



COUNCIL
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN
CONSTITUTION

MEDIA STATEMENT

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CASAC calls for the suspension of the Marikana Commission of Inquiry

The Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution (CASAC) has learned that the Director-General of the Department of Justice & Constitutional Development has decided to withdraw support to the families of the victims of the Marikana massacre, thereby denying them the right to participate in the Commission of Inquiry instituted by the President.

The Chairman of the CASAC Advisory Council, Siphon Pityana, said this afternoon:

"If this information is correct it displays a callous disregard for the rights and dignity of the families of the victims. It exacerbates their pain and anguish amidst their grieving".

This bizarre decision can only undermine the credibility and integrity of the Commission whose primary focus ought to be on the victims of this national tragedy. It will make the continued participation of the families and their lawyers untenable. A Commission of Inquiry denuded of the presence of the families of the victims will be an empty vessel.

The reputation of the Government locally and internationally hinges on its commitment to an open, inclusive and transparent Inquiry. The Inquiry must be unimpeachable in terms of its procedures and its ability to search for the truth so as to deliver justice for the victims. Sadly the outrageous decision of Ms Sindane shows that this commitment is very much in doubt. We must inevitably question the political motives behind such a decision. There can be no rational justification for such a decision and it suggests that the Government has lost its moral compass.

CASAC calls on the President and Minister of Justice to immediately reverse the decision of the Director-General of Justice, Ms Sindane. Should this not be done we call upon Judge Ian Farlam to suspend the proceedings of the Inquiry until the participation of the families is guaranteed.

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