

NEHAWU: VUT BRANCH

**National Education, Health & Allied Workers Union**

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**Attention: Anele Kabingesi**

**To: The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education**

**Subject: Report on the Status quo**

**Date: 06 October 2020**

Revolutionary Greetings to the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education Science and Technology

Nehawu VUT Branch acknowledges an invitation and an opportunity to present to the portfolio committee on the statusquo of the Vaal University of Technology since the intervention of the administration led by Professor Ihron Rensburg, Nehawu VUT Branch retaliate its position in assisting the administration to achieve its mandate of restoring good governance, administration and management of the university and notwithstanding the challenges that comes with the process of administration. Ion.

**Stability on Campus**

* The university is fairly stable on its operations and taking into consideration the period of lockdown and challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic;
* There’s general uncertainty, anger and confusion among student population and structures which emanated after the recentsuspensions of SRC members and Nehawu find it difficult to be quit about this matter since it threatens the cohesion and the stability of the university.

**Finances of the university**

With the presentation of finances in our last encounter/engagement we were left shocked that VUT will only be able to pay a month salary if the subsidy from government were to be halted, Nehawu VUT branch still maintain that employees’ salaries are not the reason why the university is in this dire financial situation but the operation and over expenditure on projects and maintenance budget and the practice when it comes to the prioritization of VUT finances, a practical example will be the R 145 000 000 utilized on external residences on an annual bases, non-effectiveness R 120 000 000 private investment options and practices utilized by the university. As Nehawu we believe that science park and its economy is not transparent and accountable to the university, e.g. shoe making project, manufacturing of mask, face shield and sanitizers and many related project while the institution have inherited salaries of employees at the science park while it was supposed to be self-sustainable from goods and services manufactured and rendered.

**Covid 19 Relief Funding**

There’s is no consultation regarding the relief fund on Covid 19 from higher health and other external sources

**New Challenges**

With the administration we are observing minimal consultation on many key aspect and processes of the university and resolution taken by Mancom that are not communicated with organize labour:

* There’s are general sense of fear amongst employees (with perceived section 189 somehow on the cards)
* Disciplinary actions and processes are very cumbersome and take long to conclude, a process that suffocates those who are charged with no resolutions on their cases;
* Closure of satellite campuses present an uncertain on our members and employees in general
* No transparency on the appointment and the progress of a security tender and the insourcing project agreed upon, and there’s a serious observed victimization of our members in the process of insourcing of a security project;
* Transparency on the appointment of IT related Services – we are led to believe that not all was right which has led to the suspension of the Executive director IT Services;
* A sudden resignation of the ED Human Resources left a lot to be desired and no explanation given in that regard;
* Appointment of external candidates in promotional positions poses a serious challenge to the future of VUT employees, Nehawu is of the view that level 5 positions and below should be that of permanent status since they fall within the bargaining structures and should be reserved for internal employees;
* There’s no stability at our Human Resources directorate and decision taken from organize labour and management are not implemented
* No pay progression of salaries since 2016 which has led to non-distinct of the old and new cohort of employees and salary increment has been shrinking year by year.
* Serious shortages of cleaning and service personnel staff
* More than half of employees are still on contracts without benefits for more than five years of employment,(Section 198B) is not been honored
* Notingthat VUT is the lowest paid institution of higher learning in Gauteng a proper restructuring of our remuneration structure is sought.

**Interventions**

* Nehawu VUT request the treasury for a special fund that will cater for salary increment for the 2020 financial year and thereby address the salary pay progression that is stacked at the medial of the scale while others are paid at the maximum of the scale.
* We request a review on closure of satellite campuses until every alternative has been exhausted;
* We are demanding a mix of internal and external cohorts of employees when in come to level one to four and thus ensuring good institutional memory and continuity;
* Good working relationship between employees and the ministerial appointees, adviser’s administrator’s adviser’s in different portfolios.
* We request a full consultation and participation in all critical decision making processes.
* A speedy conclusion and participation in recrafting the university statutes;
* A speedy resolution in appointing the governance body of the university;
* An assurance and a recommitment from the administration regarding victimization of union leadership by certain line managers.

Regards

Joseph Norman Radebe

Signed On behalf of

**VUT Nehawu Executive Committee**