

30 July 2021

To: Hon M.P Mapulane, MP
Chairperson: Portfolio Committee of Higher Education,
Science and Technology

From: Mr K.K Maimela
Former University of Venda Council member and
Former Chairperson of the Human Resources Committee

Dear: Honourable Mapulane, MP

REQUEST TO APPEAR AS A WITNESS BEFORE THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OVERSIGHT ENQUIRY INTO THE APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSOR PETER MBATI AS VICE CHANCELLOR OF SEFAKO MAKGATHO UNIVERSITY AND RELATED MATTERS (PART A: UNIVEN)

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- 1.1. I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 7 June 2021 which serves as an invitation for me to appear before the Portfolio Committee on the above subject matter. I am also required to submit a written and signed statement pertaining to my involvement as a member of the Task Team and to provide information about the work of the Task Team.

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- 2.1. I confirm that the late Mr M.L Mashego the then member of Council and also the Chairperson of the Appeal's Committee of Council and I as the then Chairperson of the Human Resources Committee, were appointed to form part of the Task Team as per the letter dated 09 March 2015, signed by Mr Serobi Maja as the then University of Venda Chairperson of Council. The letter is attached hereto as Annexure **KM 1**.

- 2.2. The Task Team was appointed to investigate issues relating to the application of the judicial review of the Commission for Gender Equality investigative report to court, on the allegation of sexual harassment that was reported by Prof T Tshivhase-Phendla against Prof Peter Mbatlana who was the then Vice Chancellor of the University of Venda. The terms of reference for the Task Team are as recorded in Annexure **KM 2**.

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On 10 April 2015, the Task Team reported back and advised EXCO on the following:-

- 3.1. The Task Team noted that the Chair of Council had on 30 January 2015 written to members of the University of Venda Council advising on the concern on the legality of the CGE report, and that should the CGE refuse to revisit its investigation, the University would take all necessary steps to ensure that the investigative report is subjected to judicial review. The Chair of Council Mr. Serobi Maja subsequently authorized the University management to subject the CGE report to a judicial review. The letter from the then Chair of Council is attached hereto as Annexure **KM 3**.
- 3.2. On the basis of the above information becoming available to the Task Team, the Task Team recommended that the review application of the CGE report should be allowed to take its course and that Council should await the outcome of the review application of the Commission for Gender Equality investigative report, before deciding on an appropriate course of action.

3.3. On the request of Council, the review of whether Prof. Mbatl used university resources to defend himself was done by the then Director of Legal Services, Adv Lambani. The detailed breakdown of the legal costs were presented to the University Council and, subsequently ratified by Council confirming that there was no evidence of misuse of university resources.

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4.0. On 17 April 2015, Council ratified the Task Team recommendations as per paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 above.

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5.0. I wish to state that the decision to subject the CGE investigative report to court for judicial review was ratified by Council on 17 April 2015.

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6.1. I have noted from paragraph 5 of your letter that the Portfolio Committee will put questions to me regarding my knowledge and involvement in the Task Team and as a former member of Council.

6.2. In this statement, I have clarified issues pertaining to my involvement in the Task Team, however, I humbly request the Honorable Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee to furnish me with a set of questions the members of the Portfolio Committee would expect me to respond to as it relates to my involvement in the University of Venda Council, for me to approach the University of Venda to acquire relevant information to ready myself so that I can be able to respond and assist the Portfolio Committee appropriately.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'K.K. Maimela', written in black ink. The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first letters being larger and more prominent.

Mr K.K Maimela