



# higher education & training

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

## **MINISTER NZIMANDE CONDEMNS VIOLENT PROTESTS**

21 September 2016 - The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande has strongly condemned violent student protests at some universities in the country.

The violent protests which have led to damage to property and interference in the academic programmes in some institutions are wholly unacceptable and provide no solution to student concerns.

Government has gone a long way to accommodating poor students and those in the missing middle, by exempting them from any fee increase in the 2017 academic year.

“It is most disturbing to see such violent protests enflamed by rogue elements after wide consultation was undertaken on the measures announced this week to address the ongoing issue of university fees. Government has heeded the call of students by subsidising any fee increase in 2017 to poor, working class and ‘missing middle’ students. We cannot subsidise all students in the same manner. Those from households with an income per annum of below R600,000 have been assisted by the gap funding from government announced this week. Those with the means to do so should contribute to increasing university costs by paying fees. Fees remain a significant income stream for universities, together with government subsidies and third stream income,” he says.

The dialogue with students must continue; however damage to property and violence can never be tolerated,” says Minister Nzimande.

“I wish to reiterate to student leaders that my door is always open for any further engagement and discussion. However, such engagements cannot take place in an environment of violence and destruction,” says Minister Nzimande.

Minister Nzimande further says, “Our youth must be careful not to destroy their heritage, their universities which we must protect and preserve as institutions of academic excellence for them and for generations to come.”

The Minister calls on law enforcement agencies to act immediately, within the boundaries of their mandate, against any hooliganism resulting in violence and destruction. The Minister further calls on university vice chancellors to tighten up security and take any measures necessary to prevent any form of violence and destruction of property.

The Minister and the Department are currently in close contact with universities and student leaders to deal with this unacceptable expression of discontent.

**End**

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