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MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

02 MAY 2023

SIU WELCOMES PAYMENT OF R311 MILLION BY UJ TO NSFAS

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) welcomes the payment of R311 million made by the University of Johannesburg (UJ) to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

The monies paid by UJ are unallocated funds from 2016 to 2021. The unallocated funds are monies that were for students who qualified for funding but either changed institutions or deregistered. The funds stay in the possession of the institution for a year.

The payment made by UJ brings the total amount received from institutions of higher learning to approximately R349.3 million since the inception of the NSFAS investigation in September 2022. The SIU encourages all institutions of higher learning to come forward and pay back unallocated funds that are due to NSFAS.

The unallocated funds were supposed to have been collected by NSFAS at the end of each year from institutions of higher learning through reconciliation. However, the SIU's investigation revealed that NSFAS failed to design and implement controls that would ensure that there is an annual reconciliation between the funds disbursed to the institutions and the funded list of registered students. To remedy this, NSFAS has recently appointed a service provider to assist them perform this reconciliation in a process called "close out reporting".

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The SIU is in terms of Proclamation R88 of 2022 authorised to investigate allegations of corruption and maladministration in the affairs of NSFAS, and to recover any financial losses suffered by the State through corruption and negligence.

The SIU is empowered to institute civil action in the High Court or a Special Tribunal in its name, to correct any wrongdoing uncovered during both investigations caused by acts of corruption, fraud, or maladministration. In line with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996, the SIU will refer any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.

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