

**IN HONOUR OF THE LATE
MR. SKHUMBUZO ALAN THOMPSON
NATU PRESIDENT 2018 – 2021**

**REMARKS BY
HON. S.L. NGCOBO, MP
FORMER PRESIDENT OF NATU**

THEME:

“The Teachers We Need for the Education We Want:
The Global Imperative to Reverse the Teacher Shortage.”

Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal: 27 October 2023

**Programme Director
Ladies and Gentlemen
Esteemed Guests, and
Fellow Comrades**

Today, we gather to remember and pay tribute to a remarkable leader, Mr. Sikhumbuzo Alan Thompson, the former President of NATU who served from 2018 to 2021.

We are here to honor his legacy and to reflect on the theme that was dear to his heart: *“The Teachers We Need for the Education We Want.”*

I'd like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the President of the National Teachers' Union, Mr. S.V. Malinga, the Deputy President, Mr. G.M. Mabuza, and the General Secretary, Mr. D. Ngema, along with all the NATU Vice Presidents.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of speaking on this important occasion.

Sikhumbuzo Alan Thompson was not just a colleague but also a friend and a leader. His brief tenure as the President of NATU, from his election in 2018 to the day he departed from this world in 2021, was marked by extraordinary leadership. He championed the rights of teachers and the cause of quality education, tirelessly working to uplift both the teaching profession and the communities it serves. In those few years, he left an indelible mark as one of NATU's most effective leaders.

Sikhumbuzo's vision for NATU was clear: He aimed for a Union that not only advocated for teachers but also actively contributed to the betterment of education in our nation.

His dedication and passion for this vision were unparalleled. His leadership was characterized by his unwavering commitment to teachers' rights and the quality of education. He believed that a strong teaching profession was the cornerstone of a successful education system. He understood the challenges that educators faced daily, and he worked relentlessly to address them. His advocacy for teachers' well-being and fair treatment was rooted in a deep understanding of the sacrifices and dedication required to mold the minds of our future generations.

Under his leadership, NATU's influence, and reach expanded, as he initiated and supported various programs to improve the working conditions of teachers and enhance the quality of education in our schools.

Sikhumbuzo was not content with the status quo; he sought innovative solutions to longstanding problems. He was a visionary who recognized that education is the key to our nation's progress, and he was determined to provide the best possible educational opportunities to every child in South Africa.

In addition to his vision for NATU, Sikhumbuzo was a man of values. He exemplified courage, standing strong for what he believed in, even when faced with adversity. His charisma and humility endeared him to those he served. He was accessible and approachable, always willing to listen to the concerns of teachers and respond with empathy and solutions.

Sikhumbuzo was a true workhorse, a hard worker who poured his heart and soul into his responsibilities. He was not one to shy away from challenges; instead, he met them head-on with determination and a can-do attitude. His tireless efforts in support of teachers and the improvement of the education system were unmatched. He carried himself with the utmost professionalism, setting a high standard for us all to follow.

Sikhumbuzo was a role model, not only for educators but for all of us who strive for excellence in our endeavors. His legacy is a testament to the impact that one individual can have when guided by a strong sense of purpose and unwavering commitment.

In closing, I encourage each and every one of us to emulate the values that Sikhumbuzo Alan Thompson embodied. Let us learn from his life and legacy and strive to be the teachers and leaders that our education system so desperately needs. In doing so, we will not only honour his memory but also carry forward the torch of his vision for a brighter future in education.

Thank you, and may Mr. Thompson's legacy continue to inspire us all.



Mr. Siphosethu Lindinkosi Ngcobo
Member of Parliament

Member of the following Committees
Portfolio Committee on Basic Education
Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labor