

# Higher Education Transformation Network

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For Immediate Release

## **PRESS RELEASE: HETN SUPPORTS NATIONAL STUDENT FEE DEMANDS**

The Higher Education Transformation Network (HETN) hereby supports the national student fees demands by South African Union of Students (SAUS) and various students organizations within the higher education sector.

We support the national call to fund the higher education sector through mass disciplined protest free from destruction of infrastructure and unnecessary use of force and subsequent loss of life due to reckless use of force by the South African Police Services (SAPS).

We call on all stakeholders in the higher education sector, in particular the Minister of Higher Education, university Councils and Vice-Chancellors to use innovative approaches to finding common ground in responding to the demands of students which are genuine and valid.

International practices indicate that it is not the sole responsibility of government alone to fund higher education. The responsibility to fund higher education is a shared social responsibility shared by government and the business sector.

We accordingly call on the business sector to assist the State in funding higher education as it is business that also benefits from any educational investments in the higher education sector. In the past decade, the State has invested billions of taxpayer funds in recapitalizing the NSFAS as well as funding new university infrastructure in poorer universities to facilitate increased access. These investments have not been fairly matched by the business sector.

## **2. RAISING THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LEVY (SDL)**

In lieu of the need for increased funding for the NSFAS, the Network hereby calls on government and all roleplayers at NEDLAC for the amendment to the Skills Development Levies Act of 1998 to increase in the skills development levy by 1% which needs to be ring-fenced exclusively to recapitalize the NSFAS.

## Higher Education ACCESS for ALL Communities



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### 3. UTILISATION OF UNIVERSITY RESERVES

Those public institutions of higher learning which hold massive reserves such as the Universities of Cape Town (UCT), Pretoria; Stellenbosch and Free State (UFS) due to benefits accruing from racist historic subsidy formulae by the former apartheid State need to assist in the recapitalisation of the NSFAS for the benefit of poor students to co-fund the annual allocations of the State.

### 4. ALL EMPLOYED GRADUATES TO PAY THEIR NSFAS LOANS

We further call on all graduates who have historically benefitted from NSFAS funding to settle and honour their NSFAS loan obligations to ensure the funding of future generations of students.

We reiterate that the State supported by business needs to increase investments into higher education to enable the country to attain its NDP Vision 2030 targets. Only with the requisite investments can the country attain the objectives of the **National Development Plan Vision 2030**.

Free access to higher education is a right not a privilege for the few. Ends.

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**About the Higher Education Transformation Network (HETN):-**

The Higher Education Transformation Network (HETN) is an independent network of alumni and graduates from various higher education and further educational institutions across South Africa committed to the process of transformation of higher education to increase equitable and access to education, skills and learning to eliminate of socio-economic disparities.

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**Higher Education ACCESS for ALL Communities**

