

# Praise as UCT renames building after Chris Hani

**Okuhle Hlati**

THE South African Communist Party (SACP) and family of Struggle icon Chris Hani have lauded UCT's decision to honour the life and legacy of the freedom fighter by naming one of its buildings after him.

The New Science Lecture Theatre is to be renamed the Chris Hani Lecture Theatre in honour of Hani's contribution to the country's democracy.

The official renaming ceremony will be held on April 25, and is expected to be attended by the Hani family.

The deputy minister of Public Works and deputy secretary-general of the SACP,

Jeremy Cronin, is to give the keynote address.

Yesterday marked the 25th anniversary of Hani's assassination, which was commemorated around the country.

"Naming the building Hani will contribute towards building awareness and profile the huge role the anti-apartheid activist played.

"The truth is the democracy we are enjoying now is a product of the communists' struggle in which Hani was actively involved.

"The struggle for liberation in South Africa in many ways became synonymous with the struggle of socialism.

"It was the flow of his blood that actually set the gate for

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our first democratic elections in 1994," said SACP national spokesperson and Hani family spokesperson Alex Mashilo.

He emphasised that it was crucial that the history of how South Africans achieved the democratic dispensation that we are enjoying now was taught in schools and institu-

tions of higher education.

Hani was assassinated on April 10, 1993 by Polish immigrant Janusz Walus, who was assisted by former Conservative Party member Clive Derby-Lewis.

As a member of the SACP and the ANC, Hani led the ANC armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, as its chief of staff.

UCT spokesperson Nombuso Shabalala said the institution regarded the naming of the building a historic moment.

"The renaming of buildings is just one part of a multifaceted transformation project committed to overcoming the legacy of apartheid and colonialism in the university

system, and to make UCT a home to all."

Shabalala said it was a change that would not just linger in the name boards on the side of buildings, but that it would also be a definitive break with South Africa's painful past.

"It is symbolic of a transformation, not only on the UCT campus but more importantly of our attitudes and values.

"UCT recognises that there is still a long way to go with the process of transformation, but one thing that is certain is that the renaming of each building symbolises an important milestone on our journey as a university," said Shabalala.