



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

Private Bag X174, PRETORIA, 0001, Tel: +27 12 312 6339, Fax: +27 12 326 1161, 123 Francis Baard Street, PRETORIA

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT BETWEEN MINISTER MANAMELA AND
EKURHULENI MAYOR XHAKAZA FOLLOWING A MEETING TO ADVANCE
PLANS FOR A UNIVERSITY IN EKURHULENI**

TO ALL MEDIA

6 MARCH 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, today met with the Executive Mayor of the City of Ekurhuleni, Alderman Nkosindiphile Xhakaza, in Pretoria to discuss progress towards the establishment of the University of Ekurhuleni. The meeting was constructive and focused on the commitments made by President Cyril Ramaphosa during the 2020 State of the Nation Address, in which government announced plans to expand access to higher education through the establishment of new universities in underserved areas, including Ekurhuleni Metro. These commitments were subsequently reinforced through budget pronouncements in the same year, signalling government's intention to broaden the post-school education and training system and bring higher education opportunities closer to communities.

During the meeting, Mayor Xhakaza made an appeal for the resuscitation of the project to establish the University in Ekurhuleni focusing on science and innovation. The

Mayor highlighted that Ekurhuleni, as a major economic and industrial hub, is well-positioned to host an institution that contributes to skills development, research and innovation aligned to the needs of the economy.

Minister Manamela welcomed the Mayor's intervention and reaffirmed the Department's commitment to fast-tracking and advancing the project. The Minister undertook that the Department will move to resuscitate the project and appoint a project steering committee lead by a project leader at an executive level, to guide the next phase of work and ensure that the necessary institutional processes are put in place.

The Minister noted that Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project have already been undertaken, and that the newly constituted steering committee will assess the work undertaken to date and resume the project from where it was previously left off. The committee will also assess options relating to infrastructure, including the utilisation of existing facilities as well as the development of a multi-purpose campus. This will allow it to serve different parts of the Metro while integrating academic programmes with the economic strengths and industrial profile of Ekurhuleni.

Minister Manamela emphasised that the establishment of a university in Ekurhuleni would represent an important milestone in the government's ongoing efforts to expand access to higher education, strengthen the post-school education and training system, and ensure that young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to participate meaningfully in the economy.

Executive Mayor Xhakaza welcomed the positive outcome of the meeting: "This meeting marks an important milestone in our journey and reflects the great strides we have made toward establishing a University of Ekurhuleni that will serve our people and shape the future of our city." Said Mayor Xhakaza

Minister Manamela also thanked the Mayor for the initiative, noting that it responds directly to national priorities set by the President, “this project aligns with the President’s directive that, together with the Minister of Finance, we must build more universities and TVET colleges, with a strong focus on developing the skills required to drive economic growth”, said Minister Manamela.

Enquiries: Matshepo Seedat

Spokesperson for the Minister

082 679 9473

Ramatolo Tlotleng

Acting Mayoral Spokesperson for the Executive Mayor

074 478 4403

***ISSUED JOINTLY BY THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING
AND EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF EKURHULENI***