



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

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Deeply shocking Nosicelo murder strikes too close to home for UCT on anniversary of Nene murder

TEXT: [Read the full communication by UCT VC, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng.](#)

Two years since the murder of University of Cape Town student Uyinene Mrwetyana on this day, and following the killing of University of Fort Hare student Nosicelo Mtebeni, Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng urges all to take action against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

“The deeply shocking murder of Nosicelo strikes too close to home. Just two years ago this week, we were reeling from the rape and murder of Uyinene. Today I am devastated that I feel the same heartache I felt in 2019. On behalf of UCT, I extend our heartfelt condolences to Nosicelo’s family, friends and the University of Fort Hare community on this terrible loss.

“South Africa is being robbed of our bright stars of the future. Nosicelo had her heart set on making a difference. Her classmate told the media that Nosicelo wanted to be appointed as a Constitutional Court judge someday. To aim for such a goal, she must have had loving and confident support from her family and friends. She must have felt empowered to serve her country,” said Phakeng.

She urged all members of the UCT community to take steps against SGBV.

“Every year, across our country, in all kinds of communities and homes, womxn and girls face SGBV from the men they look to for love and protection: whether it is a boyfriend or a husband, a father or other relative, a neighbour or friend or colleague at work or in school or university.

“We may not know these womxn and girls. But they are our responsibility. I am asking you to make a commitment to do what you can to protect the future they hold. Because there are effective actions each of us can take.”

One such action is to [send a digital letter/postcard to Parliament](#). UCT's Office of Inclusivity and Change (OIC) is helping to coordinate this national campaign on campus, to petition Parliament to end violence against, and the exploitation of, womxn and girls. The Uyinene Mrwetyana Foundation website provides a template where messages can be submitted. All submissions will be attached as a petition to be received by the Presidency on Saturday, 28 August.

The OIC is also hosting the "Empowered Through Vulnerability" survivor support series. This is a series of weekly live engagements on life after sexual violence and post-traumatic growth, featuring input by expert panellists and survivors of sexual violence from the UCT Survivor Support Group. These sessions, streamed via Zoom and Instagram Live, include segments on the survivors' lived experiences, criminal prosecution, mental health diagnosis and well-being (including rape trauma syndrome), myths and stigmas surrounding rape and what life is like after sexual violence and trauma. Everyone is welcome to participate.

"I especially call on the men of UCT to rise up and help to hold each other accountable for the attitudes, unconscious behaviour and direct actions that contribute to SGBV. Every womxn who is destroyed by SGBV had something to offer her family, community and country. Through SGBV we lost that significant potential. It is our responsibility to do everything we can to end this destruction," concluded Phakeng.

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Elijah Moholola

Spokesperson
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: 021 650 5674
Cell: 083 981 7770
Email: elijah.moholola@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za