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Attention: News/Assignment Editors, Political Reporters, Reporters

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KZN LEGISLATURE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS CONDEMN TORCHING OF UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS

The meeting of the Committee of Chairpersons of the KZN Legislature, which sat in Pietermaritzburg today has noted with concern the ongoing developments at the university of KwaZulu-Natal including the torching of several buildings.

The meeting resolved to strongly condemn the destruction of property and called for student formations to isolate rogue elements that are destroying public property.

Chairpersons of committees believe that whilst some students' grievances are genuine, there is however no justification of the destruction of property.

"The violent protests, including the torching of buildings at the University of KwaZulu-Natal are wholly unacceptable and provide no solution to students' concerns," said Chairperson of Committees in the provincial Legislature Themba Mthembu.

It has been reported that the UKZN SRC has been in negotiations with the university management over a number of issues, including students having to pay 15% towards their historic debt.

Student representatives have argued that poor students could not afford this, as it often ran into thousands of rand.

The university stood its ground against any further concessions, as it was already sitting with a student debt of R1.7billion.

Some students then went on the rampage torching buildings including a building housing the institution's HIV and AIDS unit.

"There is no amount of anger which justifies this action. Our youth must be careful not to destroy their heritage. Universities must be protected and preserved as institutions of academic excellence for them and for generations to come," said Mthembu.

He called on the university management to tighten up security and take any measures necessary to prevent any form of violence and destruction of property.

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