



Press Statement

16 July 2023

ConCourt ruling on Zuma medical parole must be respected

Defend our Democracy notes the recent Constitutional Court order dismissing the application for leave to appeal by the National Commissioner of Correctional Services.

The effect of this is that the Supreme Court of Appeal's (SCA) judgment relating to former President Jacob Zuma's medical parole stands. The SCA held that the former President's September 2021 release from prison on 'medical parole' was unlawful.

Zuma had been imprisoned for defying a Constitutional Court order to appear before the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture.

Defend our Democracy reiterates its position before the Constitutional Court sentenced former President Zuma in 2021. At the time, we pledged to respect and uphold the decision of the Constitutional Court in relation to the case of the former President, regardless of its outcome.

We recorded our commitment to the Constitution and the most basic concept of democracy and the rule of law – “that all are equal before the law; even the powerful”.

Today, we reiterate our call to organisations across the country to:

- Communicate to constituencies that the Constitutional Court ruling should be accepted and respected;
- Speak out against any unwarranted attacks on the judiciary; and to
- Stand firmly against any group or individual attempting to destabilise our democracy in objecting to the ruling of the Constitutional Court.

The violence of July 2021, and the enormous harm and suffering it occasioned, remains fresh in our minds. We note also the recent spate of attacks on trucks on our highways.

We call on communities across the country to remain vigilant about attempts to inflame tensions, instigate chaos or undermine peace.

The SCA judgment orders that former President Zuma return to the Estcourt Correctional Facility but that it is for the National Commissioner of Correctional Services, as he is so empowered by law, to determine the remaining period of his sentence.

We also note reports that former President Zuma has left the country to seek medical attention in Russia.

As we await the decision of the Commissioner, we urge all parties involved in the matter to place protection of the rule of law and the Constitution at the forefront of decision-making.

Issued by Defend our Democracy



For enquiries, contact:

Zaakirah Vadi

076 243 1185