



25 August 2015

## Statement: Discrimination at SU

After celebrating 21 years of our democracy, it is sad that racism and discrimination is everything but extinct, in this country and specifically at Stellenbosch University (SU). Experiences of racism have been raised in the recently published documentary, *Luister*. As the Students' Representative Council (SRC) of SU, we acknowledge the pain expressed by students in this documentary. We have seen and empathised with the narratives. We are listening and we hear you.

We want to affirm our stance: The SU SRC unequivocally condemns any and all forms of discrimination on this campus. Blatant racism, such as verbal abuse and physical harassment, has to be rooted out in its entirety. Equally important is that the institutional culture of the university has to change in order to prevent unwelcoming practices and spaces of exclusion. The idea of any student or group of students being treated as second class citizens is unacceptable.

In too many residences, classrooms and social spaces, students remain excluded. We reiterate our call on the SU management to accelerate the pace of transformation at this institution and we remain willing to work with all stakeholders to address any form of exclusionary culture at SU.

It is also important for all students and staff at SU, also those who have not been personally affected by racism, to actively participate in the process of eradicating an unwelcoming culture. As a community, we are all responsible for identifying and addressing racism as we see it, whether that be blatant or subtle.

Various political parties have called for an investigation by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training; the SRC welcomes this and believes that in the spirit of openness and transparency, a true reflection of the situation will be brought to light. We will gladly assist with any investigation.

There can hardly be any meaningful progress at SU, as long as it is plagued by discrimination and exclusion. Any incident of discrimination experienced or witnessed on campus can be reported anonymously via the Ethics Hotline (0800 204 549 or [sun@ethics-line.com](mailto:sun@ethics-line.com)).