

Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's efforts to root out corruption should be commended

By Lebogang Maseko  May 14, 2020



OPINION - Minister Lindiwe Sisulu is only a year into office as Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation and since her appointment in the ministry; she has set her eyes on turning the Department around.

When Minister Sisulu took office this time last year, she made a commitment to clean up the Department of Water and Sanitation and to bring stabilisation to all the Water Boards that work directly with municipalities through the supply of bulk water. She reiterated this commitment during her Budget Vote in July.

services to her and also assist the Department's Director-General with professional capacity on various disciplines.

To date, the Committee has since accelerated investigations on matters related to maladministration, fraud and corruption, misconduct and work on improving findings of audits by the Auditor General (AG).

While on improving audits by the AG, it is worth noting that the Department has attained an unqualified audit outcome for the 2018/19 financial year. This was heard in Parliament this week during a sitting of the Portfolio Committee on water and sanitation.

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Meanwhile, Minister Sisulu revealed during a media briefing held on Wednesday 13 May, 2020 that she has dug her hands in the mud to root out corruption by senior official in the Department and its entities.

She revealed that during the period of 01 April, 2012 to 31 September, 2019, a total number of 249 reported cases have been investigated. 139 of the cases were found to be true and were referred for disciplinary action while 110 of them were found to be untrue.



She said that of the 139 disciplinary cases, 86 officials were found guilty while 14 officials were not found guilty. She further said that 24 officials have resigned as a result.

In addition to this, she has appointed Advocate Terry Motau to lead a team of lawyers to review all fraud, corruption and irregular expenditure reports at the Department and to ensure that all recommendations are fully implemented.

This came in light as more than R16 billion worth of projects were issued irregularly, including corruption and fraud by officials in the Department and its entities.

These, are some of the strides that the Minister continues to focus on in rooting out corruption, even amid negative media reports that continue to propagate false claims that she has her eyes set on becoming Deputy President, as a result casting doubt on her capacity to bring about positive change in the water and sanitation sector.

The negative media reports are but an unfortunate deterrence of what needs to be done to accelerate the provision of water, especially now as the global community is at the mercy of the Coronavirus pandemic.

As President Ramaphosa said while addressing the nation on Wednesday 13 May, 2020, we need to come together apart and embrace change. Change in this regard is meant to restore the dignity of the most impoverished in the country, through the supply of proper sanitation and clean water.

For the sake of our country, let us put politics aside and allow Minister Sisulu to do what she is appointed to do, which is to ensure that the country's water resources are protected, managed, conserved and controlled in a manner suitable to benefit the environment and all citizens of the country.

We should not praise a fish for swimming, what we should do is to commend a captain from saving a sinking ship.

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