

MEDIA STATEMENT-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEHAWU STATEMENT ON THE DEADLOCKED WAGE NEGOTIATIONS AT NMMU

Friday May 05, 2017

The National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] has been negotiating with the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University [NMMU] management for the past two months on salary negotiations and so far negotiations between the two parties have deadlocked.

NEHAWU members at the university are demanding a living wage and are convinced that their salaries should be incremented by 6.4% (non-negotiable) plus 4% (negotiable) for living enhancement across the board. Management made a pathetic offer of 3%. This was roundly rejected by NEHAWU and the other unions.

The matter was taken to the Ombudsman for legal advisory for opinion and it was agreed by all parties that the increment would have to be above CPI, in line with the Condition of Service (CoS) yet the university continues to see it fit to exploit workers and give them salaries that subject them to poverty.

This exploitative tendency is further highlighted by the fact that the University management only moved from 3% to a mere 5.4%. Workers refused the offer by management not only because it will reduce them to poverty but because the 5.4% is below the Consumer Price Index [CPI]. It is also rejected because management is only interested in increasing its financial reserves rather than improving and investing in its human assets. Workers at the university are sick and tired of the silly games that are played by the university management.

We also call for the insourcing of all services at the campus starting with cleaning services. This week, cleaning staff downed tools after widespread abuse and victimisation by the company that employs them by the name of Supercare. Workers cannot continue to be degraded and exploited by companies whose only preoccupation is the maximisation of profit. Even after the sectorial determination increase for the cleaning sector, Supercare still continued to deduct workers' salaries last week Saturday.

Failure to resolve the current impasse will leave workers with no choice but to go on a full blown strike. The University continues to spend money on legal fees to fight the union yet when they have to pay workers what is due to them they plead poverty. Management also continues to waste money on bloating their senior management level. NEHAWU is not deterred nor frightened by their legal threats and we will work tirelessly until workers receive what is due to them.

NEHAWU is also calling on all members of the Council, especially the ministerial deployees to rise and fulfil their mandate of a socially responsive university, especially the one that is called after the name of uTata Mandela.

Issued by NEHAWU Secretariat

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