



PRESS STATEMENT

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Defend Our Democracy: The Criminal Justice System Is A National Emergency— The President Must Act Now

Even for a country as sapped by revelation of state capture as South Africa, the revelations of recent days and weeks are extraordinarily alarming.

Sunday's disclosure by KwaZulu-Natal Police Commissioner Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi are staggering. They maintain that Members of Parliament, prosecutors, police officers—including the most senior officials—are not only compromised but actively working at the behest of violent criminal syndicates. If true, these would not be isolated failures. They point to a comprehensive criminal capture of institutions that are meant to protect the public and uphold the rule of law.

The disclosures come alongside:

- The arrest of senior officials within the SAPS Crime Intelligence Unit, the very body meant to safeguard the country from organised crime;
- And the arrest of South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Special Forces members implicated in the assassination of a Hawks investigator probing kidnapping and abduction by the unit.

Even if Mkhwanazi's disclosures are without merit, what does it say about the state of South Africa's criminal justice system that its most senior policing official in KwaZulu-Natal makes these revelations about the Minister of Police, his deputy and a host of other senior officials.

True or untrue, this is not a case of systemic weakness or governance failure. It is a national emergency.

When those tasked with protecting citizens are instead enmeshed in criminal networks—when the state's own intelligence, policing and prosecutorial arms are weaponised to serve brutal syndicates—the legitimacy of the state itself is in peril.

Without immediate and drastic action, the President and the Executive can have no reasonable expectation that the South African public will continue to place its faith in them. Far from fulfilling the most basic duty of any government—to keep its people safe—we must now contend with the very real possibility that this administration is presiding over a criminal justice system that is an extension of the very forces it should be fighting.

We therefore call for the following urgent steps:

1. An urgent address by the President to the nation explaining how he intends dealing with this national emergency.
2. A full, independent judicial commission of inquiry into the criminal capture of the criminal justice and security services;
3. Immediate suspension and vetting of implicated officials, including those in Parliament, SAPS, the NPA, and the SANDF;



4. The appointment of an emergency task force of untainted professionals with public oversight to begin restoring institutional integrity;
5. Regular public briefings by the Presidency and Justice Ministry to account transparently for progress.
6. That every possible state protection is afforded KZN Police Commissioner Mkhwanazi as his revelations are investigated.

This crisis strikes at the heart of our democracy. If not swiftly addressed, it will corrode every promise of freedom, safety, and dignity made to the people of South Africa in 1994.

We urge civil society, religious leaders, business, and ordinary South Africans to remain vigilant and vocal. Democracy cannot survive under the rule of mafias.

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