

Media Statement

Unisa welcomes court judgments against Mogaila Mogashoa, Mandisa Mashego and Simamkele Xani

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The University of South Africa (Unisa) notes and welcomes separate high court judgements issued against Mr Mogaila Mogashoa, Ms Mandisa Mashego and Mr Simamkele Xani in applications brought before the court by the university against the three individuals.

Judgment against Mogaila Mogashoa.

Mr Mogashoa has on a number of occasions spread lies about Unisa and its management, including the Principal and Vice-Chancellor. Some of the false statements he has made are that Unisa is a “cooldrink place” and that the Principal and Vice-Chancellor illicitly moves money to Lesotho.

The University successfully filed an application for defamation and interdicted him from continuing to spread lies about it and its officials. He has contravened the order by spreading further lies even after the interdict. As a result of his contempt, the court has issued a warrant of arrest against him.

Judgment against Ms Mandisa Mashego

Ms Mashego made unjustified and unsubstantiated statements that Unisa is under investigation for fake degrees, for people writing examinations for others, for running classes, for corruption and “lots of things”. In the application brought by the university against Ms Mashego for defamation, the Johannesburg High Court has ruled as follows:

- Ms Mashego is found guilty of defamation.
- Ms Mashego has been ordered to pay a sum of R550 000,00.
- Interest on this amount is payable at the prescribed legal rate from the date of demand until the final date of payment.

Judgement against Mr Simamkele Xani

Mr Xani was a Unisa student who in 2021 attacked fellow students and the university staff, including the Principal and Vice-Chancellor. An interdict was sought against him in which he was interdicted from continuing with his unwarranted attack and lies about the university.



In November 2024, he again launched an attack against the University and its management. A final interdict was issued by the North Gauteng High Court, in which he was interdicted from continuing with his attacks. (Please see attached court order of 2024)

In November 2025, he again launched a defamatory attack against the University, its Council and Management and other prominent public figures and politicians, under the pretence of Sebako Attorneys, and continued with his defamatory statements through to December 2025.

The University filed an urgent application against him for violation of a court interdict and continued defamation. The Pretoria High Court ruled as follows:

- Mr Xani is found in contempt of the Court Order of 27 November 2024, which interdicted, prevented and/or restrained him from making or publishing any false or misleading information about Unisa and the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Puleng LenkaBula, in any manner and/or on any media platform.
- Mr Xani must be incarcerated for a period of 60 days, or alternatively a fine of R50 000,00 is imposed on him. This order is suspended and is not to be executed unless he breaches the terms of the original order of 27 November 2024. Unisa and Professor LenkaBula were granted leave to approach the court to enforce this order should Mr Xani again breach the interdict of 27 November 2024.
- Mr Xani is again interdicted and prohibited from disseminating and/or publishing or causing to be published, any further defamatory information or statements about or otherwise concerning Unisa and Professor LenkaBula in terms of or similar to the correspondences dated 26 November 2025, 2 December 2025 and 3 December 2025.
- Mr Xani is directed to retract the defamatory statements made through his attorneys in letters dated 26 November 2025 and 2 December 2025, and personally via email on 3 December 2025, by sending a written retraction to the same platforms that were used to publish the same defamatory and/or false statements. He was also directed to issue a written apology to Unisa and Professor LenkaBula within 48 hours of the issuing of the order.
- Mr Xani was ordered to pay the costs of the application on a party-to-party scale.

In a separate action, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Honourable Mr Teboho Letsie, brought an urgent interdict against Mr Xani for lying to the public that Unisa has granted Mr Letsie a security tender for R82 million. The High Court found that Xani was lying and he was interdicted from spreading further lies and was ordered to pay the costs, including the costs of Mr Letsie's legal team.

His so-called Attorneys, Sebako attorneys, have since withdrawn and distanced themselves from representing Mr Xani soon after the orders were made. Mr Xani has failed to comply with the court orders and the University is currently considering enforcing the orders.



In welcoming the above judgments, Unisa expressed hope that such decisive rulings by the courts will serve as a deterrent to individuals and organisations from peddling false, fabricated and defamatory statements about itself and its officials. The university also reiterated its resolve to hold anyone doing so; legally accountable.

“The university will investigate and act against anyone, including students and those within its employment, who do anything wrong and unlawful. Whilst we are committed to protecting whistle-blowers, we will not hesitate to take head-on anyone who lies about the university, our council members, officials, employees or students and tarnish the name of the university”, said Professor Boitumelo Senokoane, Unisa Executive Director: Institutional Advancement and Spokesperson.

/Ends.

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