



Western Cape Devolution Working Group Formed

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The South African national government is increasingly unable to discharge its constitutional duties towards the South African people. This imposes both a legal and moral obligation on the Western Cape Government, and local governments in the province, to step in and to ensure that the constitutional rights of the people of the province are properly protected.

Control of policing in the Western Cape is a pertinent example. Section 12(1)(c) of the Constitution states that everyone has the right to be free from all forms of violence. It is irrefutably true the national government is failing to discharge this constitutional obligation. The Western Cape Government can demonstrably do a better job of protecting its citizens.

Both the Western Cape Government and the City of Cape Town have constructively engaged the national government on this matter, but thus far without success.

A Western Cape Devolution Working Group (WCDWG) has now been formed. Its purpose is to protect the rights of the people of the Western Cape and to materially improve their circumstances through the devolution of powers and functions away from national government.

Political parties, civic organizations, business, and jurists will all collaborate to support the provincial and local governments to apply increasing pressure on the national government to act in the best interests of citizens.

The inaugural meeting of the group was held last week and was attended by several organisations including the Democratic Alliance (DA), Freedom Front Plus (VF Plus), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), Cape Independence Party (CIP), Afriforum, Cape Independence Advocacy Group (CIAG), Action Society, CapeForum, Saai, and several legal experts.

The initial focus of the group will be on the devolution of policing powers to the province and clearing the legislative hurdles which prevent the Western Cape Premier from exercising his constitutional right to directly consult the Western Cape people on specific issues via referendums.

The group will use all legal means at its disposal including formal legislation, political lobbying, legal action, public participation, and peaceful mass mobilisation.

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