



Joint Press Statement by the DA, IFP, FF Plus, ActionSA, UIM and SNP

# Professor William Gumede Announced as Independent Chairperson of the Multi-Party National Convention

**DATE:** 3 August 2023

**RELEASE:** Immediate

The political parties exploring a multi-party agreement (DA, IFP, FF Plus, ActionSA, UIM and SNP) are pleased to announce that Professor William Gumede has agreed to chair the National Convention that will sit on 16 and 17 August 2023 at Emperor's Palace in Kempton Park. Professor Gumede is an independent chairperson of the process and is not affiliated to any of the participating parties.

From the outset, this grouping of parties has understood the need for these talks to benefit from the wisdom and experience that is available in South Africa and too often ignored by political leaders who falsely believe they have a monopoly on solutions needed in South Africa.

In considering Professor Gumede's significant contributions to South Africa and various democracies around the world, it is evident that there is no South African who is better placed to guide our multi-party process.

William Gumede is Associate Professor, School of Governance & former Convener, Political Economy, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Founder of the Democracy Works Foundation.

Professor Gumede teaches a programme for MPs of the Commonwealth on how to manage their country Parliaments, ensure effective oversight of the executive and government entities, and how to conduct themselves ethically as MPs. He also runs a course on public policy and economics, including on how to put together the National Budget for MPs from all political parties in South Africa.

He mediated in several country civil and communal conflicts, including the eSwatini violent country conflict between the king and his allies and opposition parties ahead of the 2013 national elections. He advised several African governments on alternative approaches to hold violent belligerents accountable following civil wars, including the civil war between Christians and Muslims in the Central African Republic and the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was the facilitator in the healing and reparation process between the mine, victims and communities, following the Marikana Massacre in South Africa.

During the anti-apartheid struggle, Professor Gumede held several leadership positions in South African student, civics and trade union movements. He was a political violence mediator and area coordinator for the National Peace Committee during the multi-party negotiations for a democratic South Africa and was seconded to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Previously, Prof Gumede was Program Director, Africa Asia Centre, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London; Senior Associate Member & Oppenheimer Fellow, St. Antony's



College, Oxford University; Senior Research Associate & Graduate Student Mentor, London School of Economics and Political Sciences; Press Fellow, Wolfson College, Cambridge University; Course Leader, School of Public Policy, Central European University, Budapest; Course-Leader, New School University, New York; and Visiting Fellow, Duke University, North Carolina.

For the Pact conversation, Professor Gumede will manage the process together with a specialist team of technical advisors. They include: Nerine Kahn, the former CEO of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA). She is a qualified attorney with a BA, LLB and advanced Diploma in Labour Law. She practiced for six years where she mainly specialised in labour law. She was then employed by the CCMA as a commissioner for six years before she headed the CCMA

Professor Uwe Jun is the director of Trier Institute for Democracy and Party Research (TIDuP) in Germany. He is professor of Government Theory and Faculty Dean at the University of Trier. He has written extensively on coalition building in the German federal states.

Zamayirha Peter is an experienced journalism and communications specialist and will be a communications advisor for the convening team. She worked for City Press and her stories have been distributed on News24, Power FM, Rapport and Huffington Post. She was former SRC Deputy President at Wits University.

Professor Gumede has already begun the important work of chairing weekly meetings of the political parties involved in the efforts to establish a multi-party agreement on 16 and 17 August 2023. These meetings enable parties to engage around the agenda for the Convention and to build greater consensus ahead of the Convention. Already these engagements are benefitting from the experience and wisdom that Professor Gumede and his team have brought to the table.

This multi-party grouping of parties is committed to presenting South Africans with a compelling alternative vision and direction for our country. The basis for this agreement will be an agenda to address the greatest challenges facing our country to inspire the millions of South Africans who have lost hope. This agreement must lay the foundation for a new multi-party government in 2024 that can start the work of moving our country forward again.

#### Media Enquiries:

DA: Charity McCord, Media Officer to the DA Federal Leader 078 126 2765

IFP: Megan Dick, Office of the IFP President 082 432 1335

FF Plus: Pieter Swart, Media Officer for the FF Plus 065 801 7216

ActionSA: Sam Mgobozi, Communications Director for ActionSA 082 968 4021

UIM: Dianne Rogers, Head of Communications for UIM 076 482 2426

SNP: Winston Coetzee, Chief Whip of the SNP 082 228 3523

For Prof William Gumede: (Ms) Zamayirha Peter 079 692 7931