

## **Former ministers Muthambi and Zwane refuse to move out**

Jan De Lange 2018-05-27 22:29

Mosebenzi Zwane and Faith Muthambi were supposed to have moved out of their ministerial residences by the end of March, but have refused. Picture: File

Mosebenzi Zwane and Faith Muthambi, two ministers in former president Jacob Zuma's Cabinet, are still living in their ministerial residences in Waterkloof, Pretoria.

Following recent mediation by Deputy President David Mabuza, the two wrote letters to Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi asking permission to remain in their official residences until the end of this month.

The two former ministers were given their marching orders on February 21, when Cyril Ramaphosa took over as president. They were supposed to have moved out by the end of March.

A source in Parliament said Zwane had also initially refused to hand over his official vehicle.

"It's meant to be used by his successor, but it took scores of phone calls and an ugly argument before his bodyguard handed over the key to the car," said the source.

The two have for weeks ignored various letters delivered to the residences by officials from the department seeking clarity on when they would vacate the properties.

The situation became more problematic when Muthambi and Zwane's successors, Public Service and Administration Minister Ayanda Dlodlo and Mineral Resources Minister Gwede Mantashe, were supposed to move into their new residences.

Dlodlo was also in Zuma's Cabinet and has been using a state house in the ministerial estate in Bryntirion near the Union Buildings.

But special arrangements had to be made for Mantashe when he was in Pretoria.

Both of the new ministers spend a significant amount of time in the capital. Dlodlo is currently locked in wage negotiations with trade unions in the public sector and Mantashe is attempting to finalise negotiations with the Chamber of Mines on a new Mining Charter.

"It became an ugly thing. Eventually, Nxesi asked Mabuza and Jackson Mthembu, the ANC's chief whip in Parliament, to get involved," another source said.

Zwane and Muthambi are still MPs and are therefore answerable to Mthembu.

Mabuza's office did not respond to questions sent by City Press' sister newspaper Rapport, but the department of public works said it had received a letter from Zwane and Muthambi in which they asked if they could remain in their residences until the end of this month.

Since losing her position as minister, Muthambi has been appointed as a member of the portfolio committee on labour and has already attended some of the committee's meetings.