



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA

Press release: 7 July 2009: For immediate release

**LAW SOCIETY WELCOMES ASSURANCES OF JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE
BY PRESIDENT AND JUSTICE MINISTER**

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) welcomes yesterday's assurances by President Jacob Zuma and Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Jeff Radebe, that the Executive respects, without reservation, the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.

'An independent judiciary and legal profession are paramount in a democracy which is underpinned by the rule of law. Such independence engenders public confidence in the judicial system and respect for the judgments of our courts. We are also encouraged by the President's indication that, if there is to be criticism of the judiciary and other dispute resolution institutions, such criticism should be fair and informed,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons, Thoba Poyo-Dlwati and Henri van Rooyen.

The LSSA also welcomes the President's intention to expedite the drafting and processing of the Legal Practice Bill, which will transform the governance structures of the legal profession. 'We look forward to meeting the Minister at his earliest convenience to discuss the key principles underlining the Bill so that a consensus position can be reached with the other stakeholders, and a draft Bill be made available soon for discussion,' say Ms Poyo-Dlwati and Mr Van Rooyen.

The LSSA will meet representatives of the advocates' profession later this month to discuss the Legal Practice Bill.

The LSSA Co-Chairpersons add: 'As indicated by the President, all legal practitioners should be regulated within a single, statutory framework. A strong, united and independent legal profession serves as a pool from which new judges are appointed. In addition, it will ensure both access to the profession by more practitioners and greater access to legal services by members of the public.'

***ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH
AFRICA***

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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 18 600 attorneys and 4 800 candidate attorneys.

In Afrikaans items, please refer to the 'Prokureursorde van Suid-Afrika'.