

## **Unlocking Horizons, the European Dream by Hagreaves Kumba**

**In an ever-globalizing world, the Erasmus Programme is a beacon of international cooperation and academic exchange, fostering unity and cultural understanding among students across Europe and beyond. This report captures the transformative journey embarked upon under the auspices of the esteemed Erasmus Programme as Hagreaves left Africa to explore new horizons, broaden perspectives, and create lasting connections with fellow scholars from diverse backgrounds in Europe.**

**I am Hagreaves Kumba, a final year Master of Industrial Engineering student at Durban University of Technology in South Africa. I am privileged to be part of the Erasmus Programme for the winter school semester of 2023, and this initiative has granted me a unique opportunity to delve into foreign educational institutions, embrace different teaching methodologies, and immerse myself in an unfamiliar environment.**



**I left Zimbabwe in the evening 1800, my home country, on the 2nd of February 2023 at RG International Airport. I arrived the next day at Barajas Adolfo Suárez Airport Madrid at noon, then continued to Valladolid the same day.**

**I was helped by Ali, a former Erasmus student, for accommodation, and the first night I slept at her former landlord, she helped until I settled. I managed to open**

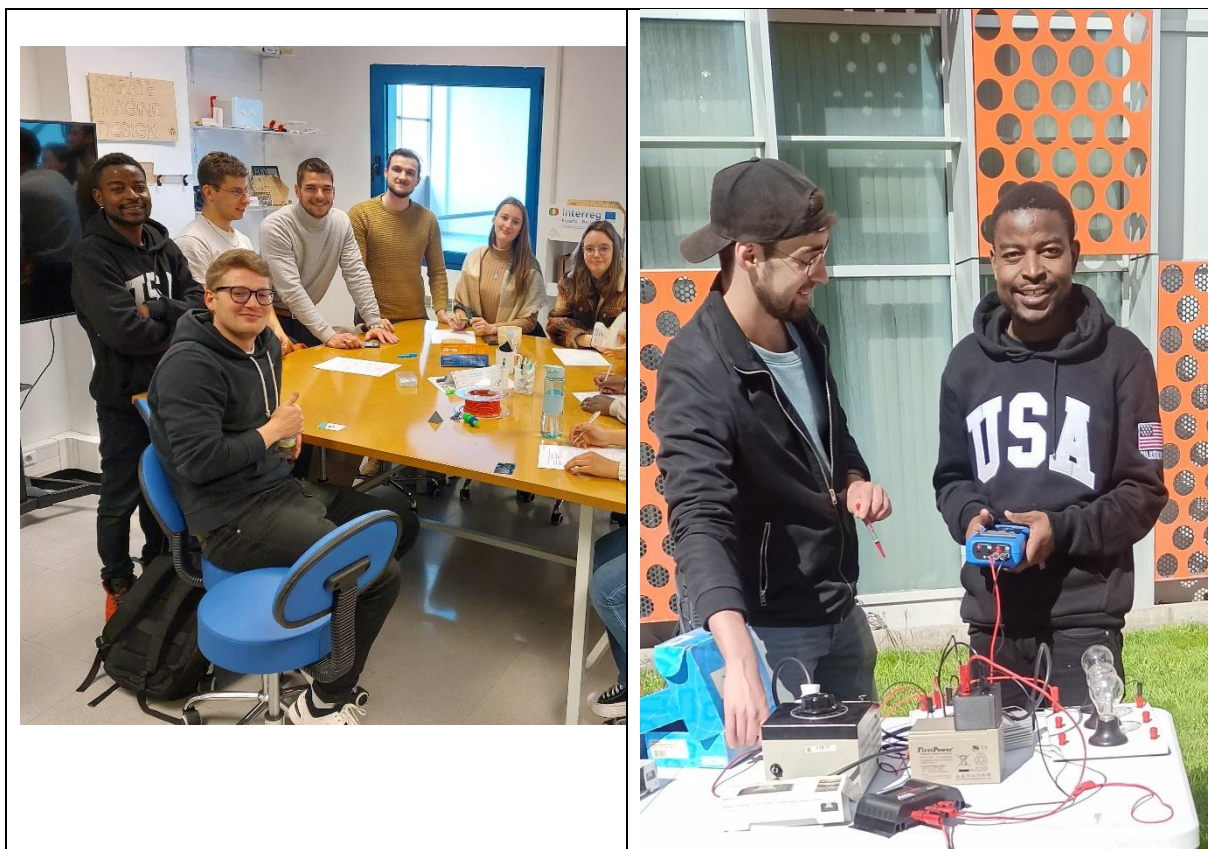
a bank account as instructed by the International Office. It was easy to open a bank account, and the people were accommodating.

The School of Industrial Engineering welcomed us with other Erasmus students for details, guidance, and time table. Lessons started on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, the environment was a bit different from our African style, but I quickly adapted. I was taking 4 courses per my learning agreement and was a bit busy because of the workload. As time went by, I had friends from different countries.

The way we contacted our lectures was interesting, for example, watching documentaries, class discussions, and online quizzes during the classes. We also had hands-on labs. One of my favorite lecturers Prof Elena with me, organized field trips and tours for us; it was amazing .



Attached below are some of the lab pictures.



**We finished lectures on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May and started preparations for exams scheduled for June.**

**Besides school, I also got some moments learning the Spanish culture, especially on the Easter holiday when they celebrated the Semana Santa. During**



**my time in Valladolid went out with other Erasmus students to play different games.**



**Thanks to Erasmus's money, I visited cities like Barcelona and Madrid, etc. I also managed to see the Santiago Bernabeu to support Real Madrid, my team.**

**I came up with a research paper during the semester; it was one of our courses assignment. The paper was submitted to an International Conference, and I, therefore, went to present the paper in Portugal. The pictures are attached below:**



**Last but not least, after finishing the final exams, we had a group photo for one of my favorite courses with my favorite Prof, Elena. Sadly she cried as she said she would miss us. She said, hopefully, we would come back...**





First, I want to thank my home university, Durban University of Technology, for giving me the opportunity and all the necessary support though I am an International Student. From the International office, Ms. Carol and my supervisor Dr. Dolapo thank you for all the support and checkups.

To the University of Valladolid and its esteemed lecturers, I offer my heartfelt gratitude for crafting an unforgettable chapter in the chronicles of my life. They have sowed seeds of knowledge and inspiration that will continue to bloom and bear fruit throughout my lifelong quest for wisdom. As I step away from this transformative journey, I appreciate their invaluable contributions and the enduring magic of the Erasmus experience. Hopefully I will be back again for my PhD exchange.

*Exchange programs do more than provide an education; they foster understanding and bridge cultural divides. Kudos to everyone involved in making these opportunities possible.*

Thank You so much to the UVa Community and everyone who became my new family. It was extremely difficult to accept the reality and leave this country, but I will definitely return soon.

from Hagreaves Kumba

If you have any questions or need some help or advice, You are welcome to contact me at my email address: [hagreaves3@gmail.com](mailto:hagreaves3@gmail.com)/+263 777 576 785