

Remarks by Pro Chancellor at the Re-commencement of Negotiations involving Representatives of the UG Unions, the UG Administration, and the Council of the University

on Thursday, February 21st, 2019 commencing at 1000 hours

in the Boardroom of Facilities Management, Turkeyen Campus

The Pro Chancellor offered brief Remarks at the recommencement of the Negotiations involving representatives of the UGWU, the UGSSA, the Administration of the University, and the University's Council.

The Pro Chancellor stated that he was present in his capacity as Pro Chancellor and also as the official carrying out the duties of Chancellor, in the absence of a substantive Chancellor. He gave the sequence of events leading up to today: Talks between the Administration and the Union on salaries for 2018 broke down due to the tabling of salaries and other emoluments-related matters by the Unions, and the position taken by the Administration that the talks could not be exclusively related to salary and allowances because there were performance-related issues, which also needed to be addressed.

Recourse to the Ministry of Labour for conciliation, was unsuccessful to date. The daily publication in the media, including social media, about issues relating to the impasse, and subjective and injurious personal criticism of the Vice Chancellor and his style, did the University's image in the eyes of the public no good, and was likely to influence and fuel negative perceptions of the University on the part of the public, prospective students, alumni, and partner organisations, philanthropists, etc.

The Pro Chancellor felt that continuation of this negative publicity leading to further polarization between Unions and Administration, was undesirable. He appealed to the leadership of the Unions and to the Vice Chancellor, to return to the negotiating table, with three representatives of the Council playing a listening and facilitating role, and without prejudice to any initiative from the Ministry of Labour. There was a positive response to the proposal and that led to the convening of the meeting today.

The Pro Chancellor stated that at stake in these negotiations were:

- The pursuit of the Mission of the University;
- The wellbeing and welfare of students and staff;
- The credibility and sustainability of the Renaissance Process for transformational change; and
- The public image of the University

The Pro Chancellor reminded of the need to reflect throughout the process of these negotiations, the Values the University adheres to:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Transparency
- Inclusivity
- Efficiency

He emphasized that parties to the negotiations should be compliant with these values and these should be integrated into the protocols for communication, consultation, and decision-making on Outcomes.

He stated his expectations of the recommencement of the Negotiations would be that:

- ✓ Parties would work assiduously in identifying issues
- ✓ Prioritise the issues
- ✓ Address each in an objective manner, and
- ✓ Reach agreement in effecting a mutually satisfactory closure of each issue and for those that are systemic, agree on a process to move forward towards an agreed outcome.

He also hoped that the experience of these negotiations will be a catalyst to embed a culture of cooperation, and collaboration, that would be respectful of personalities, engender trust and confidence in the consultation and information dissemination process, both on and off campus.

He requested that all Releases to the media should be crafted jointly and signed by all of the parties. The PRO will then make the Release.

The parties involved in the negotiations would determine their scheduling of meetings but the Pro Chancellor requested expeditious and diligent application by all to achieve mutually agreed outcomes.

The formal tabling of a report by the Council's representatives, coordinated by Mr Ivor English, and signed by the representatives of the parties to the negotiations, will be done at the Council Meeting scheduled for March 7, 2019.

Office of the Pro Chancellor

February 21, 2019