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10 November 2015

UCT community condemns unacceptable actions by protesters

Please cite Gerda Kruger, Executive Director, Communication & Marketing Department, UCT

Staff and staff bodies across the University of Cape Town have joined the UCT executive in condemning the violent and unlawful disruption of the special Senate meeting on 9 November 2015, and have called for a commitment by all parties to engagement in a peaceful and tolerant atmosphere. Condemnation of the behaviour by the protesters came from the Academics Union, the Black Academic Caucus, members of Senate, members of the Centre for Higher Education (CHED), Deans and multiple individuals.

The UCT executive and others condemning the disruptive behaviour all reiterated their support for ongoing engagement and recommitted to the principle of protecting everyone's right to peaceful protest action.

They all condemn the behaviour of a group of protesters (of whom the majority are from outside UCT), who disrupted the Senate meeting that was meant to be held yesterday, 9 November 2015. The group had returned from protesting at Parliament. They entered the venue without permission and screamed and verbally abused members of Senate. They particularly targeted Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price with utterly unacceptable verbal abuse and threw bottles, food and other articles at him. They intimidated staff members, physically threatened people, racially abused people at random, humiliated individuals and generally acted in an unruly, aggressive manner that is completely unacceptable.

In the run-up to the meeting we saw protesters setting tires alight, some buses had their tires slashed and fire extinguishers were stolen and, in one case, set off in the face of the Vice-Chancellor. These actions are deplorable and in yesterday's meeting they escalated to a level of aggression that everyone feels is intolerable and is to be condemned in the strongest terms. No engagement or negotiation is possible in such an environment. In fact, this behaviour threatens to reverse all the gains made by so many in the discussions on how to make UCT better and stronger in the future.

We appeal to every member of the UCT community to not participate in unlawful actions or be involved in a repeat of the kind of behaviour displayed yesterday.

Please find attached the respective statements by:

- The [Academics Union Executive](#)
- [CHED](#)
- The [Black Academic Caucus](#)
- [Dean of Humanities](#) Professor Sakhela Buhlungu

ENDS

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