



MEDIA STATEMENT FROM THE SAVE SOUTH AFRICA CAMPAIGN

Launch of the 'minimum demands' document

Constitution Hill, 9 May 2017

*Comments by Siphos M Pityana
Convenor of the Save South Africa campaign*

Today Save South Africa launches a set of six short-term demands to ensure that the integrity of our state institutions are protected, and to ensure the upholding of the rule of law and the Constitution.

We are also demanding, in the medium term a review of the legislation around political party funding and a fundamental review of South Africa's electoral system.

In addition, we are declaring our intention to convene a civil society summit, which will address issues such as racism, inequality, unemployment and poverty, which lie at the heart of any conversation about a better South Africa.

Central to realizing all of this is, as a start, the removal of President Jacob Zuma, who is at the heart of an illegal anti constitutional push to capture the state for and on behalf of a gangster family, their friends and their business associates.

We believe our minimum demands are rooted in the lives, struggles and campaigns of all South Africans -- especially the poor and marginalized --because it is they who lose the most when state resources are stolen and institutions wrecked leading to patchy or no delivery of text books, ARV's, housing and the fight against racism.

The struggle against state capture of institutions by the Zupta clique is an important battle for all South Africans, including the working poor, the unemployed and the excluded.

Our key message, as Save South Africa, is that we and millions of other South Africans demand to be governed with integrity, care and respect.

We have been encouraged by the massive response by our fellow citizens to unite in action in order to save our country from the multi pronged crises it is confronted with today. They have done so in marches, in protests, petitions and on media platforms.

At the heart of their protest is outrage at the corruption, state capture and misgovernance that has arisen from a blatant and deliberate disregard for the constitution and the law, and the negative impact this is having on ordinary citizens.

The people cannot and will not accept this misrule.

We are convinced that South Africans believe that this is a moment when we can forfeit our partisan interests and unite as one people behind our nation's flag, colors and emblem in defence of our sovereignty. While there may be temptation (which is legitimate in a democratic society) to exploit these crises to advance inter and intra partisan interests, we urge South Africans to guard against this and keep our focus on our simple, yet important demand to be governed with integrity, care and respect

Our call for President Zuma to step down as the President of the Republic today represents the broadest societal consensus of the first and necessary step to save our country from the brink.

We recognise, as does the nation, that the malaise is so deep that, it is a measure that has to be accompanied by other urgent steps that must accompany it without delay.

Restore Integrity in Government

In deciding a successor to President Zuma, we demand that a Leader with proven integrity is identified. We implore those that are vested with the powers to make such a decision to be reminded that the nation will be less concerned by the sectional or partisan interests that are likely to be advanced by such a leader.

The honest truth that they need to accept is that we will measure their suitability on their track record of integrity.

We believe such a development affords us an opportunity to take the immediate steps towards institutional repair as we restore integrity in government. It is within the government's powers to effect these urgent steps assuming political goodwill and Respect for Citizens. It is in this context that we will be seeking to meet with government to present these demands and discuss how they may be taken forward. We will confront government with the uncomfortable truth, and demand answers.

The nation is anxious, uncertain and restless because an authoritative statutory report adds to a lot of published allegations that the power of a democratically elected government may have been usurped (State capture) and that these are used for the benefit of some business interests, the President and his family members.

In addition to a leader often caught on the wrong side of the truth, state capture is the biggest source of mistrust between government and the people. These fears can only be allayed and trust restored by opening the closet of secrecy and appointing without delay, a Judicial Commission of Inquiry, into state capture.

We demand a commission of inquiry into state capture.

Our constitutional democracy is averse to a corrupt system of governance. In line with this, a world class legal system with internationally benchmarked institutional frameworks has been developed. However, it has been crippled by a system of appointment of often unsuitable and unprofessional leaders and personnel, sometimes with a deliberate intent to serve ulterior considerations.

We demand that the integrity and credibility of the institutions of governance be restored without delay.

In the same vein, credibility needs to be restored to Institutions in the Criminal Justice System

It is urgent that these critical weapons against corruption are enabled by an immediate appointment of key leaders through a process that is open and transparent so as to improve public confidence. There are opportunities to do this without delay in a number of cases including that of the National Commissioner of Police, Director of the Hawks, among others, and that the work of IPID is respected and allowed to proceed.

We demand that credibility be restored to the institutions of criminal justice!

We are also deeply concerned by a system of governance where the state is constantly on the dock answering to its failure to live up to its oath of office: to respect, promote, uphold and respect the constitution and the law. We are alarmed at what we fear may be a prelude to an attack on the independent judiciary. Far from being concerned about "Judicial overreach" we should be concerned about a lawless and rogue state.

We demand an affirmation of the Independence of the Judiciary.

Similarly, we have seen the muzzling and manipulation of Chapter Nine (C9s) Institutions as part of an orchestrated project to circumvent accountability.

We demand a similar affirmation of these institutions, especially the Public Protector, IEC and the Human Rights Commission

We believe that the Cabinet reshuffle of 31March marked an overrun of the treasury by the forces of state capture. Most of the capture of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) happened during the tenure of Malusi Gigaba. In the face of serious allegations of corruption during his tenure as the Chairperson of Prasa, Sifiso Buthelezi can also be located in the same nexus. Treasury today is led by a gullible pair, thereby creating uncertainty that it can remain a bulwark against corruption.

We demand the restoration of credible leadership in economic institutions that are at the frontline of a fight against corruption.

It is urgent that an Independent Judicial Commission of Inquiry is undertaken into SOEs in light of serious allegations of corruption. Urgent action is needed to stop the wanton destruction in Eskom which includes its continued looting by the Guptas and Tegeta.

Contracts being awarded to family of the CEO, and a full investigation into all its procurement processes.

The looting brigade must be held to account. And we believe the Guptas and Zuma must not be allowed to leave the country pending all these investigations.

South Africa knows that, as we push forward with these demands, we also need to make sure that we never again see a scourge of this nature.

The nexus of politics and money is undeniably at the heart of the crisis that afflicts our governance today. Our political leaders have failed us in not ensuring that this is regulated in a transparent manner.

We demand that this is done urgently before the election of 2019.

We demand to be led by public representatives whose integrity is beyond reproach. This is an opportunity for all political parties to show commitment by subjecting their public representatives to a probity that assures the public. Life style audits for such leaders should be a standard requirement from all political parties

An even bigger threat to our democratic project is the majority of people who are yet to taste the fruits of the promise of a constitutional democracy. High levels of poverty, inequalities and unemployment have resulted in the alienation of the majority. This is not sustainable. The legacy of a racial past remains a challenge, as seen in growing inequality, increasing acts of racism – such as was seen in Coligny and other places in recent weeks – and increasing poverty and unemployment.

We cannot allow the slide into social decay to continue.

We believe this needs to be addressed by a Civil Society Summit, which we intend to facilitate in the near future to enable dialogue that begins to define practical solutions in this regard. It must begin to shape the future, a people's future, and ensure we never again experience the nightmare that has been created by Jacob Zuma. It must enable South Africans to dream again, and to build the kind of society envisaged by those who developed our Constitution.

This, then, is Save South Africa's vision. Our minimum demands are a clear statement of our intentions, and we believe they are shared by many others.

We call on civil society organisations, and South Africans in their individual capacities, to read and discuss our minimum demands, to send us their ideas, but most importantly to play a role in making sure our demands are met.

Make your voices heard!

Make your demands heard!

Stop the disintegration of our beautiful nation, and help Save South Africa!

The full list of minimum demands is available on www.savesouthafrica.org