



**15 February 2021**

Wading through the seventeen A4 pages of Ramaphosa's SONA address, I was drawn to his opening statement, "My fellow South Africans". It made me question who he was actually addressing. Who was he trying to impress with the multitudinous facts and figures craftily woven into a tapestry of incertitude?

I could just imagine one of our rural citizens sitting in a dimly lit house with his ear glued to the radio, asking the children to be quiet, because he wanted to hear what the president had to say. What he heard must have made his ears burn.

In a more "wordy" SONA address than usual, the President - in uncharacteristic fashion - waxed lyrical as he spoke of the indomitable character of the South African 'nation' (which by definition excludes any minorities) as he spoke of them as victims of oppression, dispossession and injustice for three hundred years. One cannot help but wonder who it was that for three hundred years oppressed, dispossessed and dealt so unjustly with them. Implying that blacks were the only ones that went through times of hardship. There isn't a minority in South Africa that hasn't suffered in one way or another. He failed to mention the brave and courageous South Africans who fled Europe when persecuted for their faith, to face the dangers of the untamed and uninhabited African sub-continent. Defending their newly established republics with unshakable tenacity, against the then most powerful army in the world - that of the British Empire. One can understand this omission however as it would be contrary to their communist agenda of rewriting history and transforming it into his factless narrative to make it compatible with **their world view**.

He spoke of heralding in a new day. Is he going to accomplish this under a communist ideology known for its human rights abuses and destructive economic policies? Under a political ideology that has the word FAILURE written in large letters all over it, wherever it was or still is wielding power and being entrenched by force, often resulting in torture and even death? We need to look no further than Zimbabwe right next door to us and to our closest international 'friend', China.

Immediately jumping into the subject of the CORONA Virus he rehashed all the same old information. He referred to 1.5 million of our people having been infected with the virus and of whom 45,000 died. Putting this into perspective shows, that of the amount infected only 2.68 % died. Taken as a percentage to the entire population of 56 million, that equates to only 0.08 %. He then went on to what he referred to as the 4 foremost overriding priorities of 2021:

- the defeat of the CORONA pandemic;
- accelerating the economic recovery;
- implementing economic reforms to create sustainable jobs and drive inclusive growth;
- fighting corruption and strengthening the State.

### CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

He spoke on the restriction of movement and activity, and the observance of basic health protocols as having aided in combatting the virus during the last year. This year, however,

everything must be done to contain and overcome the virus. This would mean intensifying the prevention effort and strengthening the health system. A massive vaccination program had to be launched and for this vaccines have been procured of which one AstraZeneca already showed that it only provides minimal protection for the new variant known as 501Y.V2. This was verified, as he put it, “by our scientists and researchers.” Who, according to our knowledge, consisted of information received from the World Health Organization (WHO) which in turn is strongly influenced by China. 9 million doses of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, which has been shown to be effective against the 501Y.V2 was on order with 80,000 arriving this week and further consignments arriving over the next four weeks, totally 500,000 Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

It would appear that great emphasis has been placed on the ‘scientific driven’ approach to combat the pandemic; with the exaggerated expectation on vaccines that were hastily prepared and made available without the usual painstaking tests and trials normally associated with their development. We were given the assurance that all medication imported into the country is monitored, evaluated, investigated, inspected and registered by the SA Health Product Regulatory Authority. So we know who to hold responsible should the vaccine have serious contra effects.

### ACCELERATING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

After about a third of his speech the President made a promise that he immediately broke. He said: “We stand here not to make promises”. Just as well, as the promises he made in the past were not kept and very few actually expect that the promises he was about to make will be kept either.

### INFRASTRUCTURE ROLLOUT

He announced that they would be embarking on a massive rollout of infrastructure. In a country where little maintenance has been done to the infrastructure over the past 27 years, it is obvious that only an intervention on a gigantic, let alone massive scale, will be needed to address the backlog. But fear not ... an Infrastructure Investment Project is in the pipeline. One can only hope that the pipeline has been adequately maintained. One of the areas that will enjoy attention is energy, the very area both Saudi Arabia and China are heavily involved in. One wonders why, and what they hope to get out of it?

From this point forward he spoke of the billions of Rands he intends to spend on the Infrastructure Fund that will “...blend resources from the fiscus (taxpayers money) with financing from the private sector and development institutions.”

On and on he went, highlighting everything the government hopes to achieve in a country that was relegated to junk status even before the CORONA virus struck. Mentioning the Presidential Employment Stimulus (tax-payer’s money-in case you were under the illusion that he was actually going to dip into some of his own billions), which according to him is one of the most significant expansions of public and social employment in South African history.

### ECONOMIC REFORMS

It is obvious that those who are going to benefit from these economic reforms are predominately black citizens; with most of them coming from the ANC connected. He spoke about support for black, small scale farmers and implementing the Black Industrial Fund. He was going to accelerate the implementation of BBBEE policies on ownership in order to address “...the deep inequalities in our society”, and have reached land mark deals with companies that will advance black economic empowerment by transferring ownership to workers. These BEE and BBBEE

policies have been enforced for decades, and all that has happened is that the deep inequalities of our society have become even deeper. Those that have actually benefitted from them have caused the gap between the rich and the poor to increase, as many of them have been turned multi billionaires, while keeping the rest of the population in subsistence mode. Another communist ploy to make citizens more and more dependent upon the government, and force them to comply to the prescripts of their International superiors.

### CORRUPTION

As usual, promises were made to address the corruption pandemic in South Africa. Tough talk about not tolerating corruption, when there are people in his own administration with dubious records in this regard, has a rather hollow sound. The Zondo Commission, which has substantially overrun the initial time allocated to it, is still talking and talking and talking with very little real action having been taken in regard the revelations of corruption of those in high places. The revelation of gross misappropriation of the R500 billion - allocated to fight the CORONA pandemic - just adds to ordinary citizens concerns, that with corruption running so deep, this malady will never be addressed and will be with us as long as corrupt people are not brought to book.

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