

# SOUTH AFRICAN UNION OF STUDENTS



## SAUS STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OF #FEESMUSTFALL

### ACTIVIST CDE KANYA CEKESHE

24 December 2019

The South African Union of students welcomes the release of fees must fall activist, cde Kanya Cekeshe from Leeuwkop prison earlier today. Cde Cekeshe has been in prison since December 2017, after being wrongfully sentenced to eight years in prison for fees must fall related protests.

Although short-lived, cde Cekeshe has had to pay the ungodly price of imprisonment for fighting for our collective right to free quality higher education. During this period, he has undergone immense psychological strain as well as psychological trauma and other mental health related issues. Collectively, the student movement owes it to all those who have had to pay the price for what we fought for and believe in; we owe it to them for the scars, the trauma and the disillusionment that continues to haunt them while many of us have enjoyed the luxury of freedom.

As the South African Union of Students, we would like to take this moment to extend our gratitude to all stakeholders who have contributed in one form or another towards this just eventuality. We wish to thank the role played by our SADC international student unions (Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) who stood in solidarity with this clarion call to free cde Kanya as led by the Southern African Students Union (SASU).

As a Union we equally extend a special recognition and gratitude to the role played by the Minister of Justice, Minister Ronald Lamola, who, together with his ministry of young activists, have contributed immensely to the release of cde Cekeshe. As a Union we believe that the Minister's willingness to engage with SAUS and other stakeholders on this matter, as well as his conviction to see this through, is the kind of revolutionary spirit required to bring about a just and equitable society.

While the release of cde Cekeshe brings us joy in the interim, this moment in history equally presents our universities with an opportunity to redeem themselves and contribute positively to the livelihoods of many black students and families whose lives depend on the dropping all charges, suspensions and expulsion of students related to fees must fall protests- a position we will continue to lobby Universities South Africa (USAF), the Department of Higher Education as well as the Parliamentary portfolio Committee of Higher Education

To this end, as the South African Union of Students, we reiterate our solidarity to the comrades across the country who remain confined in houses of terror for merely demanding justice; we remain committed to the call to free all fees must fall activist who are currently facing charges for fighting for free education.

Issued on behalf of SAUS  
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