



FW de Klerk
FOUNDATION

FIVE WISHES FOR SUCCESS FOR SOUTH AFRICA IN 2019

By Theuns Eloff: Executive Director, FW de Klerk Foundation

2018 is almost over. December is a time for many South Africans to wrap things up and conclude business, to take some time off and to rest. But it is also a time of taking stock of the year and what was achieved - and to start thinking about what 2019 holds.

Call it a combination of wishes for Christmas presents and New Year's resolutions, but if there are say, only five things that can be chosen, I would choose the following five for the country. It could be the recipe for success for South Africa in 2019.

A new leadership, stripped of the selfish, the State capturers, the corrupt and the well-meaning socialists

Whether it's the Cabinet, the public service, the private sector or civil society - we need a new leadership stripped of selfish people, who only think of themselves and their own interests. This type of mindset does nothing for the country, and mostly works against common prosperity and welfare. We are tired of the corrupt, the State capturers and the Zuptas in our leadership structures - they must be removed from their positions and effectively prosecuted with the full weight of law. For this purpose, lifestyle audits should become common practice, in particular, in the public service and politics. But more than that, we are tired (and very cautious) of well-meaning leaders who propose policies that are essentially socialist and can economically cripple the country in the long run. A Minister who publicly states that the affordability of a health system is not his problem does not belong in the Cabinet. We want our leaders to lead according to all constitutional values.

We wish for a new leadership ...

More than policy certainty: good, enabling policy

You often hear from economists that "policy certainty" is needed. But certainty relating to bad policy is not good enough. If you are sure your property will be expropriated, it will not encourage you to invest in property. Secondly, we wish for a government that does more than ensure policy certainty - for one that generates sound and clear policy. We wish for policies that are empowering for the private sector and ordinary citizens, policies stripped of ideological motives and bureaucratic rubbish. Our country needs an economic policy that encourages the private sector to create jobs and prosperity. Our country needs a policy that confirms the property rights in the Bill of Rights rather than dilutes them. We need labour policy that is flexible and allows the economy and job creation to flourish. We wish for policies that encourage the State to secure partnerships with the private sector, especially in the areas where the State has no capacity to do the work itself.

We wish for good policies ...

The issue of State-owned enterprises (such as Eskom, SAA and SABC)



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Recently, R5 billion was ploughed back into the bottomless pit known as SAA - a mere drop in the bucket needed by the airline. It is apparent that other State-owned enterprises are also not well managed and operated - to the extent that informed commentators say they cannot even be given away. We wish for an Eskom that is well-managed so that increases in double figures are the exception and not the rule, and where the same is true of power outages and load-shedding. We wish for a public broadcaster that is not always on the verge of bankruptcy and permanently in crisis management. We wish that our tax money will be better utilised other than being used to reward inadequacies and mismanagement with never-ending life-preservers.

We wish for well-functioning State-owned enterprises ...

Racial polarisation and intimidation of minorities

The main driver of racial polarisation, Julius Malema, is currently on the verge of exceeding even his own previous records of hate speech and racial polarisation. The recently-published *Employment Equity Bill* (talk of an anomaly!), will, if approved, make racial quotas for all facets of South African society the norm. It will further alienate and intimidate racial minorities in the land of their birth. We therefore wish for a country where racial polarisation is treated with the contempt that it deserves. A country where Malema and the like prove themselves irrelevant - mere noise-makers - through their statements. We also wish for a country where minorities are no longer discriminated against on the basis of their race and where they feel at home to contribute to the prosperity of the country and all its people. We wish for tolerance and a welcoming of diversity. We wish for common courtesy in how South Africans interact with each other.

We wish for good racial relations and appreciation of minorities by the majority ...

Civil society is resting on their laurels (again)

Civil society was instrumental in opposing apartheid. It also played a decisive role in the fall of the Zuptas. It still plays an important role in freeing South Africa from Zupta influences. But after the first democratic elections in 1994, civil society proverbially went to rest on its laurels and eventually became less effective. This was hastened by the new government's insistence that foreign funders should re-route the money historically given to civil society organisations to the new legitimate government. When the dwindling capacity of the State became clear in many areas in the early 2000s, especially when the Zupta regime became a reality, civil society, as it were, "took a stand". And today the results are clear. The danger is that with the new dawn of President Ramaphosa, civil society will eventually relax in its watchdog role. We hope that civil society does not (again) rest on its laurels, but remains vigilant about the Constitution and constitutional values.

We wish for an active and ever-wary civil society ...



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Back to the harsh reality of December 2018. Our wishes for a newer South Africa are not going to be granted by a mythical Santa Claus (perhaps called Cyril?). In fact, there is no one individual who can do it. These five wishes (and others) will only become a reality if all South Africans play their part and do their bit. It will of course help if our leaders take the lead, but eventually it will require a joint effort. And it is possible.

So finish 2018's work and take a break. And start thinking about your role in the realisation of the big five...

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