



COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO CRIMINALITY,
POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND CORRUPTION
IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



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WITNESS STATEMENT: BRIGADIER LESIBA JOSEPH MOKOENA

INTRODUCTION

1 I am an adult male police officer serving as a brigadier in the South African Police Service (“SAPS”) at the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (known as “the Hawks”) appointed as a section head in Tactical Operations Management Section (TOMS).

EVENTS OF 6 DECEMBER 2024

2 On Friday 6 December 2024, shortly before 16H00 and while I was attending the Hawks Excellency Awards in Pretoria, I received a call from the Hawks Divisional Commander Lieutenant General Dumisani Patrick Mbotho. He informed me that he was with the National Head Lieutenant General Lebeya. He said that General Lebeya had just received a call that there are people at a certain address in Sandhurst (he gave me an address which I can confirm is the address of Mr Katiso Molefe but I did not know this at the time) who introduced themselves as members of the Hawks and that these people said they were with General Lebeya and would like to search the premises.

3 General Mbotho asked me to verify if there are members of the Hawks deployed around Johannesburg at this address and I told him that my team was not deployed at that address. General Mbotho did not tell me who had called

General Lebeya with the information. It was not unusual for individuals to pretend that they were members of the Hawks. In fact, at that stage I was aware of several cases where members of the public had impersonated members of the Hawks. General Mbotho instructed me to verify if there were legitimate Hawks members at that address. I knew that General Lebeya was in Pretoria at the awards ceremony so he could not have been at the address in Sandhurst.

- 4 I contacted Captain Kruger and Constable De Gouveia and instructed them to go to the address to verify if it was indeed a legitimate operation. I also sent the address in Sandhurst to Captain Kruger.
- 5 Captain Kruger called me when he arrived at the scene and informed me that it was a legitimate operation. To the best of my recollection Captain Kruger told me that he was with the head or leader of the takedown operation, Captain Wanda and Captain Kruger gave his cell phone to Captain Wanda for me to speak to him. I spoke to Captain Wanda and asked him to confirm that the operation that he was involved in at the scene is a legitimate police operation. He confirmed that it was and I told him that I was satisfied. I informed him that the information that I had received was that there were people at the address (where the operation was currently underway), who introduced themselves as members of the Hawks who were at the address with the National Head, General Lebeya and that they would like to search the premises. Captain Wanda assured me that this was not the case.
- 6 During my call with Captain Wanda, I changed the call to a video call to demonstrate to him why I was concerned by the report that there were members

of the Hawks executing an operation with General Lebeya because the General was in Pretoria at the Excellence Awards where I was also present. Once Captain Wanda confirmed that the operation was legitimate, I instructed Captain Kruger to leave the operation and my understanding is that he did so.

- 7 I must state that when I instructed members of my operational team to go to the address, I was not aware whose home it was and my expectation was that Captain Kruger would go with Constable De Gouveia (who Captain Kruger was with when I contacted him) to verify that it was a legitimate operation. My expectation was that Captain Kruger and Constable De Gouveia would go to the address, assess the situation and if they encountered any problems, they would inform me and I would take appropriate steps to reinforce the team or Captain Kruger would exercise his discretion to increase the team once he had assessed the situation.
- 8 I would not expect Captain Kruger and Constable De Gouveia to add members to the team to attend the scene with them without first assessing the scene and ascertaining if a larger team was required. Having said that I do not know why this decision was taken and Captain Kruger is best placed to address this.
- 9 I am aware that takedown operations are highly sensitive operations and tensions are high. Any unknown individuals or groups of individuals arriving on such a scene would be a concern for the takedown team. It is for this reason that I instructed a small team to attend to assess the situation so as not to create unnecessary chaos in the event that it was indeed a legitimate operation. My intention certainly was not to interfere in the operations, hence I instructed the

team to withdraw immediately once Captain Wanda confirmed that the operation was legitimate.

DATED ON THIS THE 28TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2025

BRIGADIER LESIBA JOSEPH MOKOENA