

GOVERNMENT SOUNDS A CLARION CALL AGAINST CORRUPTION

In a giant step that will significantly contribute to the ongoing war against corruption in the country, government launched the anti-corruption communication campaign during the Internal Communicators' Forum (ICF) session held at Tshedimosetso House in Hatfield on 30 March 2016. All presenters at the launch called for coordinated efforts to deal with corruption within and outside government.

Mr Itumeleng Mongale from the Department of Public Service and Administration, responsible for Ethics and Integrity Management, said the "Anti-Corruption Campaign should reflect and promote ethical behaviour in the Public Service through ethics and anti-corruption policies and programmes."

On the other hand, the Acting Cabinet Spokesperson, Ms Phumla Williams, said the aim of the campaign launch to government internal communicators was to get inputs and feedback so that government as a whole could communicate the same message to the public.

The objective of the communication campaign is to educate society about corruption, and encourage South Africans to play their part in preventing and countering corruption. In addition to promoting good and ethical conduct within the Public Service and state institutions, the campaign also seeks to raise awareness about the work government and stakeholders are doing in the fight against corruption. Most importantly, it aims to project government as a leader in the fight against corruption. Since corruption in this country is increasingly becoming more sophisticated every day, it is imperative to enhance prevention work and educate all public servants about the scourge, while also urging all citizens to lead a decent and corruption-free life.

In South Africa, the fight against corruption is one of the major priorities of government. Through the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) and the Governance and Administration clusters, government has prioritised the fight against this epidemic in line with its zero-tolerance stance towards corruption in the public and private sector.

Government is intensifying communication efforts on issues of corruption in order to ensure increased citizen participation.

The Anti-Corruption Inter-Ministerial Committee (ACIMC) coordinates and oversees the work of state organs responsible to combat corruption in both the public and private sector. The ACIMC comprises Ministers in the JCPS Cluster and is chaired by the Minister in The Presidency responsible for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Jeff Radebe.

South Africa also has a National Anti-Corruption Forum (NACF), which is a formal interphase between civil society, business and government on anti-corruption efforts. The NACF was established to combat and prevent corruption, build integrity and raise awareness.

In addition to introducing adequate measures to combat corruption, government uses platforms such as the ICF to promote a corruption-free society. There is growing recognition of the importance of communication in fighting corruption and forums such as the ICF provide an opportunity for government to brief communication experts, and discuss and debate on ways in which communication can support and enhance anti-corruption efforts.

The most important function of communication is to create an environment conducive to winning public trust and managing expectations. Cooperation with civil society in the prevention and combating of corruption should be encouraged through communication, even asking citizens to become whistle-blowers.

Meanwhile, government has called for strategic partnerships with stakeholders who share our vision for a corruption-free country; to unite and act to stop corruption.