

Guptas make ANC poll win a dream — Cronin

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● South Africans warned to recognise the danger the country is facing and urged to unite

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The ANC is "dreaming" if it thinks it can win 50% of the vote in the next general election if it continues on the trajectory involving the Guptas, South African Communist Party (SACP) deputy general secretary Jeremy Cronin warned on Wednesday.

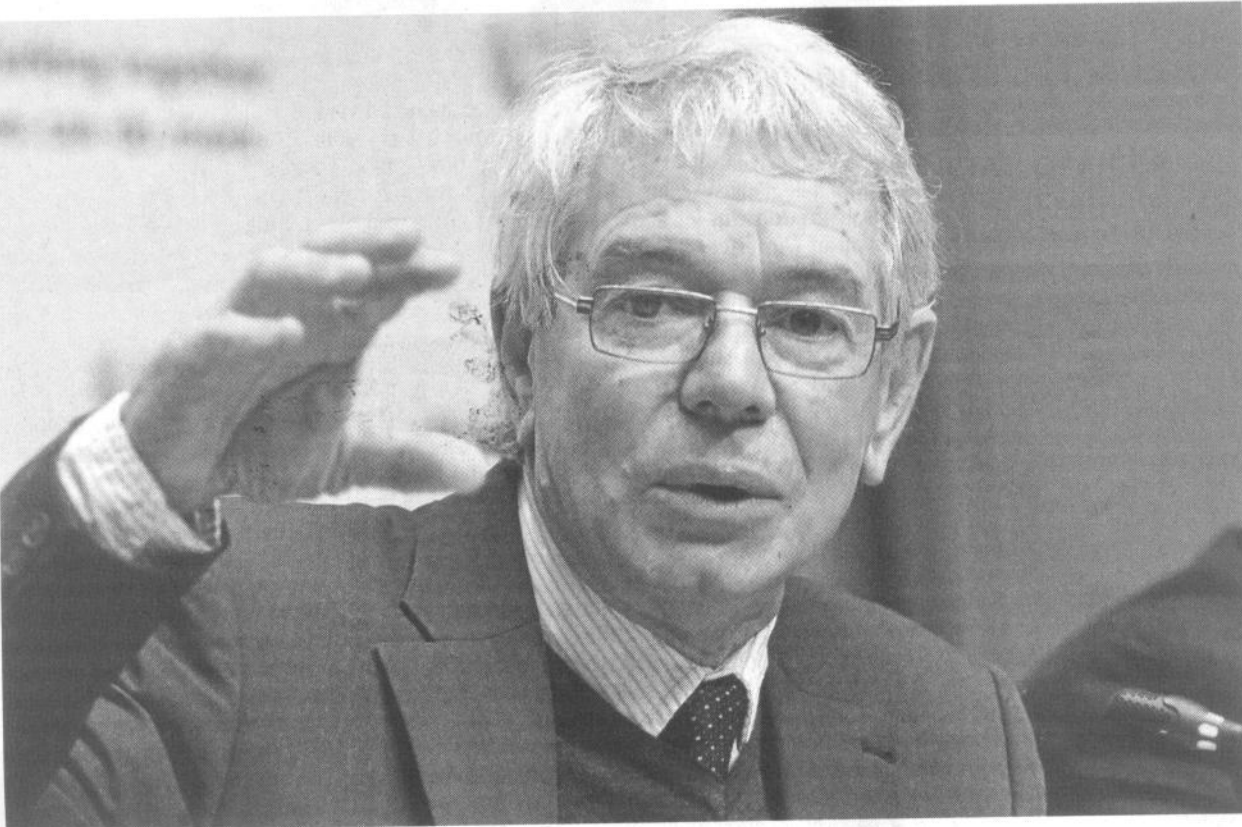
Cronin made the remark during an address to the Cape Town Press Club, where he also called on the government to cut all ties with the Guptas immediately, even if only for narrow electoral reasons.

He emphasised that President Jacob Zuma must step down if any progress was to be made in ending state capture.

Cronin addressed the club on how SA had reached the conjuncture in which the state had been captured. This was shortly after delegates at the ANC policy conference locked horns over the malaise that has contributed to declining levels of support for the party.

Cronin warned that the country's hard-won constitutional democracy was under "dire threat" and said South Africans needed to recognise the danger the country was in and unite on a common platform.

The minimum demands that should unite opponents to state capture should include an independent judicial commission of inquiry into state capture with a clear and circumscribed



Open your eyes: SACP deputy general secretary Jeremy Cronin has warned that SA's constitutional democracy is under threat and that criminal action should be taken against those involved in state capture.
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mandate, that should not be made too broad as a diversionary tactic.

Also, criminal charges should be taken where there was strong and prima facie evidence of criminal activity. This should include some serving cabinet ministers, who seemed to be "deeply implicated" in the allegations of state capture.

Cronin said the governance of state-owned enterprises had to be sorted out as they had become the "soft underbelly" for

the looting of public resources. Those supporting state capture wanted the state to retain control of these enterprises — as do the SACP and Cosatu, for different reasons — so the looting could continue.

State-owned enterprises such as Transnet, Eskom and the Passenger Rail Agency of SA were being milked.

The other soft underbelly for state capture and corruption was the ANC itself, which was being used as a springboard.

Cronin said the government's nuclear build plans also had to be stopped.

Finally, poverty, inequality and unemployment had to be tackled as SA's constitutional democracy was unsustainable with 9-million people unemployed. This situation created the space in which demagoguery and populism thrived.

Cronin highlighted increasing authoritarianism that was emerging, quoting a comment made by Zuma a few months

ago, when he said if it was up to him, he would ask to be a dictator for six months to obviate the need for consultations and collective decision making.

Other examples were the recent threats against journalists and former director-general of the Department of Social Development, Zane Dangor, and the fires at the offices of the premiers of the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, who were regarded as not being in the right camp.

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