

Questions and Answers: DHET Universities Branch Deputy General Dr Di Parker

ZO: What was Minister Nzimande's involvement in the appointment of Prof Mtose as Unizulu Vice Chancellor?

Dr Parker: Minister Nzimande had no involvement in the appointment of Professor Mtose.

ZO: Sources have claimed that Professor Mtose is Minister Nzimande's "agent", making decisions under his direction. What is the Minister's comment in this regard?

Dr Parker: Professor Mtose was appointed by the Council of the University and is accountable to the Council. She is not an agent of the Minister. He has never issued any direction to the Vice Chancellor; if he needs to interact with the university it would be through correspondence with the Chair of Council.

ZO: Can the Minister confirm that Cyril Gamede (Unizulu Council Chair) was appointed by the Minister as chairman of Council, as the university denies this?

Dr Parker: Cyril Gamede is a Ministerial Appointment to Council. The university Council has five Ministerial Appointees in line with its statute. The Minister does not appoint the Chair of Council. The Council itself appoints its own Chair from amongst its members. The Minister has never appointed a Chair of Council at a university.

ZO: There have been rumours that the Minister harbours ill-will towards Professor Thandwa Mthembu (current DUT Vice Chancellor) as a result of legal battles between the Minister and the Central University of Technology while Prof Mthembu was the VC there. What is the Minister's comment in this regard?

Dr Parker: The Minister works with all institutions with an even hand. After the case mentioned the Department and Ministry continued to support and work with CUT. The Minister does not harbour personal ill will to any individuals within the sector. In cases where the Minister needs to intervene it will always be in the interests of the institution.