

# Ramaphosa on the warpath

BALDWIN NDABA

**D** EPUTY President Cyril Ramaphosa has taken the fight to the doorstep of President Jacob Zuma and his allies, drawing a line in the sand in the bruising battle for control of the ANC.

In an unprecedented attack on Zuma's friends, the Guptas and the ministers accused of benefiting from the family, Ramaphosa vowed not to protect anyone in his party accused of "illicit business deals" with the controversial family.

Ramaphosa wants ministers such as Mosebenzi Zwane and Faith Muthambi – recently exposed as having had links with the Guptas – to be charged and prosecuted.

An emboldened Ramaphosa told the congress of the SA Communist Party that all the billions allegedly paid to the Guptas and their associated companies had to be recovered immediately and criminal actions instituted against them.

So incensed was Ramaphosa that he demanded the immediate recovery of R30 million paid for the expensive Gupta wedding at the Sun City resort in North West.

The millions, belonging to a dairy farm in the Free State, were allegedly laundered through to Dubai and later channelled back to South Africa, allegedly to be used to pay for the wedding of one of the Guptas' sons.

Ramaphosa, who emphasised that he would not remain silent on state capture, said if institutions were captured by private individuals, there would be nothing for the country, and the ANC's efforts would be derailed.

With the ANC elective conference in December looming, Ramaphosa turned the tables on Zuma and his supporters just hours after Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane had filed court papers to support the damning "State of Capture" report.



**HARD-HITTING:** Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa

She opposed Zuma's move to appoint a retired judge to head the judicial commission into the matter, which was against the recommendations of former protector Thuli Madonsela.

"Even as delegates gathered (at the ANC policy conference) to deliberate on these issues, more and more information was emerging about the extent to which our state-owned enterprises have been looted, how individuals in positions of responsibility have benefited from actions that are, at best, unethical and, at worst, criminal," said Ramaphosa.

"There is not a day that passes that we do not gain greater insight into a network of illicit relationships, contracts, deals and appointments designed to benefit just one family and their associates. We cannot turn a blind eye to these revelations," he added.

Calling on ANC members to act against state capture, Ramaphosa said they could not, under the weight of more revelations, become numb by what they mean for the country.

"We now know without any shred of uncertainty that billions of rand in public resources have been diverted into the pockets of a few."

## Vows to expose all involved in 'illicit business'

Ramaphosa said the country could have used those billions to build schools and clinics, maintain energy, rail and other infrastructure as well as assist emerging farmers and poor students in institutions of higher education.

He also said state capture was undermining the foundations of the country's democracy.

Ramaphosa slammed the Guptas' former public relations company, Bell Pottinger, accusing it of causing confusion over the party's stance on "monopoly capital".

"It is a matter of grave concern that a public relations company from outside our country (Britain) was able to so effectively poison our political discourse to advance their client's narrow interests."

"It says much about our lack of political cohesion and ideological clarity that this company, Bell Pottinger, was able to manipulate some of our own political concepts to fuel division and confusion," he said.

Ramaphosa added that "tragically, state capture was already damaging the economy, the state and the well-being of South Africans, and action was needed now to prevent further damage."

"Our law enforcement agencies must act with speed and purpose to investigate all these allegations and bring those responsible to book."

"We need to recover all the billions that have been stolen."

Importantly, as the revolutionary democratic movement, as the alliance, we need to draw a line in the sand."

Ramaphosa openly blamed his comrades and the Guptas for the divisions, infighting and factionalism that have plagued the ANC, including the decision of some in the SACP to force their party to contest elections on its own.

"At no other point in the history of our movement has factionalism and division become so brazen, so pronounced, so confident. There is an African proverb that says: 'When brothers fight to the death, a stranger inherits the home.'"

"Today our home (the ANC) is plagued by sibling rivalry, petty jealousies and the sins of incumbency. We know all too well some of the causes of these ructions within our house," Ramaphosa said.

He corroborated ANC secretary-general Gwede Mantashe's diagnostic report at the policy conference, which ended last week, that "the Guptas were milking South Africa".

Ramaphosa said Mantashe's report – together with the discussion documents on strategy and tactics and organisational renewal – described how our structures and programmes have been undermined by competition for resources, corruption and the capture of state institutions by families, individuals and companies.

See Page 4





PLEAD: ANC deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa hugs Jessie Duarte at the SACP congress yesterday.

PICTURE: NOKUTHULA MBATHA

# SACP branch tensions over succession battle

GEORGE MATLALA

LEADERS of the SACP have had their hands full trying to manage a revolt by branches over a decision to try to avoid a succession battle by having the party's boss, Blade Nzimande, remain in his position for another term.

Independent Media understands that another matter that delegates are up in arms over is that they want the party to contest elections on its own instead of campaigning for the ANC, a move that Nzimande and the party's officials oppose.

So angry are some delegates from provinces such as the Western Cape that they decided that should the party's second deputy general secretary Solly Mapaila not contest Nzimande's position, they would nominate another candidate.

Nzimande has been at the helm of the party for the past 19 years.

Although Mapaila decided not to run against Nzimande,

he appears to have been persuaded to take the position of first deputy general secretary, which was left vacant by Jeremy Cronin.

The party's international relations head Chris Matlhako has been nominated to replace Mapaila.

Nzimande remains in his post.

In the past two days of the party's congress at the Birchwood hotel in Boksburg, a significant number of delegates have been singing songs in praise of Mapaila.

This was while party officials have had to convene provincial secretaries to try to ensure the unhappiness over the "management" of a leadership contestation does not flare up in the presence of the media and expose the deep fissures over some issues in the party.

The party mandarins were worried that a contestation would weaken the party in the run-up to the ANC elect-



CONTEST: Senior SACP official Solly Mapaila addresses the media during the party's 14th national congress.

PICTURE: ITUMELENG ENGLISH

ive conference in December, while there was uncertainty over Nzimande's future should former AU Commission chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma take over the governing party.

One delegate who has attended SACP congresses since Nzimande took over in 1998 said the conference was more tense than the one where the leader ascended to power.

"I haven't seen such revolt. The branches are unhappy," he

said.

It all started on Monday when Mapaila announced that he believed Nzimande should continue in his post, while the party's first deputy general secretary, Jeremy Cronin, said he was no longer available to serve.

This set tongues wagging.

Opening the congress on Monday, Nzimande intimated that he was aware that he had served his time and that he was "old furniture".

While Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa was ushered out of the venue, delegates broke into a song, "*thina sifuna i state power*" (we want state power).

Officials battled to contain this battle cry for state power, and at some point said Mapaila should deal with the delegates, who were mostly from Mpumalanga and the party's youth wing, the Young Communist League.

Ramaphosa pleaded with delegates not to part ways with the ANC.

He warned that the two organisations would be weaker if they contested elections separately.

"As you ponder on leaving the alliance, pause for a minute. Are we better off united or divided?"

"You may even delude yourself that we will form a coalition (after elections), only when you get there, there will be nothing. The cupboard will be empty," he said.