

## **Durban attorney appointed as national director of Public Prosecutions**

President Jacob Zuma appointed the national director of Public Prosecutions, the head of the Special Investigating Unit, and the director of Public Prosecutions of the jurisdictional area of the KwaZulu-Natal Division of the High Court at the end of August 2013.

Practising attorney Mxolisi Nxasana is the new national director of Public Prosecutions. In a press release, the presidency said that Mr Nxasana has a wealth of experience in criminal litigation. He obtained his LLB degree in 1995 and served articles at Durban law firm Ngubane & Partners from 1994 to 1996. Mr Nxasana was admitted as an attorney in 1997. After admission, he has been practicing as a sole proprietor under the name John Majola, Nxasana & Partners.

Mr Nxasana has occupied senior positions in the legal profession including that of the president of the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society from 2011 to 2012. He was also the chairperson of the Durban branch of the Black Lawyers Association.

Advocate Vasantrai Soni (SC) has been appointed as head of the Special Investigating Unit. Mr Soni is a senior counsel with approximately 25 years of experience. The former journalist obtained his LLB degree in 1985, was admitted as an advocate in 1987 and has been in private practice ever since. He was appointed as senior counsel in 2002.

Mr Soni has been appointed as an acting judge of the Labour Court and the High Court on various occasions. In the Labour Court he sat in all the major centres where the court is located. In the High Court, he sat in Durban and Johannesburg. He sometimes serves as an arbitrator and is currently a member of the Judicial Service Committee.

The National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADEL) has welcomed the appointment of Mr Nxasana and Mr Soni. 'We congratulate Mxolisi Nxasana on his appointment to the all important position of national director of Public Prosecutions. The country has gone too long without certainty on the leadership of the prosecuting arm of the criminal justice system. We have every confidence that he will excel at his new responsibilities,' it said in a press release.

NADEL also congratulated Mr Soni and said that his experience in the legal profession and previous contributions to the criminal justice system's administration through the Jali Commission stand as testimony to his readiness for the daunting task ahead.

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) has also welcomed the fact that the critical positions of national director of Public Prosecutions and head of the Special Investigating Unit have been filled by the president. 'The LSSA particularly welcomes the appointment of Durban attorney Mxolisi Nxasana as national director of Public Prosecutions,' it said in a press release.

LSSA Co-chairpersons Kathleen Matolo-Dlepu and David Bekker said: 'Mr Nxasana brings with him relevant experience as a seasoned criminal law practitioner, and leadership experience gleaned from serving on the council of the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, particularly as its president in 2012. He has also served on the Criminal Law Committee of the LSSA and participated in LSSA council meetings *ex officio* in his capacity as president of the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society.'

The third appointment is that of advocate Sophy Noko. She has been appointed as director of

Public Prosecutions of the jurisdictional area of the KwaZulu-Natal Division of the High Court.

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