

SPEECH BY SIPHO PITAYANA AT THE LAUNCH OF 'ROGUE'

Pretoria, 10 November 2016

Good evening.

We meet tonight just a few hundred metres from Lehae la SARS, which was once known as the nerve centre of one of the most efficient and effective revenue-collection agencies in the world.

It was a benchmark for democratic South Africa's public sector -- one of the first public service entities to be transformed from a narrow apartheid-era agency to a progressive institution that embodied the spirit of a professional and transformed public service.

Under the leadership of Pravin Gordhan, Ivan Pillay and others, SARS was the benchmark of what we all believed the post-apartheid, people-centred public service was supposed to be. It was a living example of how public servants could work and act to serve South Africa – by acting in the public interest, to increase the tax base without fear or favour, and to serve the greater good.

It was one of the embodiments of the new public servant, the servant-leaders: Activists, professionals and others who believed their sole purpose was to act in the interests of the greater good, and to empower the democratic state to fund quality public services for the people. After all that is how a development oriented public service should look like.

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Today, however, Lehae la SARS is a house of shame. Its commissioner, Tom Moyane, is increasingly emerging as a key figure in the state capture project. He is a facilitator of crime and corruption, and a national disgrace. To make things worse, he is alleged to have condoned or encouraged a string of nefarious deeds – whether it's sending jack-booted Hawks agents to interrogate his staff, or turning a blind eye to the activities of one of his deputies, Jonas Makwakwa, who seems to have spent more time depositing cash into his girlfriend's bank account than he does dealing with tax evaders.

As a result, this once-proud institution is in disrepute. It is a national embarrassment.

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The two key questions we have to ask ourselves tonight are:

- How did this all happen? and
- How do we make sure it doesn't happen again?

The answer to the first question is relatively easy, given the amount of information that is spilling into the public domain. Adrian and Johan's book is one example of this, and we commend them for helping us to understand the truth. They have joined the dots, and exposed who the real rogues are at SARS.

There are other examples, too: the former Public Protector's report, *State of Capture*, which begins to expose the various nefarious forces at play in our body politic, and in business.

And then there are the weekly revelations in the media – well, at least those media houses that have not been captured by the state. We have to commend the work of honest journalists on newspapers like the *Mail & Guardian* and *City Press*, the exposes by the producers of *Carte Blanche*, and the new generation of journalists on the *Sunday Times* who have managed to escape the clutches of some of their colleagues, who played an active role in demonizing the good people who were managing SARS during the time of the so-called Rogue Unit.

But as I say, understanding how this mess happened is relatively easy compared to the more pressing question, which is: how do we make sure it doesn't happen again?

In answering this question, it is easy to get bogged down in analyzing when and how President Jacob Zuma will be removed as President. Whether your personal preference is regime change, a recall by the ANC NEC, or a swift flight into exile in Dubai, I strongly believe it is only a matter of time before we are rid of the man who holds the title of the ANC's worst president ever, and commander in chief of state corruption.

I welcome that day. I will celebrate, as enthusiastically as I did the demise of the apartheid regime.

But we cannot stop there. Tonight, as the momentum against Zuma and his cohorts gathers steam, I believe the real issue is to focus our attention on the pathology of a post-Zuma South Africa; the DNA of the next era of South Africa's democracy.

Because that is our real challenge: In the same way that we spoke about a post-apartheid South Africa when SARS was beginning its transformation journey in the mid-1990s, we now need to speak about a post-Zuma South Africa, and ensure we are equipped to avoid making the same mistakes again.

I say this because it is not enough to get rid of Zuma and then relax. We have to make sure that we never, never, and never again have a situation where we put the interests of our leaders before the interests of our democratic project, and before the interests of the country as a whole.

That means we need to clearly define the characteristics of our post-Zuma leadership, whether that person is from the ANC or otherwise. We need to involve all South Africans in thinking, talking and participating in a conversation about the values that we want our new leaders to embody.

We need to set a clear set of parameters for good leadership, and measure any potential new leaders against those values.

We need to ring-fence the next generation of South African leaders from contamination, corruption or capture. We need to make sure there is no room to move, no space for seduction by forces opposed to democracy. We need to hold them to account, day after day after day, if we are to achieve the dream we held as we overthrew apartheid.

[PAUSE]

As you probably know, I am part of a campaign called Save South Africa. Our key focus at the moment is to rid South Africa of Jacob Zuma, and in so doing to stop the wicked project to capture the South African state. We do not believe it is possible to rid ourselves of state capture for as long as Zuma remains the President of our country

It is a very important campaign, and it follows a number of attempts by civil society over the years to stop the looting of state resources and to get the President to step down.

The Save South Africa campaign is similar to these previous attempts, but different. It is similar, in that it aims to stop the rot and end state capture – and, in so doing, to end the frolics of our corrupt leadership. But it is different because it is not only focused on the removal of a corrupt leadership, it is totally committed to finding ways of ensuring we do not make the same mistake again.

For this reason, we have been able to attract a broader church of civil society voices than we have ever seen before – not to mention almost every single political party that has representation in Parliament. At our assembly last week, for example, we were able to find common ground between Paul Mashatile of the ANC, Terror Lekota from COPE, Itumeleng Mosala from Azapo, Solly Mapiale from the SACP, Mmusi Maimane from the DA and Bantu Holomisa from the UDM – not to mention the dozens of civil society organisations, and organised business, who joined us in saying “no” to further state capture.

Over the next few, you will see more voices from organised labour, women’s groups and youth formations joining us, in a remarkable resurgence of civil society activism, as South African democrats find their voice.

I truly believe we have a window of opportunity – partly because of the buffoonery of the architects of state capture, who seem to be their own worst enemies at the moment. But also because South Africans are just sick and tired of this nonsense, and want it to stop.

We want to stop the Zuma nightmare, and begin to dream again.

We must not waste the opportunity we have now – but nor must we fall into the traps left behind by those who are retreating, as the voice of the people becomes louder and louder.

We must be honest about the mistakes that were made and the blunders that led us to be what we are today: a hollow state, captured by devious business

interests, and a playground for the corrupt and those addicted to the abuse of power.

We must be vigilant. We must be firm, very firm, in ensuring that the democratic project stays on course. We must use our energies to continue to drive change – in politics, in business, in faith-based organisations, in communities. We must continue to build a society founded on social justice, equality and democratic principles.

We must outlaw looting, theft, corruption, the abuse of power, the contamination of state institutions, the distortion of the justice system for political gain, and the complete disrespect for our Constitution. We must outlaw people who complain when they are caught out disrespecting the Constitution, and boast that they are not afraid to go to jail for doing so.

We must insist on a common understanding of the qualities of leadership. We must insist on respect for our Constitution, and in particular the Bill of Rights. We must insist on respect for our flag, our state institutions, and ultimately our sovereignty. And we must hold our leaders accountable – whether they are community leaders, business leaders, shop stewards, ward councilors, mayors, premiers, MPs or Ministers.

We must reject those who are campaigning against the democratic project, and who are intent on using state resources for nefarious means. They must be stopped, and we must build a society that is founded on the democratic values we fought for, the values enshrined in our Constitution.

Which brings me back to Tom Moyane.

It is clear that this man is a problem, and he must go. Not only he must go from his office at Lehae la SARS, he must go to jail.

Lest we forget, Moyane is alleged to have been a key player in the events around the Gupta wedding, and the family's capture of a national key point.

We must not forget that Moyane was a key player in the Zuma-appointed team that "investigated" – and I put those words in quotes – the violation of our sovereignty at Waterkloof. We all know that that investigation was a complete whitewash – and it was clear that, from that day on, Moyane was captured.

It is my firm belief that Tom Moyane is the real commander in chief of the real Rogue Unit that today runs SARS, and he must be punished.

[PAUSE]

Which brings me, in turn, back to the book we are launching tonight...

In my view, Adrian Lackay and Johan Loggerenberg are more than authors of a book, even though that in itself is something to be proud of.

They are model civil servants. They are brave, noble people who have exposed injustice and the abuse of state resources. They have blown the whistle on corruption and the abuse of power and state institutions, and join the ranks of Themba Maseko, Vytjie Mantor, Mcebisi Jonas, Zelda Holtman and others who were prepared to stand up to the nonsense that is state capture.

More recently, they were joined by their former colleagues at SARS, deputy director Vlok Symington and SARS attorney David Makapela, who refused to become accomplices in the NPA's heavy-handed attempts to concoct a case against Minister Gordhan and his co-accused.

I ask you to join them as we applaud them all for displaying integrity and courage, and paying both personal and professional sacrifices.

[PAUSE/APPLAUSE]

When all is said and done, the wonderful book that we are launching may seem like, well, just a book.

But one day, we will look back on it and remember it as a crucial few pages, perhaps even a chapter, in the new book we are writing about the next new South Africa and the struggle of the people to ensure that we never, never again go back to this dark era we are experiencing now.

It is a handbook of how state capture works. It is a guide to how power-brokers can undermine democracy. It is a warning about the role of the media, politicians and bad public servants can play in sabotaging democracy.

And if you needed it, it is a motivator to get out there and join us in the campaign to do one thing: to **Save South Africa**.

Thank you.