



11 November 2023
Press statement

Motsoaledi must explain why electoral reform panel is not yet appointed

The Defend Our Democracy (DOD) movement calls on Home Affairs Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi to explain why he has failed to meet the deadline to appoint an Electoral Reform Consultation Panel.

The panel was meant to have been appointed by 19 October 2023, but this has not been done to date.

As stipulated in the Electoral Amendment Act, “Within four months after the commencement of the Electoral Amendment Act 2023, the Minister must establish the Electoral Reform Consultation Panel.” The Act was gazetted on 17 April 2023 and took effect on 19 June 2023.

Civil society organisations were among those who made submissions for nominees for the panel earlier this year.

Defend our Democracy believes that the failure by Minister Motsoaledi to establish the Electoral Reform Consultation Panel in the time frame prescribed by law has a direct impact on its effectiveness. In terms of the law, the deadline for the Panel to complete its report is 12 months after the 2024 election and so every day its appointment is delayed, is a day less to consider electoral reform options, consult with stakeholders, and undertake meaningful public participation.

Although the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs raised the issue of the non-establishment of the panel with the Minister on 19 September 2023, it did not seem to get a clear answer for the delay or a time frame for its establishment.

Parliament has consistently dragged its feet on the issue of electoral reform, resulting in inadequate public consultation and the flawed Electoral Amendment Act that we currently have.

We call on Minister Motsoaledi to now fulfil what he is legally obliged to do, and appoint the panel as a matter of urgency.

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