

**ADDRESS BY L N SISULU, MP, MINISTER OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS, DURING THE DEBATE ON A MOTION OF NO
CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENT
17 MARCH 2015, PARLIAMENT**

John Milton, in his poem entitled, “On His Blindness”, meditates on his own tragic loss of sight. It is not his inability to see that he bemoans, but more substantially, he bemoans his loss of relevance. He aptly captures it when he says in the opening line “when I consider how my light is spent”. To the DA, who put this motion of no confidence in the President before us, your light is spent and you are clutching for relevance. Milton speaks to his inability to see with the inner eye and his lack of ability to reason. In the case of the DA it would be the refusal to see - in plain English - it is called an ingrained prejudice.

It is a known fact that the Democratic Alliance has an 'axe to grind' with President Zuma. Long before he became President, the DA had made it its business to attack and hurl insults at the President. What clearly informs the psyche of the DA is nothing more than deep rooted hatred for the person of the President, which he himself called, “playing the man and not the ball”.

Here we are, a mere ten months after our voters returned the ANC and its President by a landslide 62%, debating something that the voters so eloquently concluded on. But we do so as an affirmation of the Constitution that the ANC has bequeathed to this country, a Constitution that is both tolerant and accommodating, even to the most misguided and insecure, such as those who put this motion before

the House. The Agang gang, in retrospect was cleverer. They merely scuppered off with their tail between their legs.

The voters indicated their confidence in the ANC and the President in recognition of the ANC's achievements – which even Honourable Maimane acknowledged – that:

- Most of our citizens are living in dignity. We are providing houses, education, health and access to land. We are doing this at a rate unprecedented in the world!;
- South Africans who voted the ANC into Government know what we have done for them and will vote us in again in 2019.

Quite frankly, what we have here is an important process of Parliament that has become the latest casualty of the opposition stampede for self-promotion. It says something about a Parliament which is gradually being turned into the "theatrics" that Honourable Shenge spoke about during the SoNA debate, rather than a place established to legislate and ensure we change the conditions of the poor and destitute who depend so much on us and to whom we are individually and collectively accountable. Accountability is a word that is bandied about by the Opposition as applying only to the ANC. It applies to all of us. Each MP is accountable to his constituency, however you define that constituency, because we are paid with taxpayer's money. The Opposition imagines that the taxpayers pay them for the number of times they are captured in the media. Being an MP is more that the media opportunities to promote the self.

Now let me tell you what has been achieved by the ANC as MPs and as Government, under President Zuma, specifically related to one of the issues you raise, which is the phrase “Corruption has spiraled out of control”. Indeed, corruption is unacceptable, whether under control or out of control. We, all of us ought to be very concerned about it at all times. We in the ANC have expressed our concern about this matter and highlighted the steps we have taken to fight this. Specifically, the President has done this at every SoNA.

Just to put the matter in perspective, corruption has existed in this country long before the democratic dispensation. Our concern is that it should not have settled into the *modus operandi* of this dispensation, nor should it be allowed to continue. What we seek to emphasise, which is very important, is that corruption is a societal problem and can only be solved by all of us. It is, by its very nature pervasive and erodes every sphere of civil society, the private sector and the public sector.

Honourable Members, we are committed to the fight against corruption. We, the ANC, who fought to create a new moral order, will strive to determine that it remains so and on every occasion that the President addresses the nation, he has explained this. There is no one in this House that can argue that Government takes a back seat and does nothing about corruption. The record of this government speaks for itself. When we have cases of corruption we follow due processes, as are enshrined in the Constitution. **We might not be in agreement with the outcomes.** And I repeat, we might not be in agreement with the outcomes, but there is no denying that we deal with every case brought up, in the public domain. None can claim that this government has had cases of corruption and not taken any action to investigate and where necessary, court processes have ensued. We remain seized with the task and the responsibility that our people have placed upon us. We remain very

concerned about corruption and use every opportunity to explain to our people what we are doing about it.

For the record, what we in the ANC, led by this President have done in curbing corruption.

1. Justice Institutions

The State has increased its capacity to curb corruption:

- The capacity of the Special Investigating Unit has grown from an initial 70 staff members in 2003 to more than 600 at present;
- Since 2003, the SIU has saved government R1.6 billion;
- It prevented future losses of R16.9 billion;
- It recovered R875 million, with an additional potential of R2.06 billion, of which R1.8 billion is in one Department alone.
- As at 31 December 2014, the President has signed 48 proclamations, directing the SIU;
- A total of 192 criminal cases are under investigation and have already led to 58 convictions. These include 12 cases under investigation in terms of the OECD Foreign Bribery Convention. This means that the cases involve multinational companies that are suspected of having bribed public officials in procurement transactions.

Madam Speaker, our record speaks for itself, just read our country report to the African Union.

2. Public Service

Madam Speaker, we have been in this House many times before with the specific aim to get Parliament to put in place several instruments to help us fight any creeping tendencies of corruption. We have never shied away from the fact that this concerns us. We **have** to be **intolerant** of corruption **in all** its forms.

We have put legislative measures in place to fight corruption and spent the better part of 2012 and 2013 in this House to urge Honourable Members to support the Public Administration Management Act, (the PAM Act), which has as one of its main focuses the rooting out of corruption in the public service. Every opportunity was used to educate the public about how this Act would curb corruption in the public service. The President announced in his State of the Nation Address this year that he had signed this Act into law. This Act comes from the **ANC Government**, supported by ANC MPs, which was blocked by the DA in this House, but signed by the ANC's President.

This was done precisely to ensure that the seeds of corruption do not enter into our supply chain management processes by prohibiting public servants from conducting business with the State. I can assure you now, as the President did in his SoNA, that fighting corruption within the public service is yielding results.

This Government has passed five pieces of legislation in addition to the PAM Act to curb corruption. These have enabled us to pursue all corruption related and general criminal investigations.

3. National Treasury

We have created a myriad of instruments to bind us to certain standards. Just last week, the Minister of Finance informed the nation how the system of procurement will be changed. He announced that procurement will now be centralised in the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer in the National Treasury. There will be a single database of suppliers for the whole of government that will be verified and linked to SARS for VAT registration.

Corruption is an insidious crime that eats away at the very fabric of society. In our private lives, when we come across it, what do each one of us do? Do we look away? Because when we do, we are complicit in the crime. The question we would like to ask the DA is what do they do about it when they encounter it in society? The one area that is however never touched upon when we speak about corruption is the private sector that drains millions of rands out of this country. Why don't we talk about that?

It is quite clear to me that this is a frivolous motion, uncalled for 10 months after the elections, with nothing to gain from it. We in the ANC will turn this into a motion that our people will agree to. A motion of complete confidence in the President.

I thank you.