



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA
PRESS RELEASE

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LAW SOCIETY URGES SPEEDY RESOLUTION TO NDPP ISSUE

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) urges President Jacob Zuma and Minister of Justice and Correctional Services Michael Masutha to finalise discussions on the controversy around National Director of Public Prosecutions Mxolisi Nxasana as a matter of urgency.

'Mr Nxasana should not be subjected to protracted public speculation and the Office of the National Director of Public Prosecutions cannot be subjected to the instability that has plagued it since the dismissal of Vusi Pikoli in 2009. It is untenable that this important office is repeatedly brought into disrepute,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons Etienne Barnard and Max Boqwana.

The LSSA aligns itself with many of the sentiments expressed by its constituent members, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, particularly as they relate to the following:

- Mr Nxasana was acquitted of the charge of murder. It is unconstitutional to hold this against him.
- Mr Nxasana was found to be a fit and proper person to be admitted as an attorney by the High Court. This should extend to his suitability as the head of the prosecution services.
- The serious concern raised by the fact that appropriate background checks were not conducted prior to Mr Nxasana's appointment. We agree with the BLA and Nadel that this matter is rearing its head at an unfortunate time and reflects badly on President Zuma, his advisers and, in particular, the State Security system which appears to have taken some nine months to investigate the necessary security clearance.

We reiterate our views expressed when Mr Nxasana was appointed: Our prosecution services are at the heart of the criminal justice system and carry the expectations for justice of the victims of crime in our society. They are also a mirror of our criminal justice system to the outside world.

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA, ETIENNE BARNARD AND MAX BOQWANA

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Editor's note:

The Law Society of South Africa brings together its six constituent members – the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers – in representing South Africa's 22 400 attorneys and 5 600 candidate attorneys.