

**DATE: Monday, 4th January 2021**

**TO: All media**

**ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reports**

**For Immediate use:**

**MINISTER NZIMANDE SADDENED BY THE PASSING OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TEACHERS UNION MR ALLEN THOMPSON**

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande is deeply saddened by the passing of Allen Thompson, the President and the long-serving national office-bearer of the National Teachers' Union (NATU), who died due to Covid-19 related complications.

Minister Nzimande passes his heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and the members National Teachers' Union (NATU) and the entire trade union movement.

"I have known Mr Thompson as a fearless, outspoken and dedicated fighter for the rights of teachers. His contribution will surely be missed in the education sector," said Minister Nzimande.

The Minister further said that Thompson's death comes as the labour movement and South Africa is still reeling in shock following the death of Koena Ramatlou, the General Secretary of the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU).

"I am really devastated by this massive loss we continue to experience as the education sector where a number of our worker leaders depart mostly due to covid - 19 related complications. This phenomenon has not only been affecting the education sector and the labour movement, but our society in general," said Minister Nzimande.

Minister Nzimande calls on all South Africans to rally behind President Cyril Ramaphosa call to change behaviour in order to prevent and manage the corona virus outbreaks wherever they occur by following the health and safety protocols as announced by government.

Issued by:  
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation  
DST Building (53), CSIR Campus  
Meiring Naude Road  
Brummeria  
Pretoria

Enquiries  
Ishmael Mnisi 0663078859