

## FOREWORD



The Council on Higher Education (CHE) is an independent statutory body established by the *Higher Education Act* of 1997. The CHE is required annually to submit to parliament, through the Minister of Education, its activities and progress in the execution of its core mandate. This Annual Report for the financial year April 2005 to March 2006 is the eighth produced by the CHE since its inception in mid-1998.

The CHE Council again has reason to be satisfied with the performance of the CHE in executing its core mandate of:

- **Advising** the Minister at her request or proactively on all higher education (HE) policy issues
- **Assuming executive responsibility for quality assurance** within HE
- **Monitoring and evaluating** whether HE policy goals are being realized, including reporting regularly on the state of South African HE
- Contributing to developing HE through various activities.

The CHE possesses a highly professional, energetic and dedicated Secretariat, that is supported and supervised by the CHE Council and the HEQC Board. In addition, scores of academics and researchers contribute to the activities of the CHE, especially with respect to the execution of its quality assurance activities. I thank the Secretariat, the members of the CHE Council and HEQC Board, and numerous other collaborators for their contribution to the work of the CHE and HEQC.

The past year has seen the tragic loss of a key CHE staff member, Dr Prem Naidoo. I wish to pay tribute to his tremendous and seminal contribution to the development of the HEQC quality assurance policies, mechanisms and procedures. Prem's intellect, boundless energy, passion and commitment will be sorely missed. He personified the kind of person that higher education institutions require in abundance if they are to make an effective contribution to knowledge production and dissemination and to South Africa's economic and social challenges.

The end of June saw the departure of Prof. Saleem Badat, the first CEO of the CHE, to take up the position of Vice Chancellor of Rhodes University. In his seven years as CEO, Saleem's intellectual and organizational leadership, his mobilization of personnel with intellect, knowledge, expertise and skills, and his securing of finances from government and international donors made a pivotal contribution to making the CHE a vibrant and dynamic institution that has imaginatively and effectively discharged its legislated mandate.

I am confident that the CHE will continue to discharge its mandate with the imagination, dedication and professionalism that has been a characteristic of it since its inception.

**Mr Saki Macozoma**  
*Chairperson*  
*Council on Higher Education*