



Central University of
Technology, Free State

From the Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Desk

COMMUNIQUE TO THE CUT COMMUNITY

CUT's Statement on Gender-based Violence

2019 #7

Dear CUT Community

Gender-based violence in work spaces, and in higher education institutions in particular, are exasperated by gender inequalities, and structural and social factors that appear to perpetuate gender discrimination in the labour force, where a lack of gender transformation and negative stereotypes about female employees is the order of the day.

Gender equality continues to be one of CUT's priorities. In fact, CUT has a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence, and harm against women and girl-children in particular. The university has progressive policies in place to ensure that justice is immediately done to the victims of such cruel actions against women and girl-children, in order to see to it that both the perpetrators and those who have knowledge of their acts, but who do not report it to authorities, are dealt with resolutely and effectively.

Just recently, two 19-year-old university students in Cape Town were cruelly murdered: Uyinene Mrwetyana, a University of Cape Town Film and Media Studies student, who was killed at a post office close to a campus student residence; and Jesse Hess, a University of the Western Cape Theology student, who was killed along with her grandfather at their Parow home. Such a scourge at universities is a replication of the high-profile murders of six other women elsewhere in the country, including a young woman whose lifeless body was recently found by police in a Limpopo village, which has sparked nationwide anger, frustration and protests.

Flowing from all these incidences, and in solidarity with all universities affected by this, CUT has held multiple anti-femicide events to demonstrate its anger towards acts of gender-based violence, and harm against women and girl-children. A prayer meeting and a night vigil were held during the past week by CUT Management, staff, community church members, students and other stakeholders. The university thus strongly condemns any act of bullying, abuse, harm and violence against women and girl-children. In addition, CUT has put systems in place to deal decisively with gender stereotypes; and the career acceleration of women, to add to those appointed in upper-wage, high-status and senior managerial positions. Furthermore, the CUT Council and Management have commissioned the Commission of Gender Equality to conduct an independent study that focuses on women employees, in order to assist the university to promote and protect gender equality, and free the CUT community from all possible forms of gender oppression and inequality.

Let us join hands to promote a CUT free of gender-based violence, and to develop an institutional culture that promotes women empowerment, and a gender-balanced university at all levels.

Prof. Henk de Jager

Vice-Chancellor and Principal
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