



# higher education & training

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Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **Media Statement**

### **Media Statement on the Meeting of Minister with Higher Education Sector Stakeholders**

20 October 2015

Today, I convened a meeting of various stakeholders of the higher education sector in Cape Town as a response to the current wave of student protests at a number of our universities. Present at the meeting were representatives of the Universities Chairs of Councils; Universities South Africa; trade union; student leadership from the South African Union of Students and government.

The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways and means of addressing the funding situation of our higher education system and craft a common approach for finding solutions specifically to fees and fee-increases.

The meeting took place on the back of a very successful Higher Education Summit which concluded on Saturday 17 October and covered a number of issues, part of which covered the funding of the higher education system and student fees. The summit has resolutions that are short-term and long-term which the various stakeholders will pursue, and these will bring about long-term solutions to the structural challenges that engulf the higher education system. In other words, the Summit laid a good foundation for the sector to deal with the enduring challenges of our higher education system.

The stakeholders agreed to encourage their respective constituencies to engage in institutional negotiations at Universities with a view to achieve a fee increase of not

higher than a CPI-related increase of 6% for 2016. The DHET will partner institutions to enable this process by providing financial support in this regard.

A Task Team of all stakeholders will be immediately initiated with a view to provide a report on the establishment of a more sustainable fee regime that also recognises the importance of input variables such as the university subsidy and higher education cost drivers.

The representatives encourage their constituencies to create an enabling condition for the immediate resumption of the academic programme.

The representatives recognise the right to protest and the importance of differences of opinion in a university. They also underscored the importance of peaceful protest and the respect of Constitutional rights of all parties including those who decide not to protest and hold different views. The representatives condemn all acts of violence and the violation of the rights of others including preventing access and exit to institutions, preventing teaching and learning and the operations of the universities and acts of humiliation. The violation of these rights undermine a safe and secure institutional environment within our universities and must be resisted at all cost. We also recognise the importance of cooperative governance which requires sustained engagements with all constituencies and that involves give and take and leads to the productive outcomes for all sides. This requires the enhancement of the skills of leaders of all stakeholders and Department will assist to facilitate such development.

**Ends**

**Minister**