



TO: STAFF AND STUDENTS

FROM: PROF PETER MBATI, VICE-CHANCELLOR

DATE: 5 NOVEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: SOLIDARITY MARCH WITH STUDENTS TO PRETORIA WEST POLICE STATION BY STAFF MEMBERS, INCLUDING ACADEMICS

Last week I shared with you the pain and agony for what has happened to one of our female students who was raped at our off-campus residence over the weekend. It is a fact that as a University, and the country by extension, is not yet safe for our female students and staff.

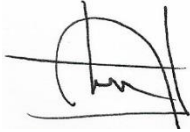
Gender-based violence remains one of society's greatest challenges. Harrowing statistics show that a woman is murdered every three hours in South Africa, and the country has the world's fourth highest death rate due to "interpersonal violence". As per the various communiques from the Vice-Chancellor's Office in respect of the female rape incident which took place over the weekend, concerned students and the SRC have organized a march to Pretoria West Police Station on Friday, 6 November 2020. At its meeting held today 5 November 2020, Management has resolved to join the march in solidarity with the students with a view to recommitting themselves and to standing firm against gender based violence in the country.

Through this communique, I also extend the invitation to members of Senate and other staff of the University, and urge senate members to join the march wearing their academic regalia if possible. This would allow us make an unequivocal statement that as a socially engaged institution, we should all contribute to the building of a grassroots movement against GBV at the University as we reshape the social orientation of the society in this regard. The march to Pretoria West Police Station, will take place in Pretoria on **Friday, 6 November 2020 from 08h30 to 11h00** and it will be led by the students.

With this march, the University seeks to reinforce President Cyril Ramaphosa's call for all sectors of society to work together to stop gender based violence. President Ramaphosa has called for an extraordinary and immediate response to the scourge of gender- based violence and femicide by all members of the society. Through this march, the University reaffirms its position to the comprehensive response to a national crisis as part of emergency measures to combat Gender Based Violence 'epidemic'.

I urge all students and staff to join the solidarity march. Further details will be communicated to the staff and students by Dr Eric Pule, Director: Marketing and Communication.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Mbatia', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

PROF PETER MBATI
VICE-CHANCELLOR