Pandar says students must be taken seriously genuinely

Science and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor’s address to the SA Student Congress at Stellenbosch University on Wednesday.

The past few months have posed significant challenges for higher education in South Africa. The issues raised refer to genuine concerns and are a justified expression of the ongoing struggle of transformation. However, the chaos, violence and criminal behavior that have unfortunately continued unabated all of us must reject. These are not the aspirations of the students but of a minority of disturbing individuals trying to disrupt the transformation and participation of the majority.

In that context, Stellenbosch University is proud to have a student body that represent a cross-section of South African society with a total of 21 855 students. We have a student body that is 41% female and 59% male. We have a student body that is 49% Black, 28% White, 17% Coloured and 6% Indian.

Throughout the university, there are 67% living in townships or rural areas, 15% living in areas outside of urban areas in and 18% from urban areas. There are 64% students from the Western Cape, 25% from other provinces and 1% from abroad.

The academic year has started well and a number of initiatives have been implemented to support and enhance student life. This includes the introduction of a student advising system, a peer support program and a student mentorship program.

In addition, there have been several events and activities to promote student engagement and participation. These include an annual student conference, a student research symposium, and various cultural and social events.

Finally, the university has prioritized accessibility and affordability to ensure that all students have the opportunity to pursue their academic goals. This includes scholarships, bursaries, and financial aid schemes, as well as partnerships with organizations to provide additional support.

Our students have made significant contributions to the university’s social and academic success. They are the future leaders and innovators of our society and we are proud to support their journeys.

Please visit our website for more information on these initiatives and how you can get involved.