



Media Statement

Zuma must respect the Rule of Law

03 February 2021

CASAC welcomes the statement issued by the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture on 2 February 2021 responding to the threat by Mr Jacob Zuma not to appear before the Commission. The Commission has emphasised that respect for the rule of law is a foundational principle of our constitutional order.

The behaviour and statements made by and on behalf of Mr Jacob Zuma in respect of his duty to appear before the Commission of Inquiry, demonstrate a flagrant disregard for the summonses issued by the Commission as well as last week's order by the Constitutional Court directing that Mr Zuma appear before the Commission and answer questions put to him.

It cannot be that a former Head of State treats the courts, laws and summons with such disdain, in a desperate attempt to evade accountability. In its judgment last week the Constitutional Court said:

"It must be plainly stated that the allegations investigated by the Commission are extremely serious. If established, they would constitute a huge threat to our nascent and fledgling democracy. It is in the interests of all South Africans, the respondent [Mr Zuma] included, that these allegations are put to rest once and for all. It is only the Commission which may determine if there is any credence in them or to clear the names of those implicated from culpability".

Noting that a criminal complaint has already been lodged with the law enforcement agencies following Mr Zuma's 'walk-out' from the Commission while under subpoena in November last year, we believe that each breach of the law by Mr Zuma must result in further charges. Should Mr Zuma fail to appear before the Commission on 15 February we further urge the Commission to institute proceedings for contempt of the clear order of the Constitutional Court.

Mr Zuma's disrespect for the rule of law cannot and should not be tolerated. He must face the consequences for his actions. Failure to do so will weaken the foundations of our hard-fought democratic order.

For further comment:

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