



4 February 2018

ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa

Please receive our urgent plea, as Future South Africa, for you and the collective leadership of the African National Congress to do what is in the interest of the over 55 million people residing in our country.

In just four days' time, the State of the Nation (SONA) address is due to be delivered. South Africans across the country will be glued to their television screens, their radio sets and cellphones to get a sense of what the state has prioritised for the next year, and what is going to be done to improve their quality of life.

The SONA, which takes place at the opening of Parliament, is an important occasion for our country. It's a moment that highlights government's central role in the development of the country and the uplifting of our people. It's an occasion where protocol and symbolism befitting the decorum of the occasion is upheld. It is also an occasion where the integrity, transparency and accountability of the state should be on display. It should be an occasion where government is able to show that it is indeed in touch with the struggles of ordinary people.

President Jacob Zuma, who is set to deliver the SONA, unfortunately embodies none of this.

He is a president that has for years now been dogged by scandal after scandal related to state capture and corruption. He is a president who has been found to have flouted the Constitution, and who in the eyes of most South Africans, lacks the credibility and integrity to lead this country. President Zuma embodies the antithesis of the core principles of what it means to be a good leader. He embodies 'misgovernance'.

His previous SONA addresses have resulted in members of the opposition staging walkouts. The President's lack of integrity and accountability became the core focus of the SONA, instead of government's plans for development, transformation and upliftment.

FutureSA believes that the ANC has been presented with an opportunity to ensure that February 8 can and must be different. This year's SONA can be an address that honours the decorum and dignity of the House, and one that truly takes into consideration the sentiment of the public. It can be one that sets the tone and shows that government, and indeed the ruling party, is serious about dealing with corruption and tackling state capture.



For this to happen though, President Zuma must be prevented from delivering the SONA.

The ANC has the power to recall President Zuma from his duties as President of the country before the SONA address and send a clear signal that it is embarking on a new path – a path of true leadership, in tune with the needs of the people, and committed to good governance and the end of state capture.

The leadership of the ANC has a responsibility to the people of South Africa – we should not be forced to listen to a President who has long given up the country's interests for those of a few and who has failed in his undertaking to serve the Republic.

Your election as President of the ANC in December 2017 was monitored closely by all sectors within South Africa, including civil society. It has left South Africa with a renewed sense of hope and optimism that the issues that have plagued the country for last decade at least, may finally be addressed.

Over the last few weeks, we have seen government making strides in tackling state capture. We have seen action being taken at Eskom and the establishment of the long-awaited commission of inquiry into state capture. The Asset Forfeiture Unit has been conducting sterling work around the McKinsey/ KPMG issue, and recent investigations into Estina Dairy Farm have left us assured that finally, there may be some accountability for those who have looted state coffers.

Yet, at the same time, we are well aware that at the helm of our state, one that has been captured by private interests, is President Jacob Zuma. Until he is recalled from office, action against state capture will be limited, and talk about eradicating corruption will remain hollow, and somewhat meaningless.

Ahead of the SONA, you have the opportunity to restore the confidence of citizens of South Africa, as well as of people globally. You have a chance to ensure that the vision of the forebears of our democracy, the Mandelas, Sisulus and Kathradas, is put back on track. You have a chance to restore the dignity of the state. We implore you to ensure that that opportunity is not lost. Please recall President Jacob Zuma from office.

- FutureSA is a politically non-partisan coalition of civil society organisations which aims to end state capture. The coalition was formed following a conference of some 600-people representing 130 organisations from around the country, who gathered to take a stand against state capture on Mandela Day (18 July 2017) at the Rhema Bible Church in Gauteng.

Our patrons include: Albertina Luthuli, Bonang Mohale, Adrian Enthoven, Bruce Fordyce, Cas Coovadia, Dennis George, Ela Gandhi, Giet Khoza, Kumi Naidoo, Lebo Ramafoko, Popo Molefe, Prema Naidoo, Shauket Fakie, Sheila Sisulu, Siphon Pityana, Wayne Duvenage, Zac Yakoob and Zwelinzima Vavi.



Kind regards

Mandla Nkomfe

Future South Africa – Convenor

Organisations who have endorsed this letter include:

Active Citizens Movement

Africa Diocese of PE (Anglican Church)

Ahmed Kathrada Foundation

Auwal Socio Economic Research Institute

Business Leadership South Africa

Community Based Empowerment Forum

Concerned Community Movement

Congress of Business and Economics

Corruption Watch

Ebenezer International Christian Church

Equal Education

Federation of Unions of South Africa (Fedusa)

Future of the Left Discussion Group

Greater Mayfair Civic Society

Heartlines



Johannesburg Against Injustice
Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse
Public Affairs Research Institute
Quaker Peace Centre
Right2Know
Save South Africa (Eastern Cape)
Save South Africa (Nelson Mandela Bay)
Save South Africa (Free State)
South Africa First Forum
South African Muslim Network
South African National Zakah Fund
South African Women's Collective
Students for Law and Social Justice
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The Evangelical Association of South Africa
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Trevor Huddleston Memorial Centre
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United Front Civics (Free State)
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