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ANDREW WHITFIELD, MP

SHADOW MINISTER OF POLICE

09 March 2022

Hon. President Cyril Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
Per e-mail:

Dear Honourable President Ramaphosa

SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT SAPS HANDOVER REPORT(S) BEING SENT TO MINISTER CELE OR POLITICIANS

As you are aware, on 25 February it came to light that you and the SAPS National Commissioner, General Khehla Sitole “have agreed that the early termination of the Commissioner's contract is in the best interests of the country”.

Whilst the public still has no information regarding compensation paid to Sitole in this regard, worrying news reports now suggest that Police Minister Bheki Cele has requested General Sitole to prepare a comprehensive handover report including “major and high-profile cases” and that this report must be given to Minister Cele.

This is highly irregular. No politician, not even the President, is entitled to receive dockets on active police investigations. This is an example of gross political interference into the operations of the SAPS. It demonstrates the extent of the Minister’s warped sense of authority. He does not have the same powers as a National Police Commissioner, and this can be seen as an attempt directly interfere with the independence of SAPS.

The DA believes that all handover reports for Sitole’s successor must be handed over directly to this individual. The report is likely to contain names of ANC cronies and politically exposed business people under investigation by the Hawks for their role in state capture. This move by Minister Cele goes against all promises by you to fight state capture. In fact, this is just another way to further capture the state and its institutions.

We urge you, Mr. President, to do the right thing and establish a firewall against political interference in the SAPS. Please instruct Minister Cele to not request or receive the said report(s) in any way. General Sitole must hand this report over directly to his successor. The DA has long argued that there is simply no justifiable reason to keep Minister Cele in Cabinet and this latest move by the Minister is yet another reason for the you to fire him.

Kind regards,

Andrew Whitfield, MP