

Media Statement

UNISA Notes Court Order Suspending Implementation of Public Protector's Remedial Action Pending Judicial Review

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The University of South Africa (UNISA) wishes to provide clarity regarding developments relating to the Public Protector's investigation into the appointment of Mr Johannes Peu Matlala to the position of Manager: Physical Security Services on a fixed-term contract.

The matter originated from a complaint lodged with the Public Protector concerning the appointment process followed in relation to Mr Matlala's fixed-term appointment after retirement.

On 27 March 2026, the Public Protector issued findings against Mr Matsiababa Motebele, the Vice-Principal: Operations and Facilities, concluding that he had both recommended and approved the appointment of Mr Johannes Peu Matlala. The Public Protector found that this dual role was inconsistent with the University's Delegations of Authority and governance framework and constituted maladministration and improper conduct.

Consequently, the Public Protector directed the University to take appropriate remedial action against Mr Motebele for his non-compliance with the applicable governance requirements. There was no irregularity found against the University in the appointment of Mr Matlala post-retirement.

Following the publication of the Public Protector's report, Mr Motebele instituted review proceedings in the Gauteng Division of the High Court, Pretoria, seeking to have the findings and remedial action reviewed and set aside. Pending the determination of the review application, Mr Motebele also approached the Court on an urgent basis for interim relief.

On 29 June 2026, the Gauteng Division of the High Court granted an interim interdict in favour of Mr Motebele. The Court interdicted the implementation of the remedial action directed by the Public Protector pending the finalisation of the review proceedings. The Court held that Mr Motebele had established a prima facie right to challenge the Public Protector's findings, that implementation of the remedial action before the review was determined could cause irreparable harm, and that the balance of convenience favoured preserving the status quo until the review application is adjudicated and consequently granted an order suspending the implementation of the remedial action pending the determination of the review application.

The University further points out that, during the urgent application, it neither opposed nor supported the relief sought and elected to abide by the decision of the Court.

UNISA remains committed to the rule of law and to upholding the principles of good governance, accountability and transparency. As a party to the proceedings, the University will comply fully with the order of the High Court and will await the outcome of the review proceedings before taking any further steps relating to the remedial action directed by the Public Protector.



The University wishes to assure its stakeholders that it respects the constitutional role of both the Public Protector and the Courts and remains committed to implementing all lawful and binding decisions in accordance with the Constitution and applicable legislation.

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For more information and interviews requests, please contact Unisa Senior Media Officers: Mr Tommy Huma on 072 218 6197 / 012 429 3981 / humartm@unisa.ac.za OR Mr Edgar Rathelele on 063 731 5456 / 012 429 3981 / ratheme@unisa.ac.za

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