



**UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION**

P O Box 31873 Nairobi  
Telephone 334244 Ext. 2218

**NEWSLETTER NO. 1 1979**

**FROM: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**TO: ALL MEMBERS**

Dear Colleagues:

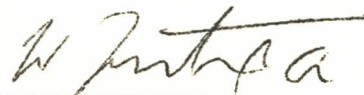
At the last U.A.S.U. Executive Committee meeting, it was decided that members be kept up to date with the Union news and activities. This decision was taken after receiving complaints from some members about insufficient communication from the Union officials on Union matters.

It was also felt that starting a regular communication would encourage a broader democratic participation of the membership scattered around the six campuses. Members on leave, in hospitals, attending conferences abroad and on field work would also be able to participate by writing their comments on the current issues to the Secretary-General.

Thus with this first communication letter we attach the following documents which show the progress to date of the work assigned to the Executive Committee by the general membership of the Union:

1. A brief history of U.A.S.U.
2. A paper on proposed salary increases and changes in the Terms of Service.
3. A sketch on the background and developments to date on the U.A.S.U.'s struggle to have Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o resume his duties at the University.
4. A copy of the Press statement given by U.A.S.U. on Professor Ngugi.
5. An enrolment form for those of you who may not be members yet.

Yours sincerely,



WILLY MUTUNGA

SECRETARY-GENERAL  
UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION



UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION

In its present composition the University Academic Staff Union would seem to be in a very healthy state under the guidance of a strong and dedicated executive committee and seems to enjoy massive support from the majority of the teaching faculties, senior administrative and library staff at the University.

It is hoped that the Union will in the near future represent more categories of staff in the University, an eventuality that is being discussed. At the moment, the Domestic Hotel and Allied Workers Union represents some of the workers, while other workers, secretaries, and some tother categories of administrative staff are not represented by any Union. The secretaries on the Main Campus have openly declared their willingness to join the University Academic Staff Union.

It would appear that the teaching staff at the University of Nairobi and its predecessors (the Royal College and the University College, Nairobi) have been organised, one way or another since the beginning of the institution. But records of this organisation go back to April 1966 when an organisation called the University College Academic Staff Association was registered with the Registrar of Societies. This Association was very much a social organisation which welcomed and sent off expatriate staff as they joined or left the College. Most of this social function has since been taken over by the Faculty Boards and the Senior Common Room.

The Academic Staff Association was given some kind of legal status with the establishment of the University of Nairobi (set up by the University of Nairobi Act, 1970) whereby the staff association was entitled to representation in the University Council, the highest governing body of the University. There has been some contention over this representation since the Academic Staff Association transformed itself to a Staff Union.



This transformation came about in 1972 when, due to some misunderstanding over access to certain information vital to staff welfare, the Association members decided to form a trade Union which could then make certain demands with the backing of the law. The Union was subsequently registered with the Registrar of Trades Unions on 19th April 1972 and has remained on the register ever since. We gather that this move was unpopular with the University Council, principally because the Union constitution, like all constitutions of Trades Unions anywhere, provided for strike action as a last resort. It was felt at the time that "intellectual workers" could not properly be expected to "withhold their labour". There has then been a lot of lobbying from council and certain Senate members to reconsider their decision and perhaps revert to an association. But in spite of this, and the pressure that comes with being unrepresented in Council and its committees, members have on three occasions - 1972, 1975 and 1979 - voted overwhelmingly to remain a Trade Union.

The argument in favour of a Union has often been that University academic staff are workers, "intellectual workers" but workers who sell their services for a price all the same. They need to negotiate the terms on which they are hired, including salary, housing, medical and retirement benefits - like any other workers. It seems to be an open secret that any group of workers who are not organised always end up getting a raw deal, especially in a "free market economy" like we have in Kenya.

Part of the other unspelt misgiving against the Union again seems to be that the Union may easily drag the University into "Trade Union Politics", especially if the Union was to be affiliated to a central organisation such as Cotu. The fear here is that any time plantation workers go on strike against an oppressive management, University Professor may be asked to go on a sympathy strike. Anyone who has followed "Trade Union Politics" in Kenya over the years should know that this kind of eventuality, while it cannot be ruled out altogether theoretically, is just not possible. The University Academic Union is in any case not affiliated to Cotu, Knut, ECOTP, W.F.T.U., the International Federation of University Teachers, or any other organisation.



Possibilities of affiliation with these bodies have been mooted, from time to time but it has always been felt that the Union should first build itself up while retaining, like the University itself, a measure of autonomy. Informal contacts and exchange of information with other organisations are however maintained.

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KNOW YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Chairman                    | - D.N. Sifuna: Dept. of Educational Foundations, Kenyatta University College   |
| Vice-Chairman               | - Vacant   |
| Secretary-General           | - Willy Mutunga: Faculty of Law  |
| Assistant Secretary-General | - George Mkangi: Sociology   |
| Treasurer                   | - G.R. Gacheche: Literature  |
| Assistant Treasurer         | - Mohamed Bakari: Linguistics  |
| Committee Members           | - Isaac Nyambok: Geology - Chiromo<br>J.K. Wang'ombe: I.A.S. - Kikuyu<br>Judah Ogaa: Clinical Studies, Kabete<br>V.G. Simiyu: History - Main Campus<br>Peter Anyang' Nyong'o: Government - Main Campus |
| Trustees:                   | - E. Oyugi: Ed. Psychology - K.U.C.<br>- Ngotho wa Kariuki: Accounting - Main Campus   |





**UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION**

P O Box 31873 Nairobi  
Telephone 334244 Ext. 2218

22nd August 1979

TO: THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

"URGENT DEMANDS ON SALARY INCREASE, HOUSE ALLOWANCE,  
OWNER-OCCUPIER PAYMENTS AND CAR LOANS"

Dear Sir,

The following is a case for our request to have salaries of members of staff increased, the effective date being 1st February 1979.

This is a summary of a larger document on the "TERMS OF SERVICE" which was tabled and adopted to the General Assembly of the Union. We were charged with the job of submitting this summary to you as an immediate DEMAND and also to work on an amended "TERMS OF SERVICE" document. This last document will be tabled to you in August.

The members charged us with the duty of having negotiate for the IMMEDIATE DEMAND and also tabled the terms of service, and have an ANSWER to them by the BEGINNING of the new academic year.

1. THE SALARY SCALE OF THE UNIVERSITY

a) THE RISE IN COST OF LIVING

On page 8 of our interim report there are two tables which show that:-

There has been a considerable rise in the cost of living and

There is urgent need for an increase in Staff Salaries.

Simply the stock of goods which could be purchased by Kshs. 68/- in 1971 could be purchased by Ksh 105/- in 1975 and Kshs 141/- in 1978 (December). This shows a change of 34% from 1975 to 1977

The salary increase in 1977 was:-

Assistant Lecturer	10%
Lecturer.....	12%
Senior Lecturer.....	7.8%
Associate Professor ....	7.3%
Professor.....	7.4%



THIS DID NOT ACHIEVE MUCH IN ARRESTING THE DETERIORATING WELFARE OF STAFF MEMBERS. THERE WAS A SHORTFALL OF INCREASE BY AT LEAST 22%

A cost adjusted increase in 1977 should have been as follows:-

	1975	1977
a) Professor, Director, Dean of students	KS 4,320	4,759
b) Associate Professor, Deputy Registrar and Finance Officer	3,600	4,824
c) Senior Lecturer and equivalent	2,772	3,715
d) Lecturer	1,800	2,212
e) Assistant Lecturer	1,500	2,010

B) COMPARISON BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI AND OTHER UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

1) University of Nairobi and Teachers Service Commission

	T.S.C.	U.o.N
i) Senior Lecturer or the equivalent of Lecturer at the University	£ 2,212	£ 2,010
ii) Principal Lecturer or the equivalent of Senior Lecturer at the University	3,144	2,988
iii) Deputy Principal II - Primary TC	2,514	-
iv) Principal Grade II	3,144	-
Deputy Principal Grade I	3,144	-
v) Principal Grade I	3,672	-
vi) Headmaster Grade I - Sec.	3,144	-

NB Most of the TSC staff are people with only one degree and those at these scales have at least four years experience. Some have surpassed their former Lecturers at the University

THE K.I.A.

Recently the government appointed a Review Committee on K.I.A. and they had this to say

Salaries

Paragraph 183. While there are many other factors which will assist in enabling the K.I.A. to fulfil its mandate, one of the most critical is the quality of academic staff in terms of numbers and competence. In this regard, the level of salaries and the package of the terms and conditions of service are decisive elements in attracting and retaining persons of the right calibre.



Paragraph 184: Therefore having compared the current salary scales of the K.I.A. staff with those of such training institutions as the Egerton College, the Kenya Polytechnic and the University of Nairobi, and also having examined the ruling market rates of pay for persons of the calibre required by the K.I.A., we RECOMMEND the following salary structure:-

Lecturer Trainee	K£1,734 x 72 - K£2,334 per annum.
Lecturer	K£2,154 x 108 - K£2,820 per annum
Senior Lecturer	K£2,712 x 132 - K£3,540 per annum
Principal Lecturer	K£3,144 x 155 - K£3,960 per annum
Head of Department	K3,408 x 156 - K£4,272 per annum
Consultant and Registrar	- K£4,800 - K£6,000
Director	K£5,400 - K£7,200

Paragraph 185: In the preceding paragraph, we have recommended a new salary structure specifically for the academic staff. However, we are aware that the Institute will have a large complement of non-academic staff engaged in various administrative services and whose salaries we have not given detailed treatment in this Report. We therefore RECOMMEND that the Directorate of Personnel Management should undertake a review of the terms and conditions of service for the non-academic staff in order to avoid the possible disharmony which might arise if our recommendations on teaching staff salaries are accepted.

## II University of Nairobi and other Universities:

(Refer to the table drawn on the other sheet)

Looking at the table it can be seen that Nairobi University has very low salary scales. The city of Nairobi compares very much with other big cities in the world as far as the high cost of living is concerned.

Recently an advertisement in the papers for middle level executives houses at Onyorka Estate, the category of which lecturers and senior lecturers do belong stated a required income of £4,000 -9,500. These two groups did not belong to the category because of the low salaries.

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1 Since these proposals were formulated, H.E. the President has announced the setting up of a committee to review Civil Service salaries. It will therefore be necessary to review our recommendations in this regard after that committee has presented its report.

HOUSE ALLOWANCE:

House rents in Nairobi are high and in no way compare with the house allowance given to the staff members. A look at the house rents show that:

- i) A house at Buruburu with three bedrooms is shs. 1,400
- ii) A house at Golf Course 2,500
- iii) A house at Hoshima, Nairobi West etc. 2,500

The University gives a maximum of Shs. 1,090, because of the 90% rule clause. This is certainly inadequate.

OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSES:

The rate given for this category is low. First it is not possible to raise the additional deposits. The cost of the houses and the maximum capital values accepted by the University are very much different.

The average cost of houses these days is shs. 300,000 (£15,000) whereas the latest University level was shs. 240,000 (£12,000).

CAR LOANS:

A cheap car (new) like a Toyota Corolla 1200 or Datsun 120Y costs shs. 70,000 on average. The University car loan is certainly inadequate for members to be able to buy reliable cars which are essential in their performance of duties.

MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

With the ever rising cost of fuel there should be an increase in mileage allowance and all the distance should be covered without the exemption of the first 8 kms.

There should be a specific provision for an automatic rise in this allowance whenever the fuel price increases.

CONCLUSION:

- a) With the above background and statement of our research it can be seen that there is an urgent need for adjusting the give stated items to match up with the costs. This has been a matter of gerious concern to the members because they have to make their ends meet if they are going to stay at the University and also do a good job.

STATEMENT OF SPECIFIC RATES:

We would like to have the following:-

1. SALARIES to rise by 30%. Thus lecturers starting scale will be £2,621, Senior Lecturer £3,884, etc. This should be effective from 1st February 1979.



Clinical allowance should also be increased by 30% to £400.

- 2.. HOUSE ALLOWANCE (i) to go up to Shs. 1,500 per month  
(ii) pay 100% of the allowance instead of the current 90%
- 3.. OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSES: The capital value should be:
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| Professor and equivalent                 | £18,000 |
| Senior Lecturer, Lecturer and equivalent | £15,000 |
| Assistant Lecturer                       | £12,000 |
4. a) Mileage Allowance should be increased by 30% and the distance covered should be the total distance without the 8 km exemption.
- b) Travelling Allowance: All the staff should receive some travelling allowance and those without cars should be paid 400/- per month flat rate.
5. CAR LOANS: should be based on the capacity of the car and subject to a maxima depending on the grade. The loans should cover 100% of the price of the car. This should be based on an average car e.g. 1200 cc like Toyota Corolla which is 70,000/-. The repayment period should be six years or the time of the contract. For this we would like to have:
- i) Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer and equivalent grades  
100% based on a car of 1300 cc (when new). This maxima should also apply for old cars of different capacities. This should be automatically adjusted when the prices change. That is why we would rather state the cc other than price.
- ii) Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor & Professor: 100% based on cars with maximum capacity of 1400 cc.

WE are hopeful that these minimum and reasonable demands will be met

With thanks,

  
NGOTHO wa KARIUKI  
(Chairman, Terms of Service Sub-Committee)

  
WILLY MUTUNCA  
(Secretary, Terms of Service Sub-Committee)

TABLE III

COMPARISON IN £ STERLING

	LIBYA	AUSTRALIA	NIGERIA	U.K.*	W. INDIES	SINGAPORE	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	MALAWI	KENYA
PROF	£9,216	16,530							
ASST PROF	8,064	12,344	9,849					4,494	
SNR LECT	7,296	10,590	7,271		3,279		9,901	3,055	3,705
LECTURER	6,656	7,893	4,189	4,333	2,422	6,405	8,692	2,493	2,500

COMPARISON IN K£

PROF	7,432	13,331	-						
ASST PROF	6,503	9,955	7,943					3,624	
SNR LECT	5,884	8,540	5,864		2,644		7,985	2,463	2,988
LECTURER	5,368	6,365	3,378	3,494	1,953	5,165	7,097	2,010	2,016

\*U.K. Average of 10 Universities (viz. Exeter, Manchester, Nottingham, East Anglia, Leicester, Glasgow, Bradford, Liverpool, Sussex, New Castle)



A BRIEF DOSSIER ON U.A.S.U's STRUGGLE TO HAVE  
PROF. NGUGI RESUME HIS DUTIES AT THE UNIVERSITY

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1. 19.4.72 The Union was registered as a Union but prior to this, it had been registered as an Association. The Union worked up to 1975 without the University Council's recognition.
2. 1976 Officials resigned unconstitutionally through pressure from University Authorities.
3. 1976 - Feb. 1979 The Union was dormant.
4. 0.1.78 Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chairman of the Department of Literature and a member of UASU is arrested.
5. 15.1.78 The Press announces detention of Professor Ngugi. No reasons for detention were given.

The following weeks, intermittent student demonstrations expressing resentment at Professor Ngugi's detention and demanding release.

Members of the Department of Literature send a delegation to the Vice-Chancellor and demand Prof. Ngugi's release.

Student agitation continues while academic staff members keep silent. The University of Nairobi makes no official comment on the fate of its member.

6. 12.12.78 Professor Ngugi released from detention. University students make a jubilant procession through the City. They are joined by members of the public.
7. 13.12.78 Prof. Ngugi addresses the University staff and students and receives a tremendous reception from the community. Students make a procession through the City. They are joined by members of the public.
8. Jan - Feb 79 Mass student meetings continue to call for Prof. Ngugi's resumption of duty to office. University authorities keep silent on the issue. Students send a petition to the Chancellor. Student leaders make several requests to the University authorities for Prof. Ngugi's resumption of duties. University academic staff members make no official comment. The University remains silent.
9. 28.2.79 Finally the Academic members of staff take a step toward the fate of their colleague. A Special Conference of UASU took place. Former officials' resignations were constitutionally accepted. A new Executive was elected by this special conference and a resolution was unanimously passed as follows:-



"That this Special Conference meeting on 28.7.79, having duly elected an Executive Committee and being gravely concerned about the non-resumption of Ngugi wa Thiong'o of his duties, hereby mandates the said committee to take up with the relevant authorities the question of the re-engagement of Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o as a matter of singular and utmost urgency. This special conference further directs the said Executive Committee to report back as soon as possible and in any event in not later than two weeks time.

10. 5.3.79 To act on this Resolution the Executive Committee met and discussed the Resolution.
11. 8.3.79 The Executive Committee met the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J.N. Karanja, and after the introductory formalities, the Committee raised and discussed the Ngugi issue.
12. 14.3.79 There was a special conference of the UASU which endorsed the petition produced here below and mandated the Executive Committee to procure signatures from the members of Academic Staff. The conference also accepted the content of memorandum to Councils (Nairobi and Kenyatta University College) asking them to stand up and defend Ngugi's contract and rights.

PETITION TO H.E. THE PRESIDENT, THE CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI IN REGARD OF PROF. NGUGI WA THIONG'O SUBMITTED BY ACADEMIC MEMBERS OF STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY.

"We the undersigned, being members of the academic staff in the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University College and all being colleagues of Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o DO PETITION your Excellency in your capacity as Chancellor of the University to allow Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o to resume his teaching duties at the Department of Literature in the University of Nairobi. We do so on the grounds that he is a patriot and a scholar who greatly loves his country; he is an outstanding teacher with proven capability to contribute to the development of our Society- he is the only Kenyan creative writer of international repute. We strongly feel that he can only participate fully in nation-building by taking his place in the University. We have sent a memorandum expressing similar sentiments to Council, Nairobi University and the Council, Kenyatta University College. We are sure, Your Excellency, that in the interests of this nation in general and those of the University in particular, you will favourably consider this petition."



13. 4.4.79 The first memorandum to the Council sent to the Vice-Chancellor.
14. 5.5.79 The Amended copy of the memorandum sent to the Council.
15. 16.5.79 The Executive Committee resolved to postpone an appointment with the Chancellor and brief the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor J.M. Mungai, on all the developments and congratulate him on his new appointment.
16. 28.5.79 The Chairman and Secretary-General met the new Vice-Chancellor and stress the urgency of Prof. Ngugi's case. They got a date for the entire Committee to discuss the issue with the Vice-Chancellor.
17. 31.5.79 Prof. Ngugi writes to Council expressing readiness to resume duties.
18. 6.6.79 The Executive Committee meets the Vice-Chancellor and is told that the issue of Prof. Ngugi resuming his duties in the University rested with people other than the University authorities. His situation, the Committee was told, was an Act of State.
19. 7.6.79 - 16.7.79 Executive Committee seeks appointment and audience with the Chancellor without success.
20. 13.6.79 The Vice-Chancellor in the presence of the Registrar told Prof. Ngugi that his case was beyond the University and that it was a matter of Public Security and that he (Prof. Ngugi) needed clearance from somewhere.
21. 16.6.79 Special Conference of the Union rules that the Petition be sent to State House by hand in the event an appointment and audience with the Chancellor was not seen forthcoming. The Conference further ruled that a Press Conference be called to inform the Kenyan public that members of staff have petitioned the Chancellor.
22. 16.7.79 The PETITION to Chancellor. Sent to the Office of the Comptroller of State House. The Press Conference took place an hour later in the Junior Common Room. The Press statement noted, above all:

Professor Ngugi has devotedly served Kenya as an outstanding national scholar: he has continuously struggled for the true development of national cultures of Kenya against domination by foreign cultures. In this struggle, from pre-independent Kenya up till now, he has stood as a firm patriot in the eyes of the broad national population of our country. We hope that the Chancellor will use his good offices to facilitate Professor Ngugi's resumption of duty in the University.



23. 17.7.79 - up to date Kenyan general public begin to openly show support for the petition in view of the fact that Prof. Ngugi has been expressing national sentiments in his stand on national cultures and languages against foreign domination.
- Letters to the Editor in the press reflect the national feelings on the case of the writer.
24. 30.7.79 Members of Parliament ask the Assistant Minister of Education why Prof. Ngugi is denied the opportunity to resume his duties in the University "despite requests from students and lecturers at the University and the people of Kenya."
- The Minister's response grossly misrepresented, and in important details, falsified the case. He was acting on information given by the University.
25. 31.7.79 Prof. Ngugi discovers, after the Ministerial statement in Parliament that he had been paid terminal benefits, that the University had paid the benefits, on 18.12.78 by a voucher presented to the Bank on 14.12.78.
- Prof. Ngugi was released from Detention on 12.12.78.
26. 3.8.79 The Registrar, University of Nairobi writes to Prof. Ngugi and informed him that the University, acting on some legal advice from un specified quarters, had, as early as January, 1978, dismissed Prof. Ngugi from his job through the invocation of an act of State.
27. 18.8.79 Prof. Ngugi replies to the letter from the Registrar. He abhorred the secrecy and silence in the matter and ended his letter by stating:
- By taking the kind of action that you have taken, the University has joined hands with those forces in the country which are against the position I have consistently held about the necessity of a patriotic Kenyan theatre, literature and a culture free from any and every form of foreign domination and control, a culture that reflects and draws its strength and inspiration from the heroic struggles of Kenyan peasants and workers against all forms of internal and external exploitation and oppression.
28. 20.8.79 Prof. Ngugi gives a press statement and tells the Kenya public the truth: that the University has acknowledged his secret, unilateral, unjust, arbitrary and illegal dismissal. Prof. Ngugi concluded his press statement patriotically:



Let me finally say that over my detention, I still regard myself as the wronged party. I still hold my position regarding the necessity of a truly patriotic Kenyan national theatre firmly rooted in the peasant cultures and languages of the various nationalities that make Kenya. I am still opposed to the domination of our cultural, economic and political life by foreign interests. I still hold the position that Kenyan national theatre centres should be allowed to flourish freely and to stage activities which truthfully reflect Kenyan social and political realities and history.

I look forward to a time when no Kenyan shall lose his job for saying that Kenyan cultures must be free from foreign domination, a time when no Kenyan shall lose his job for demonstrating that Kenyan cultures that glorify the grandeur of our past struggles and achievements and that show the great possibilities open before us all, Kenyan people, can blossom in great dignity and beauty if given a chance.

22.8.79

This dossier is prepared.

UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION

JULY 10, 1979

PRESS STATEMENT

The purpose of this Press Conference is mainly to brief you on the efforts which the University Academic Staff Union (U.A.S.U.) has been making to help Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o to resume his teaching duties at the University of Nairobi as an Associate Professor in the Department of Literature.

The University teaching staff feel very concerned about the fact that Professor Ngugi has not been allowed to resume his teaching duties at the University. What seems now a Professor Ngugi's affair might turn out to be a job security problem for any of us teaching at the University. Since the issue has to do with the security of the tenure of a University employee, we all feel affected in one way or another. This in short underlies the University teaching staff's deep concern towards Professor Ngugi's plight.

Members of the press community will, without doubt, recall that Professor Ngugi was released, along with other detainees, at the end of last year, much to the joy of all Kenyans.

His involuntary absence was a great blow to the University's academic prestige which he tirelessly helped to generate and uphold. At the time of his release it was generally assumed that he would immediately resume his duties. But as it has turned out, this has not been the case.

The UASU has taken the following actions regarding the issue of Professor Ngugi:

- 1) After waiting in vain for more than a month to hear from the University authorities regarding their position on his resumption of duties, he took the initiative to contact the University administration seeking their advice on the matter. His letter dated 30.1.79 to the then Vice-Chancellor documents this uncertainty on his resumption of duties and his keenness to resume his teaching duties once invited to do so. That letter was neither responded to nor acknowledged.



2. At its special conference convened on 28.2.79 the UASU inspired by a great admiration for Prof. Ngugi's scholarship and acting on the concern that Prof. Ngugi's problem of resumption of duties in the University could easily befall any of its members, passed a resolution mandating the Union's Executive Committee to take up with the relevant authorities the question of Prof. Ngugi's resumption of his duties in the University as a matter of singular and utmost urgency.

Acting on the above Resolution, the said Executive Committee immediately arranged for a meeting with the then Vice Chancellor. At the meeting (which took place on March 8, 1979) the Committee was led to believe that the University, as an autonomous institution was free to take the initiative as regards Prof. Ngugi's issue, and in that vain the University had not sought any guidance from the government. Neither had the government attempted to influence the University on this matter.

Encouraged by this finding, the Executive Committee pursued a course of action aimed at solving the issue internally. Unfortunately this proved to be futile. Consequently, having noted that internal University channels had been exhausted, the Executive Committee called a Special Conference on March 14, 1979 to report these developments to the Union members. It was from this Special Conference that UASU decided to launch a direct petition to the Chancellor of the University. It was also resolved that a memorandum be sent to the University Council asking them as the titular employers to expedite Prof. Ngugi's resumption of his duties. This was done on May 5 this year. We have yet to be honoured with a response to our memorandum.

3. In the meantime, on May 15, 1979 Dr. J.N. Karanja resigned as the Vice Chancellor of the University.



4. Following the appointment of the present Vice Chancellor, Prof. J.M. Mungai, UASU lost no time in briefing him on the Ngugi matter. At a meeting with him held on June, 6, the Executive Committee of the Union was told that the question of Prof. Ngugi rested with people other than the University authorities. His situation, we were told, was as "Act of State".

It may also be noted that on May 31, 1979 Prof. Ngugi wrote to the Chairman of the Council about his re-assumption of duties. This letter was copied to the Union. Once again, he has had no reply or acknowledgement. On June 13, 1979 the Vice Chancellor in the presence of the Registrar told Prof. Ngugi that his case was beyond the University, that it was a matter of public security, and that he should get a clearance from somewhere. In the absence of a clearance, nobody was even sure, whether he could or could not take the job if and when it was offered by the University.

Having exhausted all the existing channels of communication within the University administration, the UASU was left with no viable alternative other than to step up its efforts to directly petition the Chancellor as directed by the Special Conference of March 14, 1979. As you can see this was the last resort, but one that we are entitled to by the University statutes.

Several attempts to book an appointment with the Chancellor have been unsuccessful. In the new era of reconciliation and understanding we remain assured that justice and academic freedom will be honoured and respected.

It is against this background of unsuccessful attempts to help Prof. Ngugi resume his duties that the Union felt obliged to inform the public that we have petitioned the Chancellor of the University of Nairobi.



Prof. Ngugi has devotedly served Kenya as an outstanding national scholar: he has continuously struggled for the true development of national cultures of Kenya against domination by foreign cultures. In this struggle, from pre-independent Kenya up till now, he has stood as a firm patriot in the eyes of the broad national population of our country. We hope that the Chancellor will use his good offices to facilitate Prof. Ngugi's resumption of duty in the University.

The text of the petition and this statement duly signed by the Chairman and Secretary General UASU are available to the press.

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Dr. D.N. Sifuna  
Chairman,  
UASU.

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Mr. W. Mutunga  
Secretary General  
UASU



UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC STAFF UNION

You are aware, we hope, that we are on a big drive to resuscitate the Union. Please help us help you by enrolling as a member. The Constitution demands that 'Every eligible person shall be required to pay an entrance fee of shillings twenty on application for membership and thereafter on being accepted, a monthly subscription of shillings five by check-off from the monthly salary.'

Some people, may, however, find it more convenient to pay a lump sum of Shs. 80. But whatever method of paying you opt for, please fill the first of the following forms.

All cheques should be made payable to the University Academic Staff Union and can be given to your campus representative or sent directly to The Treasurer, U.A.S.U., University of Nairobi.

Please enrol me as a member of the University Academic Staff Union. Enclosed find the sum of Shs. 20 (Twenty) being my membership fee.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

To the Finance Officer,  
University of Nairobi/Kenyatta University College

Please deduct the sum of Shs. 5 (Five) from my salary every month, being my subscription to the University Academic Staff Union and credit it to the Union's account at Barclay's Bank, Market Branch.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_