

11 September 2025

The Minister

Mr Manamela

Department of Higher Education and Training

E – MAIL:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Professor Peach

Head of Legal

UNISA

E-MAIL:

[REDACTED]

Dear Minister Manamela,

MISCONDUCT BY MANAGEMENT OF UNISA: SUSPENSION OF DR. RESHMA MATHURA

1. We confirm our legal brief to act on behalf of Dr Reshma Mathura and Mr Donald Ndlovu.
2. The President's letter to his "*fellow South Africans*" dated 8 September 2025, unfortunately illustrates Government's lip service to the fight against corruption and

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the desire to *“build transparent, accountable and ethical institutions – both public and private – in which corruption is unable to take root”*. We submit that at UNISA it has taken root and has prospered.

3. The Mathura and Ndlovu sagas are the clearest indications yet of Government wilful blindness to address the clear corruption and abuse of power at UNISA. Unfortunately, and perhaps a further reason for the failure to act is UNISA's financial support of a certain political party.
4. Further, we address this correspondence following the announcement in Parliament that the Minister has established a *“stabilisation and dispute resolution task team to investigate the governance crisis at the College of Cape Town”*. It is reported the Minister made the decision after receiving allegations of *“unfair labour practices, abuse of power, misconduct, and wasteful and irregular expenditure”* levelled against the college's chief executive, Mhangarai Muswaba.
5. We note the Minister's worrying observation that human resources have been weaponised to instil a culture of fear. We welcome the Minister's decision as being appropriate and necessary when considering the circumstances at the College. We therefore have full confidence that the Minister will treat this correspondence and allegations related to UNISA with equal seriousness and vigour.
6. After consulting with Dr Mathura, Mr Ndlovu, and Prof Mothata, a clear practice has emerged whereby staff members who are incorruptible and stand in the way of UNISA management's illegal abuse of power and illicit spending are suspended in order to neutralise them. The ineluctable inference is that the intention is to

remove them from their positions and allow their contracts to reach its termination date and to avoid a public disciplinary process.

7. The government's failure to support and protect whistleblowers and those people who stand up against corruption seems to be only topical when murder is linked to these exposures.
8. The purpose of this letter is firstly to request access to the PWC report into the suspension of Prof Stuart Mothata and secondly and more pertinently to obtain a copy of the report compiled by Adv Shaun Abrahams into the allegations of misconduct against Dr Reshma Mathura. Our information is that the PWC report made serious negative findings against Prof LenkaBula and even recommended disciplinary steps to be taken against her and others.
9. The Abrahams report, according to our information, cleared Dr Mathura of any wrongdoing. We are convinced that as is the case with other forensic investigations commissioned by UNISA, this report has not been shared with the Department of Higher education and Training (DHET), and not even with the Council. If shared with the Council the failure to re-instate our client is a deliberate dereliction of duty.
10. As with the PWC report, we learnt that the Abrahams report recommended disciplinary action against other officials rather than Dr Mathura. The failure to disclose the contents of the report to relevant stakeholders has shielded those officials from the recommended action.

11. Our client's continued suspension is not only *male fide*, but it also undermines the President's address to the nation and the government's stated strategy against corruption. We accept that Prof. LenkaBula received a copy of the report, which was apparently made available in March 2025, and her failure to act on it can only be described as malicious.
12. If we are correct and the report was made available in March 2025, the failure to implement its recommendations or even worse, the failure to disclose the report, cannot merely be interpreted as a dereliction of duty, but should lead to an investigation of those who had access to the report, which may include members of Council and others, for their failure to do their duty.
13. We have been informed that the PWC report recommended disciplinary action against Prof LenkaBula and we infer that that the secrecy in handling the report and the failure to act in accordance with the recommendations illustrates the age-old question of "*quis custodiet ipsos custodes*". UNISA funded the report and therefore it must be available to DHET. If so, our inference of the recommended action against LenkaBula will be easy for the DHET to verify. If we are correct, it creates further questions surrounding the merit of a settlement paid to "the complainant" despite the report finding no evidence to support the allegations against Prof Mothata.
14. For the purpose of this letter our main concern remains the deliberate yet irrational conduct against our client.

15. We have purposely not sent this letter to Prof LenkaBula as we, Dr Mathura's legal team, have lost confidence in her ability to act objectively. The recommendations in the PWC report and the handling of the Abrahams report have identified her as a possible subject of a disciplinary process.
16. The letter is, however, copied to Prof Peach as the Head of Legal as we accept that he must be in possession of the reports and or able to locate the reports.
17. We attach hereto a letter sent to Dr Blade Nzimande in his capacity as Minister of Higher Education and Raining dated 2 May 2024. Although not surprised we remain disappointed that he failed to act on the contents of our letter. The content remains relevant and important. It also remains an indictment of UNISA management's ability and willingness to carry out their responsibilities without fear, favour, or prejudice.
18. The attached letter implores the Minister to *"take decisive steps to implement the findings of various forensic investigations"* commissioned by UNISA and expands on the *"amateurish attempts to falsely incriminate"* our client of corruption. We set out all the relevant facts and address the motive of UNISA management's deliberate support for these false allegations. We also discuss and identify the various forensic reports that have been commissioned by UNISA which have seemingly been hidden from the affected parties and the DHET.
19. There exists absolutely no rational reason for the continuing suspension of our clients and likewise no rational reason for the DHET and Ministers Office's failure to take action to ensure that the various forensic reports, inclusive of those who

recommend disciplinary action against very senior officials of UNISA, are not implemented.

20. Our client is the victim of a malicious and possibly criminal attempt by UNISA management to shelter themselves from scrutiny. We are aware that Prof LenkaBula's term ends soon and hope that the DHET and the Minister will not allow the stalling of this process to allow for this to happen before steps are taken.

21. We have corresponded with the DG of the DHET and offered our willingness to meet with the department's legal team. We did this after being informed that the DHET were unable to locate the various forensic reports. This offer is repeated.

22. The way this case has unfolded, viewed together with various others, and the seeming reluctance by the DHET and the Minister's office to exercise their duties, flies in the face of government's objective to fight the scourge of corruption.

23. We implore your office to take whatever steps necessary to address our concerns about UNISA's deliberate failure to act on the recommendations of various independent forensic investigation reports and to ensure the re-instatement of our client.

24. Having consulted with Mr Ndlovu about the large sum of money UNISA management spent to attend a political-party-specific dinner, we reluctantly form the impression that Prof LenkaBula and UNISA management have become untouchable because of a dynamic created by their goodwill to support certain members of society and a political party. We will soon write to you about Mr

Ndlovu's irrational suspension, which is part of a pattern of suspending those who stand in the way of what could be described as a criminal enterprise.

25. It is not our duty to ensure clean governance and to address the seemingly widespread corruption and mismanagement of funds at UNISA, but we will do what is necessary to clear our client's good name and to ensure her return to her office. However, we have now reported our concern to your office for the second time and implore you to take decisive action.

Yours sincerely



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