

**UNHCR CHIEF PRESENTS REFUGEE LECTURE AT UNAM**

Prof. Lawrence Mgbangson

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Resident Representative Prof. Lawrence Mgbangson has attributed the high number of refugees around the world, to internally displaced people within their own countries as a result of war, persecution and famine.

Delivering a public lecture at the University last week, he said the 44 million refugees worldwide the majority of them (about 26 million) were internally displaced people. He urged members of the public not to look at refugees as “inferior people”, saying their status as refugees had not come by choice. “No one wants to be a refugee. It is a situation that is forced onto us.” While international law and conventions do not allow refugees to be sent back to the country of origin, Mgbangson noted that some countries were sending them back to their home countries – resulting in some of them drowning in high seas in some instances.

The UNHCR representative told the gathering that while sheltering refugees at designated places as is the case in Namibia was the norm, the situation presented grave challenges. “There is no privacy; diseases are passed on, which at times results in suffocation. Children copy what others do which leads to early pregnancy, abortion and school drop outs.”

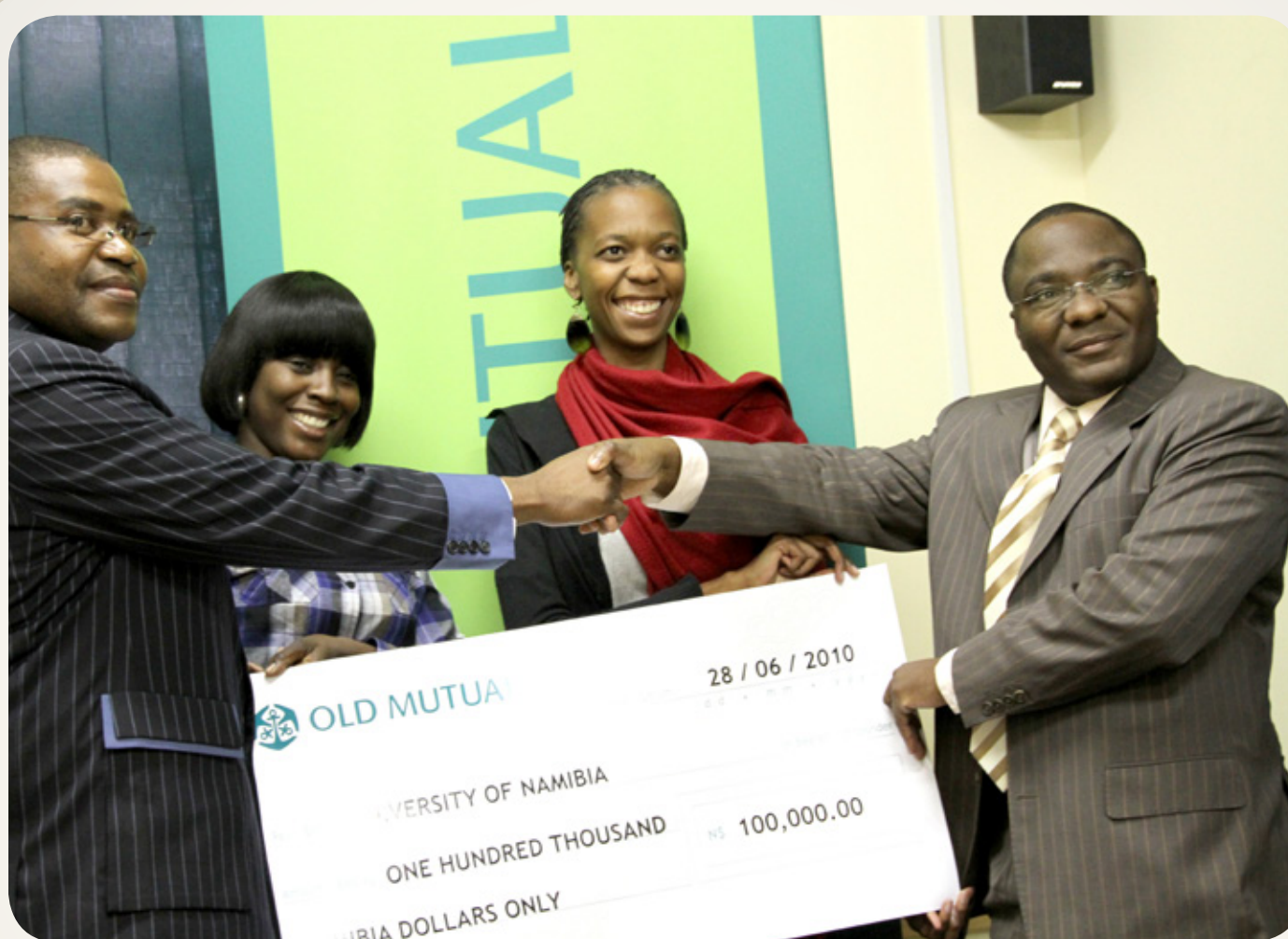
Prof. Mgbangson noted that some refugees were also contributing to the socio-economic development of Namibia, saying some had permits to work as lecturers at the University while others are engineers, doctors and teachers. Adding his voice to the discussion, Commissioner for Refugees in the Ministry of Home Affairs Nkrumah Mushelenga said government was working on a Bill, enabling the integration of refugees into Namibia. In his welcoming address, Pro-Vice Chancellor: Academic Affairs & Research Prof. Osmund Mwandemele called for greater cooperation between the university as a reservoir of knowledge and policy makers through platforms of such nature.

**MUTUMBA TELLS STAFF: “WORK HARD & ECONOMISE”**

On a recent visit to the northern campuses, the Pro-Vice Chancellor: Administration and Finance Dr. Boniface Mutumba encouraged staff members to work hard and handle University assets with love and care. He complimented the regional campuses and centres for reaching out to their communities, despite the meager resources at their disposal in some cases.

Mutumba told staff members that the University had resolved to have Academic and Administrative components work closely, in the best interest of UNAM. He encouraged staff members to individually seek to do their best, in order for the collective UNAM family to emerge victorious. “Remain high performers so that UNAM shall remain a high performing institution. There is only one way of succeeding – that of doing things right and doing the right things”.

Government, he said, requires all State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to put in place their strategic planning documents, performance management systems in place and sign performance contracts. This means that all university’s top managers and staff shall be required to perform their best in order to achieve the goals of the University. “No office shall be run from the air or road,” he said.

**OLD MUTUAL DONATION**

Old Mutual Namibia CEO for Operations Sakaria Nghikembua handed over a donation of N\$100 000 towards the Engineering & IT Computer Lab in Ongwediva. PVC: Administration & Finance Dr. Boniface Mutumba received the donation on behalf of the University. In the year 2007, Old Mutual’s made a commitment to give a combined of N\$300 000 towards the Faculty of Engineering & IT over three years.

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