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Statement on 2025 NSC Examination

NAPTOSA notes UMALUSI's report on the state of readiness for the 2025 end-of-year national examinations and welcomes it with little reservation. While we acknowledge the extensive audit undertaken across various assessment bodies and examination centres, we remain concerned that the number of centres is far too large to allow for meaningful individual oversight. Of particular concern are the centres located in areas recently affected by floods and other natural disasters. As the rainy season approaches, we cannot afford to be found unprepared when storms strike again. Proactive planning and risk mitigation strategies must be strengthened to safeguard the integrity of the examinations and the safety of all involved.

NAPTOSA further notes that the Department of Basic Education (DBE), as the main assessment body, carries the core responsibility for ensuring credible and fair examinations. We therefore expect the report to be largely positive, as this is the DBE's primary mandate. We do, however, remain deeply troubled by the "little things" that directly affect individuals – particularly the recurring reports of learners being turned away for being pregnant or arriving late. Such actions are not only unacceptable but constitute clear violations of learners' human rights. NAPTOSA will not hesitate to refer incidents of this nature to the South African Human Rights Commission.

As the examination season begins, NAPTOSA appeals to all principals, as the custodians of exam centres, to conduct themselves – and the schools under their leadership – with dignity, fairness, and compassion respecting the human rights of our children. We salute our teachers across all grades, from the Foundation Phase to Grade 12, for their unwavering dedication and professionalism under increasingly difficult conditions. We understand the extreme pressures and burnout many educators face, yet they continue to give their best for the sake of learners.

UMALUSI highlights the shortage of markers in some subjects. The DBE needs to investigate the underlying reasons for the reluctance to step forward to mark, including the fact that matric teachers are by now near burnt-out having spent almost every day of the past year at school, poor conditions in some marking centres and less than exciting food provisions. DBE must check on the quality of meals and accommodation.

Finally, NAPTOSA wishes the **Class of 2025** well for the upcoming examinations. We appeal to parents and communities to ensure that learners have safe and supportive environments in which to study and travel to and from examination venues. Protecting our children's futures must remain a collective responsibility.

Education is a shared duty – let us uphold it with integrity, humanity, and action, not just words.

Mr BL Manuel

Executive Director

