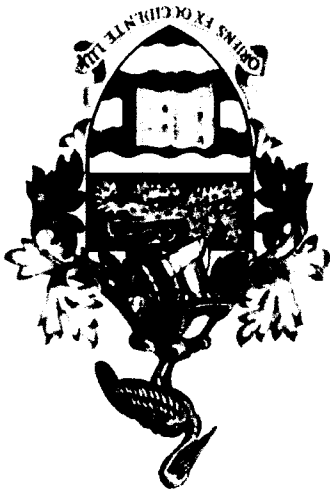


Reginald Dumas



Chancellor, many in your audience will be familiar with the "Disney movie" "The Lion King" though few may remember "Rafiki" – a character in that story. Rafiki was not the King. No... he was not even the Kingmaker. But without Rafiki there would not have been much of a Kingdom, for the sustenance of the Kingdom relied heavily on his wisdom. Rafiki is the metaphor for the highest level of social evolution that can be achieved by an individual – one who grows continually to fulfil larger and larger social needs and being ever responsive to the call of self-sacrificing duty.

We must now seek to find what forms and informs such character. Could it be a Tobaqa upbringing? – Where, then as is now, the great African tradition survives and where the entire village assumes the responsibility for raising the child. Could it have been his sojourn to the Chaguanas Government School – a bastion of excellence in primary education – or, for that matter, a Cambridge education?

For all his exposure to places of high academic standing, it is not what he has learnt that matters; it is what he has contributed! If it was his fate to serve with dignity and pride, then he has fulfilled his obligations to Trinidad and Tobago and the world with distinction.

For 50 years Reggie Dumas has played the role of Rafiki.

He led a distinguished diplomatic career spanning 1973 to 1988. During this time he served as High Commissioner to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean; India and Sri Lanka; Ethiopia and other Eastern African countries and as Ambassador to The United States and The Permanent Representative to The Organisation of American States.

Following his diplomatic postings he served as the Head of The Civil Service and chaired the Public Service Task Force. His publication, 'In the Service of The Public' – a compilation of articles, speeches and commentaries – documents his voluminous works between 1963 and 1993.

But his work was not yet done.

In 1998 he co-founded Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute, the national chapter of Transparency International.

In 2004, following the political impasse that had developed in Haiti, he was selected by the then Secretary General of the United Nations to be a special adviser on affairs related to Haiti. His mastery of the French language, keen sense of diplomacy and civil responsibility made him a natural choice for this onerous challenge.

Chancellor, like all truly great men, Reginald Dumas bestrides many ages. He is evergreen, with a keen sense of transition from one age to another. He has steadily climbed Maslow's hierarchical ladder, fulfilling at each turn, vital roles from which our country has been the beneficiary.

*Here is one of our nation's sons in whom we are well pleased – a nation-builder, a diplomat extraordinaire, a sage and one who is deserving of our highest honour. Receive him, Chancellor, and by the power vested in you by the Council and the Senate, confer upon him the title of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.*

St. Augustine Campus

Friday 28th October, 2011