U.A.S.U
EDUCATION LIBERATES

UNIVERSITIES ACADEMIC STAFF UNION (UASU)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Universities are in Crisis

Members of the media, Good morning:

The Universities Academic Staff Union (UASU) is deeply concerned about the deteriorating state of Kenya's public university sector.

Public universities face a convergence of serious challenges: the failure to conclude the 2025–2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA); persistent underfunding; the growing casualisation of academic work through part-time teaching; inadequate staffing and excessive workloads; and failure to honour the retirement-age provisions of the CBA.

UASU calls on the Government to intervene urgently and resolve these matters before the damage to university education becomes irreversible.

1. Stalled negotiations for the 2025–2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement

UASU is concerned by the failure to conclude negotiations for the 2025–2029 CBA.

Other workers in the education sector concluded and signed their CBAs last year. Under the Return-to-Work Formula of November 2025, UASU and the Inter-Public Universities Councils Consultative Forum (IPUCCF) agreed to conclude negotiations before the end of 2025.

Nearly a year later, IPUCCF and the Government have yet to table a financial counter-proposal. This delay has created deep anxiety among public university staff.

UASU gives IPUCCF and the Government one month from today to table a substantive counter-proposal, negotiate, sign and implement the 2025-2029 CBA.

2. Exchequer funding for public universities

Academic staff in public universities are public officers. The Constitution defines a public office as one whose remuneration and benefits are payable directly from the Consolidated Fund or from money provided by Parliament.

UASU notes that the recently published *Tertiary Education, Placement and Funding Bill, 2026*, does not address the mechanism for remunerating academic staff.

It is unsustainable to finance the salaries of university professors from student fees.

We therefore demand that any Bill before Parliament concerning the financing of public universities include a clear provision safeguarding the remuneration of academic staff from the Exchequer, as envisaged by the Constitution.

3. SRC is a roadblock to university level CBAs

UASU is concerned that the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) has declined to approve several internal CBAs negotiated between individual universities and UASU chapters.

A recent example is the University of Nairobi 2017–2021 CBA, which was signed after nine years of negotiations. SRC has since proposed that University of Nairobi academic staff forgo the agreement.

To the Union, this signals an attempt to precipitate further crises in public universities. We demand that SRC provide a practical pathway for the registration and implementation of signed internal CBAs.

4. Part-time teaching

UASU is alarmed by the increasing reliance on part-time academic staff in public universities.

Part-time teaching is increasingly being used as a substitute for the recruitment of permanent academic staff. The expansion of student enrolment has not been matched by corresponding recruitment, resulting in excessive workloads and a growing dependence on insecure employment.

UASU calls for an immediate review of part-time teaching policies in public universities. Part-time teaching must not be used to replace established permanent positions. Part-time lecturers should be considered for immediate absorption into available permanent positions.

5. Retirement age

UASU is concerned by continuing attempts to reduce the retirement age of academic staff in public universities, in violation of the current CBA.

It is illogical for universities to rely on part-time lecturers while simultaneously forcing experienced academics out of permanent employment. It takes decades to produce a professor, and Kenya has fewer than 2,000 professors.

The loss of a single professor represents the loss of immense accumulated intellectual capital. The retirement-age question cannot be separated from the pension crisis in public universities, which collectively owe pension schemes more than KSh 20 billion in remittances and related obligations. If academic staff retire earlier than the retirement age provided for in the CBA, the pension schemes may collapse.

6. Moi University

UASU demands that the Government suspend the redundancy process at Moi University.

Reports by regulatory bodies indicate that Moi University is severely understaffed, and the University has advertised for part-time lecturers. It is therefore contradictory for the institution to pursue redundancies while seeking additional teaching staff.

The Government should immediately institute an independent staffing audit at Moi University and suspend all redundancy notices.

In conclusion, UASU calls on the Government to address these fundamental issues without delay to protect the quality of university education, the welfare of academic staff, and the future of our students.

Thank you.

Solidarity for ever.
-ENDS-

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