

7 September 2016

Ms Gugu Ncongwane
Commission of Enquiry into Higher Education and Training

By email: feesHET@justice.gov.za

Dear Ms Ncongwane

The UCT Vice-Chancellor, Dr Max Price, delivered a presentation to the Fees Commission in Cape Town on 6 September 2016. As you know, the event was disrupted and not all the presentations could be concluded. I wish to raise a serious concern about the disruption and the fact that Dr Price had to endure threats and abuse by protesters, was held hostage and had his laptop taken from him. Nobody should have to contend with such a situation, and I wish, on the behalf of the Council of the University of Cape Town, to register our most serious concern at that fact that appropriate security arrangements were not in place at the venue. While protesters may have been raising issues specific to UCT, this does not detract from the fact that the Commission has had to contend with similar protests at venues around the country. The risk of disruption should therefore have been anticipated and appropriate measures put in place to prevent the grave situation that prevailed yesterday at the Cape Town venue.

I am requesting that you kindly bring this matter to the attention of the Chairperson of the Commission. The entire higher education sector, and the country more broadly, need assurances that the Commission is able to do its work in an orderly manner, and certainly without the kind of external intimidation and criminal behaviour by unnamed persons who have free access to venues as was witnessed by all yesterday.

I implore you to give this matter urgent attention, so that all of us, Vice-Chancellors included, feel more assured when invited to participate in the proceedings of the Commission.

Yours sincerely

Sipho M Pityana
Chair of Council
University of Cape Town