Reopening of Schools - SADTU Statement

The **South African Democratic Teachers' Union** (SADTU) has noted the presentation by the Director General of Basic Education to the Parliamentary Education Portfolio Committee regarding the reopening of schools.

SADTU stands firm on its position which was articulated on Friday that no school shall open until our concerns are met.

We urged the Department to comply with minimum requirements which we articulated in 14 points. These included among others, the fumigation and disinfection of schools, proper school infrastructure in the form of proper toilet facilities and classrooms, observance of social distancing inside the classrooms and on court yards, reduction of class sizes, provision of soap, sanitizers and masks, screening of learners, teachers and support personnel, social distancing in the transportation of learners to and from schools, provision of psychosocial services to assist learners as well as teachers to build resilience and calm down fears among learners and teachers.

If Stage 4 regulations are to be adhered to, there should be no re-opening of schools under Stage 4. The Minister should meet with stakeholders before any announcement is made and after making sure that the Department of Health has expertly assessed the risks.

We reject importing the Taiwan, China, Denmark and Singapore misrepresentation by the Director General. The context and culture are not the same. We must use our context, culture and data to inform our actions.

We have called upon everyone to contribute towards the solution but it is now clear that the Department of Basic Education is engaging in bad faith and this is undesirable when we are faced with a virulent and contagious pandemic. We can't allow them to liquidate our workers and students.

We stand firm that no schools shall open until our concerns are met.

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