

THE ROBERT GRAY AWARD – 2022: DR GREG MILLS

Greg was born in 1962 in Cape Town attending first Forres School, then Bishops Prep, where he boxed under Mr Herbie Selfe, twice winning the school finals; played first team Prep rugby and ran for the school in the Triangular. He came to College in 1976 as a dayboy in Ogilvie, played hockey in the Second XI, and continued in his athletics career. By then he had already started to participate in motorsport, in karting. This sport had been a longstanding family interest; and he was yet another member of the family to excel at it receiving National colours as a schoolboy. After school, Greg went to UCT where he earned his BA Honours Degree in African Studies; after which he went to the UK to further his studies, being awarded an MA *cum laude* in Strategic Studies. Having received high honours for the course, he enrolled for a PhD which he received from Lancaster University in 1990 with the topic on counter-insurgency warfare in southern Africa. Whilst at Lancaster, he was appointed Dean of Students; captained the rowing team, earning his blue, and played first team lacrosse and rugby for both his college and the university. There he raced in the British kart championships, earning a place to represent Britain at the World Championship in 1985.

Greg is very proud that his PhD was submitted on the historic day when Nelson Mandela was released from prison in February 1990; which meant that Greg was happy to return to South Africa. After teaching at the University of the Western Cape and UCT, respectively, he became the Director of Studies of the SA Institute of International Affairs, and then from 1996 – 2005, its National Director. When the Oppenheimer family inaugurated the Brenthurst Foundation in 2005, Greg became its first Head. The purpose of the Foundation is to strengthen economic performance in Africa, in which he has been involved in since, at the highest level, with many of the Heads of State of Africa. Examples include being the strategic adviser to the Presidents of Rwanda and Malawi at different times; and setting up and running the Presidential International Advisory Board in Mozambique and the Presidential International Advisory Committee of Malawi.

Greg devised the Ghanaian government's 'Ghana beyond Aid' turnaround strategy and is currently serving as the strategic adviser to the President of Zambia. He has also sat on the Danish Africa Commission and on the African Development Bank's high-level panel on fragile states; and served with the rank-equivalence of Major-General in four deployments to Afghanistan with the British Army as the adviser to the commander. He was based in the Presidential Palace in Afghanistan until the fall of Kabul in August 2021, facilitating the terms for a regional peace settlement. He has also worked extensively with the military in Colombia, and with a variety of African governments in both improving the conditions for peacebuilding and investment, including through the Zambezi Protocol on the natural resource sector.

Greg is the author of many books — *Why Africa Is Poor; Africa's Third Liberation* which he penned together with former Nigerian President Obasanjo, *Making Africa Work: A Handbook for Economic Success; Democracy Works; The Asian Aspiration: Why and How Africa Should Emulate Asia* (again with President Obasanjo, and former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn) and more recently *Expensive Poverty* (which details the failings of aid, and suggests several ways to improve development outcomes); *The Ledger: Accounting for Failure in Afghanistan*; and *Better Choices*, about the current South African economy; and finally, *Populism*, a book on competitive African politics.

Greg met his wife, Janet, a World Championship and World Cup rower on a rowing tour to Henley in 1992. Janet joined him in Johannesburg in 1994 where they have lived since, and have three children Amelia, Beatrix and William, all national sports awardees.

Greg's many hobbies, include motorsport having received his national colours as well as cycling. Greg is currently working on '*Rich State, Poor State*' examining the effects of a state when it makes economic and political reforms. Further recent research has drawn him to Ukraine several times, including a visit to that country in December 2022 with Archbishop Thabo Makgoba.