

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT, 1997 (ACT No. 101 OF 1997)**TO INVITE REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING THE PROPOSAL TO MERGE CERTAIN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OR SUBDIVISIONS OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

I, Professor Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education, hereby gives notice in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997), of my proposal to establish a single higher education institution through the merger of the University of the North, University of Venda and the Medical University of Southern Africa.

The merger is part of the broader process for the restructuring and transformation of the higher education system to ensure the responsiveness of the higher education system to national human resource and research needs as outlined in the National Plan for Higher Education, which was gazetted on 9 March 2001 (Government Gazette No 22138, Notice number 230).

The reasons for the merger are as follows:

- Enabling the development and provision of a wide and comprehensive range of vocational, in particular, technikon-type, professional and general programmes in line with the human resource needs of the region.
- Providing the critical mass necessary to build administrative, management, governance, academic and research capacity.
- Overcoming the apartheid-induced concentration of medical training in the urban areas of the old Transvaal Province and strengthening the provision of the health sciences in Limpopo.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources through reducing overlap and duplication in academic programmes.
- Enhancing sustainability through increased enrolments linked to broadening the range of programmes offered.

Interested persons are referred to the fact that a detailed analysis of the reasons is contained in my Ministry's document, Transformation and Restructuring: A New Institutional Landscape for Higher Education, which was gazetted on Friday 21 June 2002 (Government Gazette no 23549).

All interested persons are invited to make representations to the Minister of Education by Monday Friday 4 October 2002. Please note that comments received after the closing date may be disregarded.

Further information concerning the proposal is available from the Department of Education. The contact person is:

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