Universities South Africa congratulates Dr Nobuhle Pamela Nkabane on her appointment to the Ministry of Higher Education and Training

The Board of Directors of Universities South Africa (USAf) has congratulated Dr Nobuhle Pamela Nkabane, MP, for her appointment, last Sunday, to the position of Minister: Higher Education and Training.

USAf also extends this congratulatory message to the Minister’s two deputies, Dr Mimmy Martha Gondwe, Member of Parliament since 2019, who was previously the Democratic Party’s Shadow Minister of Public Enterprises, and Mr Buti Manamela, MP, a familiar face re-appointed to the position he has served with excellence for at least five years.

In a letter penned to Dr Nkabane this week, Professor Francis Petersen, Chairperson of USAf, who is also the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Free State, pointed out that while the sector has survived challenges ranging from the #FeesMustFall protests of 2015/16 to upheavals related to the CoViD-19 pandemic, “our universities are still grappling with several complex issues, including inadequate student funding and accommodation, improving access and success rates for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Other challenges that Professor Petersen mentioned are “institutional budget cuts, the increasing cost of providing higher education, and the rising student debt. These challenges require strategic solutions to create a more equitable, effective, and sustainable higher education system.”

As he acknowledged and expressed gratitude to the Department of Higher Education and Training for its continued support in executing the sector’s strategic objectives, the USAf Chair went on to request an introductory meeting with the Minister, “to strengthen our relations and cooperative efforts.”

He said he was confident that the Minister’s prior association with the higher education sector, and her experience and leadership in government would be instrumental in advancing USAf’s and the Department’s mutual objectives, as well as serving their respective constituencies.

“The Board and executive leadership of Universities South Africa feel honoured to wish you, and your two deputies, a successful and rewarding tenure,” Professor Petersen concluded.

Media inquiries:
Ms 'Mateboho Green, Manager: Corporate Communication, USAf – 0728074677, OR
Ms Kayley Webster, Communication Consultant, USAf -- 0810410475