

## General News

### **President Mbeki bestows national honour on CSIR President and CEO**

Dr Sibusiso Sibisi, CSIR President and CEO, was awarded the Order of Mapungubwe: Silver by President Thabo Mbeki at the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 21 September.



Sibisi received the award for "... his excellent contribution in the field of information technology in South Africa, contributing to the development of research and development and providing business technology with analyses and strategies."

National Orders represent the highest award that a country, through its President, bestows on its citizens. Sibisi was among a select group of South Africans who received National Orders in recognition of their contribution towards the betterment of the country in their respective fields.



According to The Presidency, Sibisi's versatility has seen him provide the vision and leadership of the team who conceptualised, planned and established the [Meraka Institute](#) (the African Advanced Institute for Information and Communications Technology) in response to President Mbeki's call in this regard. Sibisi's commitment to its strategy and operations has ensured the growth and delivery of outputs by the Meraka Institute in support of a range of national priorities. "He is strongly committed to science and is interested in aligning it with government's mission of promoting excellence and sustainability," stated The Presidency.

The institute's work is aimed at contributing to reducing poverty and improving people's lives by addressing quality of life and creating circumstances that enable economic activity. The work has attracted international donor funding and investment from multinational corporations.

The Order of Mapungubwe represents ingenuity and excellence, and is awarded to South African citizens for exceptional achievement. Various elements in the Order's design symbolise new horizons, creativity and excellence, and human resourcefulness. The Kingdom of Mapungubwe existed a millennium ago in the northern part of what is now South Africa. The kingdom had a developed mining, metallurgy and agricultural industry, and traded with countries as far afield as China.

At the ceremony, President Mbeki referred to the recipients of the National Orders as "... distinguished men and women who are, indeed, the stars on our firmament." He continued: "Because of their efforts, we are able to live and develop in a world of freedom, without the fetters of oppression or exclusion. The honours that we bestow

today tell the story of what and who we are and who we shall be. These National Orders represent the nobility of human endeavour, constituting a hall of fame that will today be enriched by new and distinguished members."

Regarding the recipients of the Order of Mapungubwe, President Mbeki said: "These are people whose activities cannot but be described as excellent. They are the men and women who dared to act outside the boundaries of the ordinary, taking upon themselves the skill and daring of the majestic bird on our Coat of Arms, which stands on permanent guard to protect the nation. Her wings commune with the beams of the rising sun, as the people of Mapungubwe conversed with nature, the peoples of the universe, and the world of creative thought...They are our symbols of human creative talent, the guardians of Ubuntu who manifest the national gift of courage that rises with danger, our touchstones for our collective accomplishments as a nation, and stalwarts of human solidarity."

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