



## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF UNISA ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE SALARY ADJUSTMENT DISPUTE WITH ORGANISED LABOUR**

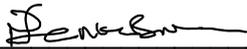
23 March 2022

Dear colleagues, students of Unisa and fellow South Africans,

1. I am pleased to announce that the main issue of dispute between Unisa and organised labour, namely, salary adjustment, has been successfully resolved by the appropriate authority, the Council of Unisa. This is a vote of confidence on our steadfast attitude that any solution to the issue must follow proper governance protocols.
2. The resolution of this dispute means that the university will immediately return to operational and academic stability. We wish to thank all the stakeholders who made constructive inputs into the negotiation process. For the sake of the stability, sustainability, as well as academic excellence of the university, it is important that engagements remain robust and yet honest, constructive, and forward-looking. Anything outside this framework tends to undermine the very notion of a university anywhere in the world.
3. Since I joined Unisa as Principal and Vice-Chancellor, contrary to misinformation and maneuvering, I have always paid attention to the concerns and complaints raised by our staff about the various discrepancies in our remuneration structure. In fact, I have always believed that they must be resolved equitably and fairly through our governance processes.
4. In an effort to remedy the situation, Management and I instructed Human Resources to undertake a research and benchmark study regarding salaries for Academics, Administrative and Professional staff due to the complex nature of the problem.
5. It is unfortunate that Human Resources did not comply with Management resolutions on the salary adjustments, including the benchmark study which was never done. Instead, shortcuts were taken, and the university was exposed to operational and strategic risks, including a collision course with organised labour.
6. In August 2021, Management decided to approve the salary adjustment of P6 and P5 Academic and Support Staff salaries as an interim relief, even though the initial intention was to remedy the discrepancies surrounding remuneration for academic staff.

7. The problem arose when Human Resources made the salary adjustments without following the appropriate governance procedures and thus making the salary adjustment irregular and unlawful. Under normal circumstances, salary adjustments should happen in strict observance of Labour Relations laws, Unisa's remuneration policies and the internal bargaining and governance frameworks. This did not happen at the required time. It is this violation of governance protocols that has led to the current instability and impasse which has lasted for over five months now.
8. Once more, Management and I wish to apologise to all our internal and external stakeholders for the inconvenience caused by the dispute. We would like to assure all stakeholders concerned that consequence management is underway and will apply to all those who have violated university policies and the laws of the land. Unisa **cannot** condone lawlessness.
9. Now that the dispute is behind us, Management expects all hands-on-deck and a return to normalcy so that we give our students the professional experience they deserve, without fail.
10. Unisa is an academic centre of excellence. Our steady rise in international rankings and the various academic and research awards we continue to win all over the world, is testimony to the fact. We owe it to our students to do well in terms of providing academic, professional, and administrative support for their success.

Yours sincerely,



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Prof Puleng LenkaBula  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor