



Publication: Cape Argus Early - Main
Title: Divisions form over Ramaphosa's line-up
Publish date: 14 Oct 2022
Page: 4

Reach: 27662
AVE: R 38374.34
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ANC CONFERENCE

Divisions form over Ramaphosa's line-up

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PRESIDENT Cyril Ramaphosa's camp is likely to go to the 55th ANC elective conference in December divided following a disagreement over the running mates.

In the camp's caucus meeting that was held in Gauteng this week, sources who attended the meeting said there was dissatisfaction in the provinces when the president preferred a line-up that left out current Limpopo chairperson Stan Mathabatha and former KwaZulu-Natal provincial secretary Mdumiseni Ntuli.

In the meeting, the caucus was said to have endorsed current Water and Sanitation Minister Senzo Mchunu for the deputy president position over Paul Mashatile, while Gwede Mantashe was backed to return as national chairperson.

In the secretary position, the caucus opted for Fikile Mbalula instead of Ntuli, while Gwen Ramokgopa was preferred over Nomvula Mokonyane for the deputy secretary position.

Former Energy Minister Tina Joe-



President Cyril Ramaphosa

mat-Pettersson was chosen to contest the treasurer position.

In the first Ramaphosa line-up, Mashatile was touted to deputise him, while Mathabatha and Mokonyane appeared for the chairperson and deputy secretary positions respectively. Ironically, the three also appeared on Dr Zweli Mkhize's slate for similar positions.

Ntuli's snubbing did not go down well with his campaigners, who had criss-crossed the country campaigning for him to be secretary after he was defeated in the provincial conference in July. His lobbyist, Sabelo Sigudu, said they did not agree with the caucus

meeting's decision to dump him.

He said they regarded his dropping as a proposal, not a decision, as it was the work of the branches to nominate members, not the caucus of individuals.

Sigudu, also from KwaZulu-Natal, said they did not accept the reasons put forward by the caucus that Ntuli should be dropped to allow Mchunu as it would not be a good idea to have both in the line-up since they are from the same province.

"We have done a lot of ground-work. For us, Ntuli is still in the running and it would be the branches that would decide his fate, not a group of individuals who meet in the corners and come up with their own line-up to serve their own interests," said Sigudu.

His sentiments were strongly shared by one of the key CR22 campaigners in KwaZulu-Natal, Jomo Sibiya, who rejected the new line-up that excluded Ntuli. Sibiya, a former human settlements and public works MEC, said those who created the line-up still wanted slate politics, which others in the ANC were rejecting.

He said he did not buy the reasons

advanced by those who did not want Ntuli. He said their reasoning was misplaced.

"When former president Jacob Zuma was party president, comrade Dr Zweli Mkhize was the treasurer in 2012. President Ramaphosa is currently having comrade Mashatile as treasurer, but they are all from Gauteng and that has not been an issue, so why is it being raised now?"

"We are not backtracking in our campaign for comrade Mdumiseni and we believe he has what it takes to be secretary-general of the movement," said Sibiya.

The Limpopo province was also said to be angry about the dropping of Mathabatha and was said to have switched support to Mkhize.

One of Ramaphosa's lobbyists, also from KwaZulu-Natal, said it was not true that there were divisions in the camp. He said all delegates from other provinces who attended the caucus meeting agreed with the new line-up. He added that dropping Mchunu, who lost the secretary-general contest in 2017 by a narrow margin, would not make sense.