



EFFSC STATEMENT ON FREEDOM DAY

27 April 2020, Monday

The EFFSC notes the 26th anniversary of South Africa's entry into a democratic dispensation and end to white colonial rule in 1994. It was on this historic day that millions of black South Africans could participate in the country's first democratic elections and gain what was supposed to be political, economic and social freedom.

Exactly, 26 years later, black South Africans have not attained any practical and substantive means of political, economic, and social freedom. Black people continue to be plagued by countless oppressions that come as a result of the legacies left by slavery, colonialism and Apartheid. Black people are still languishing in townships, rural areas, informal settlements, squatter camps, slums, ghettos, and all forms of spaceless living conditions, living on top of each other. To make matters worse, black people still struggle with access to basic needs such as clean water, sufficient electricity, adequate housing, proper basic education, a well-run public healthcare system, and sustainable jobs, just to mention a few. Moreover, large portions of arable, fertile land; mines, banks and all strategic sectors of the country's economy remain in the hands of the white minority. This is a sad reality of South Africa 26 years into so-called democracy.

Furthermore, black students at institutions of higher learning and training, i.e. universities and TVET colleges, are still subjected to different forms of oppressions. For black students at historically white universities, racism, high tuition fees, European-centred curriculum, and campus militarisations, just to mention a few, are the order of the day. For black students at historically black universities, high tuition fees, poor, worn-out, dilapidating residence infrastructure, inadequate library, lecture hall facilities, lack of high speed WiFi and highly advanced computer centres and labs, just to mention a few, are prevalent at these institutions. For black students in the TVET sector, lack of proper classroom and learning spaces, inadequate library, lecture hall facilities, lack of high-speed WiFi and highly advanced computer centres & labs, lack of sufficient electricity and lack of adequate toilet facilities, running water & safe hygiene, just to mention a few, remain the order of the day.

To make matters more, since our country has been heavily hit by the Coronavirus pandemic, institutions of higher learning have gone in an early recess and delayed the start of the second term of academics due to the nationwide lockdown that our country is under. Now, some universities have taken a decision to implement online teaching & learning in order to continue and finish the 2020 academic year as planned. In principle, the EFFSC believes in academic progress and supports any initiative to promote academic excellence, for as long as that initiative is not



exclusive. We believe online teaching & learning as a mode of learning should only be rolled out at all institutions provided that students from poor, disadvantaged backgrounds, black students in particular, are not left out. No institution should be left out. No student should be left out. Students from poor disadvantaged backgrounds should be capacitated with laptops or computers, free access to their respective institution's website, subsites, online learning portal and be given sufficient data bundles for doing thorough research. For students who stay in areas where there is a poor network coverage, universities working with government must make means to allow these students to thoroughly participate in online teaching & learning as well. One of these means is allowing these students to return to their respective campuses and use the computer facilities of their respective campuses, notwithstanding that measures must also be put in place to prevent them from spreading or contracting the virus. We support the desire from universities to continue with the current academic year but not at the expense of already marginalised and disadvantaged black students. No institution should be left out. No student should be left out.

What's more, we continue to encourage all EFF Student Command members, students and the public to use this time to inform one another with accurate information on the COVID-19 pandemic and how they can stay safe.

Let's continue to stay at home. Let's practise good and safe hygiene. Let's educate one another. Let's save lives so that together we shall overcome and realise Economic Freedom In Our Life.

No Retreat. No Surrender. Victory Is Certain. Hasta la Victoria Siempre.

Issued on behalf of Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command
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