



FW de Klerk
FOUNDATION

STATEMENT ON ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION OF MR NENE AND APPOINTMENT OF MR MBOWENI

By Theuns Eloff: Executive Director, FW de Klerk Foundation

The FW de Klerk Foundation welcomes the fact that President Ramaphosa, in the interest of good governance, accepted the resignation of Mr Nhlanhla Nene as Minister of Finance. As stated in a CFR article yesterday, it was the right thing for Mr Nene to offer his resignation, and it was the right thing for the President to accept it. This presents the country with a rare case of accountability and ethical conduct at senior government level, especially in the last number of years. Too often, as in the case of SASSA and Life Esidimeni, politicians and senior officials shirked their responsibility and denied accountability - and in so doing, acted unethically.

The Foundation also welcomes the appointment of Mr Mboweni as new Minister of Finance. His reputation in the finance world is sound, and his capabilities well-known. We wish him well with the mammoth task of helping to stabilise the State's finances and heal the wounds that State capture left on the economy.

The Nene case does leave the country with the question: should the President wait for certain other Ministers implicated in the Gupta saga or other doubtful actions to offer their resignations? Or should he, in the interests of good governance, ask them to resign or replace them? Unlike Mr Nene, some of them were found wanting by courts of law and commissions of inquiry in many respects, and even declared liars. Theirs were more than unethical conduct. With accepting Mr Nene's resignation, President Ramaphosa has indeed drawn a line in the proverbial sand on good governance and ethical conduct. And instead of giving laughable reasons for meeting with the Guptas such as a "professional relationship with a stakeholder" (indeed!) or attending Gupta-sponsored events for "social cohesion" reasons, these Ministers should also do the right and ethical thing: offer their resignations forthwith. And if they don't, the President should deal with them henceforth.