



**MINISTRY
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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The Ministry of Higher Education and Training has taken note of a statement sent today to the media by what purports to be a “FeesMustFall Collective.”

The statement is a collection of wild assertions, inaccuracies and half truths. It remains completely unclear as to who in fact has issued the statement, and how it can in any way serve the interests of the hundreds of thousands of South African students currently working hard for and sitting their mid year examinations as part of their ongoing efforts to empower themselves for the future with the help of the country’s universities and colleges.

Unlike the elected office bearers of the umbrella body South African Union of Students, and of Student Representative Councils from across the country with whom the Minister engaged last week as part of his ongoing meetings and discussions with all higher education and training stakeholders, the “FMF collective” remains amorphous and anonymous. It has been elected by nobody, it is reluctant to identify its leadership, and it makes it very difficult to understand what exactly it is and who exactly it speaks for.

Today’s statement refers to a “FeesMustFall national summit.” This is what the alleged venue, the University of the Western Cape, said about this meeting in a statement issued on June 3rd:

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) received enquiries from a number of individuals and institutions about a “national summit” that is allegedly being advertised to be held on its main campus. The University is not aware of any such plans and at no time was any request made to the University for the use of its premises to hold the proposed summit. Additionally, the dates indicated on the poster are during the mid-year examination period of the University and the

stated venue will be used for this purpose. It is also important to note that the individual whose name appears on the poster is not currently registered as a student at UWC.

That the invitation to the Minister to participate in the summit was followed last Friday by a mail disinviting him, borders on the farcical.

Conversely, the Minister remains committed and looks forward to deepening his engagements further with students and particularly their democratically elected leaders as together sustainable solutions to the challenges facing a higher education system which has expanded massively in the past 20 years are sought and implemented. The Minister and his Department remain committed to ensuring that many tens of thousands of young people can continue to access opportunities to gain knowledge and skills that were previously out of their grasp.

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