannesburg awards an Honorary Doctorate degree to Charles David Nupen.