

ICC flip-flop isolates SA on all fronts

It could take a year for parliament to reach a decision

By **Setumo Stone**

The different postures between the government and the ANC around the International Criminal Court (ICC) matter of whether to stay or quit the organisation have exposed policy weaknesses in the organisation, the country's diplomats suggest.

The diplomats are concerned that the country's sovereignty is being compromised by international considerations that should not matter, hence the government's fear and pussyfooting about a backlash on matters that should be the least of their worries.

The ANC's national executive committee had overwhelmingly supported the country's exit from the ICC. "But why should we care about what the US thinks when they themselves are not signatories to the ICC's Rome Statute?" asked a frustrated foreign-based diplomat.

The diplomat added that SA's vacillating stance was not

helpful, but in the end risked isolation both on the US and the Brics fronts.

The ANC's threats to dump the ICC due to pressure to arrest Russian President Vladimir Putin during the upcoming Brics summit made international headlines at a time when Ramaphosa had a delegation on the ground in Washington to persuade the US against expelling SA from Aogo over its stance on the Russia/Ukraine conflict.

US trade with South Africa totalled \$21-billion in 2021 – a factor that may have contributed to persuading South Africa to remain in the ICC. Aogo provides preferential access to the US market for SA's agricultural and manufactured products.

A Presidency insider said after ANC secretary general Fikile Mbalula dropped the bombshell on the party's position on ICC on Tuesday, Ramaphosa should have been briefed by his spokesperson, Vincent Magwenya, before echoing Mbalula.

"But when you go back to the original NEC statement, the issue is summarised differently, and it is Mbalula who actually spoke off the cuff about SA leaving the ICC."



ANC secretary general Fikile Mbalula dropped the bombshell on ICC on Tuesday. / ANC

The person said Ramaphosa should have rightfully been worried "with the US Congress showing some signs of hostility towards SA".

Later on Tuesday, both the ANC and the Presidency issued a correction that leaving the ICC would be a last resort.

Another Asia-based diplomat said the renewed talk of SA's ICC membership had rattled some of the world's superpowers like Germany and France, and it was expected that SA's consulates in those countries would have a lot of damage control to do in the coming days. "Our

colleagues are deeply worried that we are going to be isolated in these parts of the world if we withdraw," said the person.

At least three ANC NEC members said the majority in the party's highest decision-making body between national conferences had favoured the withdrawal from the ICC "because it is an instrument weaponised by the West to punish different countries and yet they themselves are the worst abusers of human rights throughout the world".

"There was a view that we must withdraw. And obviously

if you withdraw it takes a lot of time. It might take a year to take the motion through parliament and all that. People said that in the context where it is not possible to withdraw immediately, you must look at the option of an exemption," said the insider.

On March 17, the ICC issued a warrant for Putin's arrest over alleged unlawful transfers of Ukrainian children.

Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are scheduled to meet in Durban in August to discuss economic growth and international cooperation.

On Wednesday, the Cabinet appointed Deputy President Paul Mashatile to lead an inter-ministerial committee to consider "various options on the matter". The Cabinet said it reaffirmed South Africa's participation in the ICC, and "confirms that we remain a signatory to the Rome Statute".

Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni said the US was not a signatory to the Rome Statute, and therefore did not recognise ICC arrest warrants for their soldiers who have violated human rights in other countries. Similarly, the Russian Federation is also not a signatory to the ICC.

Alliance partners breathe on ANC's neck over beleaguered Mathabatha's fate

SACP, Cosatu want updates on matter

By **Tshwarelo Hunter Mogakane**

As Limpopo ANC chairperson Stan Mathabatha's future as premier is being considered by the party's top brass, members and alliance partners have called on the governing party to give them feedback on the national executive committee's (NEC) deliberations on the matter.

The South African Communist Party (SACP) in Limpopo and Cosatu said the ANC has kept them in the dark about developments even though alliance structures made submissions to the national working committee (NWC) this month requesting intervention.

Their frustration comes as a political analyst insists that Mathabatha has overstayed his welcome because he leads a province that largely supports President Cyril Ramaphosa and is "not in a position to rely on his service delivery track record".

Dr Metji Makgoba, a political commentator from the University of Limpopo, said the outcomes of the Nasrec conference in December have put Mathabatha in a precarious position. This is because of his failed attempt to be elected as ANC national chairperson in a slate opposing Ramaphosa.

SACP provincial secretary

Chuene Malebana, who presented the submissions on behalf of the two alliance partners, said they have no idea what the ANC's decision, if any, is.

"There has been no feedback," Malebana told *Sunday World*.

Her counterpart at Cosatu, Hangwani Mashao, shares the same sentiment.

"We were not consulted by the ANC NWC on their visit to Limpopo. We would have liked to do so [receive feedback on Mathabatha's future]," said Mashao.

A provincial ANC leader in Limpopo said they are disappointed by the NEC's failure to give them feedback about Mathabatha's future after they made submissions. In his post-NEC media briefing last week, ANC secretary general Fikile Mbalula said nothing about the matter.

Last week, *Sunday World* reported that tensions were high when the ANC's NWC, which included Ramaphosa and Mbalula, visited the province to oversee regional general councils and assess the state of the governing party in the province.

Mbalula had to quell tensions, explaining that those who had substantial concerns about Mathabatha's performance should make their case. He argued that it was not enough to call for the premier's head based on his preference for former health minister Zweli Mkhize over Ramaphosa at Nasrec.

Makgoba said Mathabatha's position was untenable.

"Mathabatha knows that he has overstayed in that position and had initially planned to join the national structures of the ANC. Going for the third term was always going to put him in a precarious position."

He added that Mathabatha was also not in a position to rely on his service delivery track record.

"His track record in government has not been too strong and cannot be used to support his legitimacy as the premier. He has struggled to deal with corruption and has not presented any tangible government vision that revived the economy."

ANC provincial spokesperson Jimmy Machaka said Mathabatha was an elected leader of the party, and had every right to stay in his position.

"Mathabatha's stay within the ANC leadership was determined by branches during the provincial conference and it's only branches which (can) question his stay in the organisation and no one else.

"There is no factual accuracy in (the) analysis."

ANC national spokesperson Mahlengi Bhengu-Motsiri and her colleague Amos Phago did not answer their phones or respond to text messages on the status of the alliance submissions.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

CALLING FOR INSPECTION OF THE 1st SUPPLEMENTARY VALUATION ROLL FOR 2023-2024

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 49(1) (a) of the Local Government Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No. 6 of 2004), hereinafter referred to as the "Act", that the 1st Supplementary Valuation Roll for the financial year 2023/2024 in terms of Section 78 of the Act is open for public inspection on Municipal Website (www.lepelle-nkumpi.gov.za) and below satellite office during office hours for a period of 38 days starting from the 17th April 2023 until the 09th June 2023.

MAIN OFFICES

Stand 170 BA
Zone F (Civic Centre)
LEBOWAKGOMO
0737

SATELLITE OFFICE

Zone BA
Cultural Centre(Office 27)
LEBOWAKGOMO
0737

An invitation is hereby made in terms of Section 50 (1) of the Act that any owner of property (indicated below) or other person who so desires should lodge an objection on the official prescribed application form with the Municipal Manager in respect of any matter reflected in, or omitted from the 1st Supplementary Valuation Roll 2023/2024 within the abovementioned period.

Attention is specifically drawn to the fact that an objection must be in relation to a specific individual property and not against the valuation as such, objection will not be considered if not furnished on the prescribed form on or before the closing date.

The form for the lodging of an objection is obtainable, on Municipal Website (www.lepelle-nkumpi.gov.za). The completed and signed forms may be hand delivered or posted to the addresses indicated above for the attention of the Municipal Manager. 1st Supplementary Valuation Roll 2023/2024 affects the following properties i.e.:

- 1) Incorrectly omitted from the valuation roll;
- 2) Included in a municipality after the last general valuation;
- 3) Subdivided or consolidated after the last general valuation;
- 4) Of which the market value has substantially increased or decreased for any reason after last valuation roll;
- 5) Substantially incorrectly valued during the last general valuation;
- 6) That must be revalued for any other exceptional reasons;
- 7) Of which the category has changed
- 8) The value of which was incorrectly recorded in the valuation roll as a result of a clerical or typing error

For enquiries contact Pleasure Setsiba or Penelope Gafane: Department of Town Planning and Local Economic Development) at (015) 633 4500 during office hours.

Ms. MA Monyepao
Municipal Manager

"Motho ke motho ka batho"