

**TO: PARLIAMENT'S PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION,  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**FROM: DR JM MABELEBELE, REGISTRAR**

**DATE: 14 MAY 2021**

**SUBJECT: STATEMENT READ OUT TO THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON 14 MAY  
2021**

1 On the night of 12 May 2021, I received a letter from the Chairperson of Parliament's Portfolio Committee ("the Committee") on Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mr Philemon Mapulane, requesting me to appear before the Committee on 14 May 2021. In the same letter, the Chairperson indicates the reason for my appearance as follows:

*The Chairperson of the SMU Council, Ms M Rambauli appeared before the Committee on 12 May 2021 wherein she gave oral evidence to the statement submitted to the Committee on 29 June 2020. During her testimony, Ms Rambauli could not provide responses to the Committee on a number of issues, and indicated that the Registrar would be in a much better position to give clarity to the Committee. In light of the above, the Committee requests you to appear before its Enquiry and give response to the following:*

*That Senate and the Institutional Forum (IF) were not provided with Prof Mbatl's sexual harassment disclosure records and they voted on the shortlisted candidates with no knowledge of the disclosure*

*That the Chairperson of Council was not aware if Senate and IF were not provided with the disclosure records, which were in the agenda packs distributed to Council and the Selection Panel.*

2 I will confine my response to the matters raised in the letter from the Chairperson of the Committee. I wish to confirm that the Senate and Institutional Forum (IF) were not provided with Prof Mbatl's sexual harassment disclosure records and they voted on the shortlisted candidates with no knowledge of the disclosure records. I further wish to confirm that in the agenda pack of Senate and Institutional Forum were the following:

- Advertisement for the position
  - Policy and Procedures: Appointment of Vice-Chancellor
  - Application Letters and CVs of the four shortlisted candidates
- a. Prof Mbatl

- b. Prof Moche
- c. Prof Parekh
- d. Prof Songca

- 4 It needs to be stated that Paragraph 2.2.3.2 of the **Policy and Procedures for the appointment of Vice-Chancellor** provides that “*The Senate and the Institutional Forum must, after all the shortlisted candidates have addressed a joint meeting of the Council, the Senate and Institutional Forum on a topic or topics as determined by the SP [Selection Panel], with due regards to the advertised requirements for appointment, through separate meetings make a pronouncement on the suitability for appointment of each of the shortlisted candidates. The full Curriculum Vitarum of the candidates and their declarations of intent must be made available to the members of the respective meetings before voting is conducted*”. It was in light of the above policy provision that the documents referred to above were put before the two respective structures.
- 5 In respect of whether the Chairperson of Council was aware if Senate and IF were not provided with the disclosure records, which were in the agenda packs distributed to the Council and Selection Panel, I wish to respond as follows:

I cannot confirm or deny if the Chairperson of Council was not aware or otherwise if Senate and IF were provided with the disclosure records. The reality of the matter is that the disclosure records were part of the Council Selection Panel meeting pack of 16 April 2020. For this reason, it would probably not have been possible, for those disclosure records to be part of the Senate and IF meetings of 11 March 2020. It is quite possible and probable that the Chairperson of Council was not aware for the following reasons:

- a. She is not a member of either Senate or IF; and
- b. As Chairperson of Selection Panel, she could have probably seen or gained exposure to the disclosure records at the meeting of the Selection Panel on 16 April 2020.

Yours Sincerely



**DR JM MABELEBELE**

**~ENDS~**