



AZAPO

AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

TO: ALL MEDIA HOUSES FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: AZAPO SECRETARY FOR PUBLICITY & INFORMATION

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SUBJECT: AZAPO DOFFS ITS HAT FOR CHIEF JUSTICE ZONDO ON HIS RETIREMENT

AZAPO joins the country in wishing Chief Justice Raymond Zondo well on his retirement, as he hangs his green robe.

Chief Justice Zondo started his legal career as an aspirant lawyer and candidate attorney with the late activist Victoria Mxenge who was brutally killed by the dark forces of apartheid. Zondo honed his skills, particularly in labour law, and it was no surprise when he rose within the ranks and ended up heading the Labour Court of SA. His career on the bench span over twenty-seven years. He served as deputy chief justice and later chief justice until his retirement. He is famously known for heading the judicial commission into the so-called “State Capture”, which was referred to as the Zondo Commission. He is hailed as having made great strides in the advancement of women in the judiciary. Zondo will be retiring at the end of August 2024 and his shoes will be filled by Chief Justice designate Mandisa Maya on the 01st September 2024.

Zondo's career is not without controversy. As the head of the judiciary, he leaves behind an untransformed judicial system. There is also a huge backlog of cases and some taking inordinate amount of time to be finalized. The vacancy rate and positions unfilled both on the bench and in the administration of justice is too high. The turn-around times and volume output in the lower courts still leaves a lot to be desired. The shortage of courthouses and judicial staff, particularly in the lower courts impacts negatively on the public trust and confidence in the justice system. Maintenance cases and domestic violence matters take time to resolve to the detriment of victims. The Commission of Inquiry into State Capture overran its budget and cost the country over a billion rand. It remains to be seen if this expenditure was worth our while and whether the role of the commission will dent corruption meaningfully. Zondo has also made public pronouncements which many felt were overstepping the boundaries of separation of powers and playing into the political gallery.

As we bid Zondo farewell and welcomes Mandisa Maya into the top seat in the judiciary, AZAPO calls upon the new broom to sweep with diligence and make great strides towards the transformation of the judiciary and the improvement of the efficacy and practical functionality of the

courts, especially in the lower courts.

END

Issued by **AZAPO** Department of Publicity and Information (DPI).

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