

Split in ANC can happen, says Cronin

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● Warning over 'premier league' slate victory

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2019
may be the
year the
SACP goes
its own way
and contests
the general
election

The SACP is sceptical about the ANC's ability to end its political crisis at the governing party's elective congress in December.

Jeremy Cronin, who is vacating his position as the SACP's first deputy general secretary, raised the prospect of the ANC's dominant faction "collapsing" the governing party's elective conferences, should it lose.

Cronin also warned of a possible split in the ANC if the "premier league" slate wins.

"What happens if the premier league slate wins through hook or crook in December? What happens? Is there perhaps a massive split in the ANC?"

"I mean, certainly, it's going to

be very hard for the majority of us to remain in an ANC position under a gangster leadership," Cronin said.

He was delivering his report on state power to the SACP's 14th congress, where the party is discussing the possibility of contesting elections in 2019.

The "premier league" is the President Jacob Zuma-aligned faction in the ANC that supports former AU Commission chairwoman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The SACP is seen as backing Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, although it has not publicly endorsed him.

ANC treasurer-general Zweli Mkhize emerged as another prospective candidate for the party's leadership race on Thursday, when the Alfred Nzo

region in the Eastern Cape endorsed him to lead the party.

This could split the Ramaphosa camp, to which Mkhize was seen to be aligned. Official nominations open only in September.

ANC deputy general secretary Jessie Duarte, who was at the SACP congress and is aligned to Zuma, told Business Day on the sidelines, she did not believe the elective conference would collapse.

Instead, the ANC was looking at a unified approach, possibly through Zuma's proposal that

the losing candidate become deputy president.

During his report, Cronin gave a hard analysis of the state of the ANC and said it was unable to play a leading role in society because of its paralysis.

ANC veterans and stalwarts who have been pushing for the party to hold a national consultative conference also spoke at the SACP congress.

They said the ANC had conceded there was a crisis.

The veterans boycotted the ANC's policy conference last week after the governing party

refused to hold a separate consultative conference.

Trevor Fowler, on behalf of the veterans, said there was a crisis in the governing party and in the country. Real introspection was needed.

However, the ANC was ignoring this, he said.

The veterans are still pushing for a consultative conference.

Duarte said: "We are not greatly worried that the veterans have this concern [lack of introspection] and we have said if they invite us, we might go to their meeting."

Tackling the issues: Newly elected first deputy general secretary of the SACP Solly Mapaila speaks to delegates at the congress in Boksburg this week.
/ Masi Losi

