



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Minister Nzimande Calls on South Africans to Work Together to Bring Arsonists to Book

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, has called on communities and all relevant arms of the state to work together and redouble their efforts to track, prosecute and bring to book the small band of arsonists who are destroying the country's education infrastructure.

Reacting to the latest arson attack to hit the country's public universities — the torching of a procurement building at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) at the weekend — Minister Nzimande said "enough is enough, and it is time all South Africans joined hands to stop this madness".

"It cannot be that this tiny band of anarchists, who are hiding behind legitimate stakeholder concerns, can continue to hold this nation to ransom, and be allowed to destroy our young democracy and the future of our students, their families and communities.

"Indeed, and whatever the issues are, there can never be a rational justification for the destruction of assets that we as a country need to empower the next generation so that they can play their full role in building South Africa and its economy," he said.

It was in this light, Minister Nzimande said, that he was calling on communities and higher education stakeholders to work with the responsible state institutions to "track down this criminal minority and put an end to their barbaric behaviour".

“It really is time that communities, parents, students, staff and faith leaders mobilise even more in protection of the country’s learning and teaching facilities.

"I also can't stress enough that the government and universities must and will remain open to dialogue with all stakeholders, but lawlessness and other acts of criminality will never be tolerated," Dr Nzimande added.

Meanwhile, the Minister is continuing with his intensive meetings and discussions with the full range of stakeholders in Higher Education — including students, academics, support staff organisations and administrators — as the government seeks lasting and sustainable solutions to the challenges facing the sector.

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Issued by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training

14 February 2017