Public Interest Law Gathering Young Professionals: 31 August 2016

We, the young black professionals of the public interest law sector, on behalf of all young black professionals in the legal sphere write this letter of demand to draw attention to a number of issues which concern us.

We wish to access decent job opportunities, quality mentoring and grooming, equal work, equal pay, decent wages that consider the realities of black tax. We thus demand urgent emancipation from the repressive structures and attitudes of oppression found in civil society institutions.

The Public Interest Law Gathering (PILG) participants, particularly the management of the organisations organizing PILG, are the recipients of our memo. We choose to hand over this memo to them at PILG because PILG is an annual opportunity to ventilate the issues affecting the sector and is an opportune moment for our demands to be heard and to get firm commitments for the realization of these demands.

It would be remiss if we did not take advantage of the space that PILG has provided, to voice out our concerns and demands. At PILG, we have the decision makers in the public interest law sector in one room, these decision makers include directors of organisations and donors funding the organisations.
We, the young black professionals in the public interest law sector, demand the following:

1. Transformation plans, including plans in respect of staff support. Such policies should have time frames stipulated;
2. Succession plans, with stipulated timeframes;
3. Transparency in salaries and pay scales;
4. Briefing policies in line with transformation goals; ensuring that amongst other things, black advocates be paid decently;
5. Plans on how (and when) black lawyers will be groomed, mentored and supported to do pupilage;
6. Cultural and gender sensitivity training (including thorough follow up on reported incidents);
7. Direct commitments to recruit persons living with disabilities.
8. Gender empowerment policies with funding and time frames. The sector must develop and retain young black women through training and mentorship.
9. Land reclamation and redistribution, there must be proactive fully funded programs designed to address this.
10. Adopt a hiring practice to accommodate African students who graduate from South African Universities.

These demands are genuine and should be acceded to with immediate effect.
We further demand a meeting with all directors to discuss the above demands and a session at PILG 2017 for a review of the implementation of the demands.
Signed by the Public Interest Law Gathering, Young Professionals:

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This is by no means an exhaustive list of everyone who is part of Public Interest Law Black Young Professionals.