



Statement by the Honourable Jacob Zuma on the decision taken by the President of the Republic

14 June 2005

President Thabo Mbeki has taken a decision regarding my presence in Government and Cabinet. It is the President's prerogative to take such a decision, in the context of, and within his authority as the President of the Republic. I accept and respect his pronouncement.

I believe he has taken this decision not because he believes I am guilty of any crime, but because of considerations relating to the constraints within which government operates.

In light of this decision, I have also offered to resign my seat in Parliament, not as an admission of guilt of any kind, but in order to make it easier for the ANC and government to function in Parliament.

As stated before, let me reiterate that my conscience is clear. I have not committed any crime against the State or the people of South Africa. I however still maintain that I have been treated extremely unfairly throughout the entire debacle for about half a decade.

Throughout this period, I did not use my position in government in any way to interfere with the due process of law, because I believe in, and cherish our democracy and Constitution. I believed that organs of state and other role players would be guided by the principles in our Constitution.

But contrary to this, I have been tried by the media and in effect found guilty by a court in absentia. I have not been given an opportunity in an appropriate forum to defend myself against the allegations made. Yet our Constitution states that everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

I sincerely trust and hope that those authorised to take decisions - at whatever level - will act within a reasonable period with regard to the conclusion of this matter. I need to be given an opportunity to tell my side of the story, and bring finality to these accusations and speculations.

All said and done, I believe that we should put national unity and the interests of our country and nation first - whatever views people may have about the President's decision and the Durban court judgment.

I have dedicated all my life to serving the people of this country, and to working for a better South Africa. I am determined to continue serving my country in whatever capacity and role, and remain ready to make whatever sacrifice necessary for our country.

We fought for many decades for our liberation, and have worked tirelessly - at great personal cost - to establish our hard-won democracy. We have also over the last 11 years laid a firm foundation for a prosperous and successful country.

Therefore, we all have a duty to protect and defend this democracy and the gains we have made. I shall continue to contribute to this national task, as a citizen of our beautiful country, and as a disciplined member of the African National Congress, as well as ANC Deputy President.



I would like to extend my deepest and sincere gratitude to President Mbeki who gave me an opportunity to be his Deputy, and with whom I have shared many years of comradeship and work in the struggle, under very difficult conditions.

I look forward to continuing to work with him as his Deputy in the African National Congress, in the reconstruction and development of our country.

I would like to thank all the people of South Africa for the support given to me during my tenure as Deputy President of the Republic.

It has been an honour and privilege to be given such a responsibility, and a truly rewarding experience to serve the people in this capacity.

I thank all colleagues in Cabinet and government, including staff in the Presidency for all their support in my work. I also would like to thank the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces.

I extend my gratitude to all Comrades in the ANC and the Tripartite Alliance in general, and ANC MPs in particular, who have been a pillar of strength to me during my time in Parliament.

I also thank members of opposition parties in Parliament, who have always made my work a pleasant challenge, through Questions as part of their oversight duty and ensuring that there is accountability in government.

I am also indebted to various stakeholders for their support in my work – the labour movement, business community, traditional leaders, religious leaders, women and youth to mention just a few.

I also thank the international community for supporting our work at various levels including peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Let me reiterate that all of us should put national unity and the national interest above everything, as we grapple with these difficult matters. Our freedom and democracy are more important than us as individuals.

Let us continue working together to build our country and to strengthen our democracy.

Enquiries: Lakela Kaunda

Cell: 082 782 2575

Issued by: The Presidency

14 June 2005