

SRC Statement on Abduction of Ilzé-Dene Oberholzer

15 May 2014

It is with great concern that I address the student population. A Stellenbosch University student Ilzé-Dene Oberholzer was abducted and manhandled on the 12th of May 2014 on her way to a test. She was a few 100 meters away from her car in a well-lit parking area when two men pushed her into a vehicle with the intention of abducting her. She fortunately escaped without being seriously harmed.

This incident is one of many other acts of crime prevalent, and increasing on Stellenbosch campus. A campus that was previously considered safe is now turning into a crime hotspot. The issue would not have fallen on the shoulders of Campus Security, had this incident occurred off campus. However, being only a few 100 meters away from an academic building, in an area still considered to be the heart of campus, the question of the efficiency of Campus Security comes to the fore, demanding immediate attention.

I want to express my utter disappointment and concern with the current state of security at the University. As these incidents arise, I believe the University needs to step up and not only take ownership, but also initiative. As an SRC, we've brought the increase in crime to managements' attention over a period of time. We've had meetings with Risk Management, and Campus Security Services, and all others responsible for security on campus, about the rising crime situation at hand, but unfortunately these meetings often resulted in blame shifting vision stating, and pipeline plans for future implementation. When we fathomed the impact of said problem, we took discussions further to the Rector and his management team, and demanded more security in and around campus. These have failed to manifest to any visible outcomes, and the incident of the 12th of May is testament to this. The restoration,



centralisation and further ways in which one can improve (more CCTV, interactive Helplines/Hotspots) the Green Route, are a few of the many ways in which the University of Stellenbosch can improve on ground level security.

The issue at hand is not only the safety service received by the students from the University, but the presence of safety. Students should never be in a situation where they fear walking to/from class, because of the fear of crime, as per our constitutional human right. We as an SRC demand immediate action as to tangible and visible increases on security on campus in efforts to best keep students safe.

On behalf of the SRC I would like express our deepest condolences with regards to the past incident, and convey that we will further increase our efforts to represent students' voice at management, as per our mandate. This incident should serve to shake the University's Security services to action. We appreciate the attempts to secure safety by the signing of documents and discussions. However, we as the SRC want to ensure that no Matie is a victim to such a crime on campus in the future.

Regards,

Mj Dippenaar

SRC Chairperson 2014