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Credibility and independence of the investigation

Statement from UCT Chair of Council, Norman Arendse SC, following a briefing to the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Innovation on the findings and recommendations of the independent panel of investigation into matters pertaining to governance at the institution

The University of Cape Town (UCT) Council reiterates that it has adopted the findings and recommendations of the independent panel of investigation on governance matters at UCT during the period 2018-2022, following careful consideration. Council has agreed that the report and its findings are substantively fair, rationally related to its purpose, and provides credible evidence.

We acknowledge the right of stakeholders to call for the appointment of an independent assessor to test the veracity of the report. We do not believe this process should stall or hinder UCT using the report as a roadmap to guide it towards a future marked by accountability and transparency, and a renewed commitment to strengthen the governance of the university. The UCT Council stands by the findings of the independent panel of investigation and will be implementing its recommendations.

Transformation is one of the pillars of the university's 2030 vision and strategy. We take transformation seriously. We give effect to it in different ways, including through implementation of our employment equity policy, as well as the measures we take in promoting the development of outstanding early- and mid-career black academics. We follow our employment equity policy rigorously in our selection processes. In addition, the UCT Senate has taken steps to address issues and gaps in relation to its gender and race profile. However, we acknowledge that this is a journey.

The report finds that race was used to sow division. We do not believe that failures in governance and leadership should be construed as a failure in transformation. The report details an abuse of power, bullying and the past failure of Council to act appropriately.

We look forward to robust, reasonable and meaningful engagement on the report's findings with the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Innovation, and will endeavour to answer with transparency and accountability within their deadline.

ENDS

Issued on behalf of the UCT Council by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department