



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OFFICE OF THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

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7 July 2021

Ms T R Modise, MP
Speaker of the National Assembly
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa
CAPE TOWN
8001

Dear Madam Speaker,

**REQUEST FOR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO RECONVENE URGENTLY TO DEBATE
AN URGENT MATTER OF NATIONAL PUBLIC IMPORTANCE IN TERMS OF NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY RULE 130 ON THE UNFOLDING CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS
SURROUNDING THE SENTENCING OF THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC,
MR J G ZUMA**

I write to you in terms of National Assembly Rule 130 to request that you urgently reconvene the National Assembly and schedule a debate of urgent national public importance on the unfolding constitutional crisis surrounding the recent sentencing by the Constitutional Court of the former President of the Republic, Mr J G Zuma, to 15 months imprisonment after being found guilty of contempt of court.

The historic judgement of the Constitutional Court, which holds profound legal and constitutional implications, has been overshadowed by the bizarre chain of events that have unfolded over the past week. The entire nation hoped that Mr Zuma and the Government would respect the verdict of the Republic's apex court after the former president's wish to argue his case was granted to him numerous times, and which he failed to exploit on every occasion. Yet mere days later, hundreds of his supporters descended on his Nkandla homestead to show their support for the former president in flagrant violation of the Government's Covid-19 lockdown regulations issued in terms of the Disaster Management Act, Act 57 of 2002.

Despite the fact that the gathering violated almost every lockdown level 4 regulation gazetted, some provisions of the Firearms Control Amendment Act, Act 28 of 2006, some provisions of the Riotous Assemblies Act, Act 17 of 1956, and some common law offences like allegedly assaulting SA Broadcasting Corporation journalist Mr S Maseko, and despite the fact that the former president tacitly encouraged the supporters to "use peaceful means to protest against this injustice," not a single member of the large crowd was arrested or charged with the violation of any of the specified provisions by the SA Police Service (SAPS), and the silence of the President of the Republic, Mr M C Ramaphosa, and his Minister of Police, Mr B H Cele, and his Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr R O Lamola, on this Covid-19 super spreader event has been deafening.

The five days for Mr Zuma to hand himself over to the SAPS by Sunday, 4 July 2021, to start serving his contempt of court sentence have long passed, and Minister Cele and the National Commissioner of the SAPS, Gen K J Sithole, have made it abundantly clear that they will not take any action to arrest the delinquent former president until all of his frivolous litigation to stay the historic verdict of the Constitutional Court have been finalised, or until such time as the apex court directs otherwise.

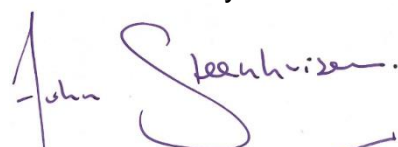
It is my considered view that this, when considered together with the continued defiance of Mr Zuma's supporters to adhere to the Government's lockdown regulations and President Ramaphosa's continued inaction to intervene, poses a real threat to the sanctity of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court and our judicial system, and must be addressed by the National Assembly as a matter of urgency. The constitutional crisis that is unfolding in front of us will certainly have widespread political and legal reverberations, and it is therefore incumbent on the National Assembly to hold Minister Cele, Minister Lamola and President Ramaphosa accountable in terms of section 92(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as a matter of urgency.

As required by National Assembly Rule 130(8)(d), this is a matter for which the Government can – and should - be held responsible. It further relates to a specific matter of recent occurrence in terms of NA Rule 130 (8)(e), which needs to be addressed urgently.

I hereby request that you reconvene the National Assembly and schedule a debate of urgent national public importance on the unfolding constitutional crisis surrounding the recent sentencing by the Constitutional Court of Mr Zuma.

I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Steenhuisen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'S'.

John Steenhuisen MP
Leader of the Official Opposition
Parliament of RSA