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## **Protest highlights two challenges in higher education, says UCT**

### **Please cite Max Price, Vice-Chancellor, UCT**

In what was a momentous year, 2015 saw two, not unrelated, waves of protest at the University of Cape Town and elsewhere in the country.

The first, #RhodesMustFall, spoke to the issue and pace of transformation and how universities should become more inclusive spaces. The campaign created a sea change in the attitude towards transformation at the university. While transformation was always on UCT's agenda, its pace was measured and slow, and one could argue that there wasn't always 100% buy-in. #RhodesMustFall highlighted the fact that transformation is the challenge, and the task, of all of us. If universities are going to survive and become better places, we all need to take responsibility for it. In this respect, we saw assemblies in every faculty where people who were feeling marginalised claimed their voice, and I have no doubt the university will be a better place for this if we respond appropriately and quickly to these challenges.

The second, #FeesMustFall, focused on the high cost of fees and the fact that over a number of years, government has been reducing its funding to higher education in real terms and per student. Students countrywide achieved in two weeks what many of us have been unable to do for years, by sending out a wake-up call to government about the funding of higher education. How this unfolds will become clearer in the months ahead as a presidential task team goes about its work.

***ENDS***

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