



**FW de Klerk**  
FOUNDATION

## **WHAT IS ZUMA UP TO?**

It might be easy to laugh off the comments about State capture in a lecture by former President Jacob Zuma in the Eastern Cape on 12 September as ludicrous, funny and weird - the rantings of a wounded former President. To say that the present crisis is a “politically-decorated expression of state capture” and there is no such thing as “State capture” while the work of the Zondo Commission (into State capture!) - and which he himself appointed - is underway, is nonsensical. At its best, it is a theoretical lesson in semantics, totally devoid of any realism. But that should not worry us. What is Zuma really up to - at worst?

We have never seen a former or ousted President participate at national level in the way that Zuma is doing. Attending meetings of official structures, holding private (not so secret anymore) meetings with former allies, and addressing public meetings organised by the ANC and its structures are not the normal activities of a retired head of State. If Zuma’s activities are ascribed to “just helping the ANC’s pre-election campaign”, he is not assisting - by denying the existence of the one thing that the ANC’s opponents are holding firmly against it, State capture (and accompanying corruption).

The more worrying fact is that Zuma’s activities and utterances may have a different goal, and that is to create a groundswell against the man who has built his campaign to be ANC president on clean governance and rooting out State capture - President Cyril Ramaphosa. Zuma is openly challenging President Ramaphosa by denying the existence of the biggest and most damaging legacy of his nine years in office. It also clearly creates further division in the party, as Zuma is probably voicing in public, what other Zuma acolytes only dare say in private. The fact that the overwhelming majority of ANC parliamentarians voted for Zuma to receive his full salary as pension, as well as continuing allowances for his numerous wives, must embolden the former President further.

All of this is going the way of a public confrontation, not of Ramaphosa’s doing and probably not in the interests of national stability. These political machinations make it all the more important for President Ramaphosa to urgently appoint the right person to head up the National Prosecuting Authority, for the Zondo Commission to urgently and credibly get to the root of the State capture allegations, and for the Nugent Commission on SARS to identify, isolate and sanction criminality in its ranks as soon as possible.

We have said in the past: give President Ramaphosa a chance but watch him closely. At this time we say: watch your back, Mr President!

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