



Transnet media statement

[Johannesburg; 30 July 2019] Transnet has been made aware of a smear campaign that has been launched in an attempt to discredit the ongoing clean-up of corrupt activities at the state-owned company.

The smear campaign hinges on a supposed conflict of interest with the legal firm that is assisting with forensic investigations, prosecutions and recovery of monies.

The firm, MNS, is one of many corporates that sponsored a golf day run by the Popo Molefe Foundation to raise funds for disadvantaged young South Africans.

There is absolutely no conflict of interest in this. MNS publicly declared its support for the event, and announced it in line with its corporate social investment programme. Its support is listed on the Popo Molefe Foundation's website, along with other supporters.

It is also a matter of record that MNS was appointed by Transnet in the year 2017, whereas Mr. Molefe was appointed Transnet board chairperson in May 2018 – making any suggestion of an untoward motive completely ridiculous.

Those behind the smear campaign have also tried to suggest that the board is directly involved in managing the MNS contract, whereas it is a matter of record that the legal team's work, invoicing and payment is handled by Transnet management.

It is deeply irresponsible, yet not surprising, that these insinuations will be put into the public domain in a bid to cast aspersions on the leadership of Transnet, which has taken firm action against those involved in state capture. These typically involve allegations of bribery and/or corruption, and are completely false.

Clearly, there is a broader “fight back” campaign underway by those who have been unseated by the revelations of state capture at the Zondo Commission, where MNS’ work formed the basis for four weeks of disclosure in relation to the state capture project.

Transnet also puts on record that it has no involvement in the affairs of the Popo Molefe Foundation, although the chairman has briefed the board of its existence. The Foundation is above board, has been declared as required, and there are no conflicts in its operation.

Commenting, Mr. Molefe says: “ The Foundation has been doing charitable work for more than 20 years, during which a lot of young people acquired access to education they would otherwise have been denied. It is registered with the Department of Social Development and its finances are audited on an annual basis.

“The beneficiaries of this Foundation do not include the Molefe family – it is purely targeted at children from disadvantaged points – and it is an insult to the Foundation and all its beneficiaries to suggest there has been any impropriety.”

He adds: “These attempts to smear my character follow a similar pattern to the one pursued when I was chairman of PRASA – all of which turned out to have no substance and did nothing to deter me from completing a massive clean-out of corrupt activity.

“Now, it seems, when the Transnet board is having similar success in cleaning up Transnet, baseless and defamatory allegations are floated by those clearly involved in a fight-back against state capture. We can expect similar attacks of this nature going forward, given the environment in which we are working.

“They are unsubstantiated and unfounded allegations and should be treated with extreme circumspection. I reject them with the contempt they deserve – and, if published, they will result in legal action.”

Issued by Transnet Chairperson

Dr Popo Molefe

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