

MEDIA ADVISORY

TO: All media

ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reports

DATE: Thursday, 18 November 2021

For Immediate use:

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande notes the media report that Dr Leon Schreiber of the Democratic Alliance has submitted a complaint to UNESCO on the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Institutions in South Africa.

Upon receiving the enquiry through UNESCO, the South African government, will respond to it, using the current practices and protocols that governs UNESCO member States.

However Minister Nzimande would like to explain the matter regarding the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Institutions into perspective and the engagements with Dr Leon Schreiber and the Democratic Alliance (DA) on the language policy framework.

Minister Nzimande has on numerous occasions, through media statements and through direct Parliamentary questions replied to the Dr Leon Schreiber and the Democratic Alliance.

At the crux of the Minister's response, is the fact that Afrikaans and other languages perceived not to be given attention in the Language Policy Framework for Higher Education Institutions does not discriminate against any South African language.

To the contrary, the policy framework affirms all South African languages and purposefully advocates for their scholarly development.

The Revised policy framework primarily seeks to promote the development of historically under developed African languages particularly those accorded the official status by the South African Constitution.

The Khoe languages are explicitly referenced in the policy as languages that also requires support. This is contrary to the claim by the DA that Khoe languages are excluded for scholarly development.

Afrikaans and other languages perceived not to be given attention in the policy framework should be read within the broader context of what the policy framework seeks to achieve and not narrowly within the confines of the definition section of the policy.

Furthermore Minister Nzimande said that Afrikaans must not be used as a means to pursue a narrow and racist Afrikaner nationalist agenda, as was the case under apartheid.

The Minister said Afrikaans should and must be located in a democratic South Africa and be rescued from a white right-wing agenda.

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