

Press statement

8 November 2021

Make your voice heard, support Anti-Corruption Week

We, the undersigned organisations, urge all who live in South Africa to express their outrage against corruption and capture by supporting Anti-Corruption Week 2021.

Pioneered by the Defend our Democracy campaign, the initiative will be hosted from 3-10 December 2021. The week is build-up to 9 December, which is marked annually across the globe as Anti-Corruption Day. It will culminate on 10 December, International Human Rights Day, providing an opportunity to reflect on how corruption affects basic rights.

The theme for the week is ‘United in Action Against Corruption’, and calls for accountability, transparency and ‘recovery with integrity’, particularly in light of Covid-19 corruption.

Apart from the health sector, we will also be shining the spotlight on how corruption affects water provision, energy supply, municipal services and the lives of honest public servants and whistleblowers.

Through various activations held during the week, we intend to:

- Draw the linkages between corruption and capture and deteriorating levels of services, and in turn, the lifestyles of ordinary people;
- Unite and mobilise South Africans in demonstrating their opposition to, and disapproval of, the lack of accountability for corruption and capture, and the impunity with which current corruption persists; and
- Demand from government an efficient response to, and implementation of mechanisms against, corruption and capture.

As South Africa emerges from a local government election in which many citizens chose not to vote, there is a need to reengage the public around participatory democracy, holding public representatives accountable and playing an active role in advocating for clean and ethical governance. This week aims to prompt that reengagement through involving communities in anti-corruption awareness work.

We are committing to participate in the week by hosting or joining in information sessions, pickets and other forms of visible public activations and awareness drives against corruption - both in the public and private sector.

We are calling on you, the public, to do the same by hosting your own anti-corruption activations. These self-initiated activations will form part of a national diary of events in different parts of the country.

We encourage you to learn about corruption and teach others about it. We all know that corruption is a problem in South Africa, but we need to understand the sheer extent of it in order to start tackling the issue effectively.

We also urge you to report corruption where you come across it. While citizens can report their experiences of corruption in municipalities or local police stations or clinics, public servants in state owned entities and government departments should demonstrate courage and commitment to our Constitutional values by blowing the whistle.

We must act against corruption. During the week, the various forms of visible public action against corruption should indicate to government that we will not tolerate empty promises when it comes to dealing decisively with corruption.

Show your outrage against corruption - 'go orange', symbolising the orange overalls that the corrupt must wear in jail. Hang orange banners at your school, community organisations, in youth clubs and on sports fields and street poles across the country. In various sectors, consider lunchtime pickets; business integrity training courses; establishing public servant networks to support whistleblowers in state institutions; hosting religious sermons or congregational gatherings against corruption; webinars/ seminars aimed at developing new thinking on tackling corruption; movie screenings/ book readings against corruption; workshops on monitoring local government budgets; and 'art/ sports against corruption'. Take to traditional and social media to create broader public awareness.

It requires society wide mobilisation to begin rooting out corruption and capture that persists at all levels. Let Anti-Corruption Week send a message to those who are corrupt: "We are watching you, and we will no longer sit by while you plunder what belongs to the people!"

To register your Anti-Corruption Week activation; find online posters and other material that you can use for the week; and to make your pledge against corruption, visit www.defendourdemocracy.co.za. Use the hashtag #UniteAgainstCorruption and tag @ForDemocracySa on Twitter.

Details about an upcoming anti-corruption march planned for 5 December to the Union Buildings, and a civil society lecture on 3 December will be shared in due course.

Report corruption by calling the Special Investigating Unit's (SIU) toll free number, 0800 037 774 or emailing siu@thehotline.co.za. You could furthermore log a report on the Corruption Watch website: <https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/report-corruption/>

Signed by:

Ahmed Kathrada Foundation

Botsotso Ensemble

Centre for Good Governance and Social Justice NPC

Congress of Business and Economics

Corruption Watch

Defend our Democracy Campaign

Die Groep van 10

Durban Coalition of the Poor

Freedom Under Law

Media Monitoring Africa

Ntwane Community Development Forum

Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse

Legal Resources Centre

Market Users Committee

South African Christian Leadership Initiative

South African Communist Party – Gauteng

South Africa - The Good News

SynNovation Solutions (Pty) Ltd

Teddy Bear Foundation for Abused Children

The Free Burma Campaign (South Africa)

United Front of Civics

Uniting Reformed Church of Struisbaai