

Retired judge to probe complaints involving the Hawks

Retired Judge Essa Moosa has been appointed to attend to complaints regarding the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), known as the Hawks.



Nathi Mthethwa Image: GQS

Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa made the appointment in terms of section 17L of the South African Police Service Act which provides for a complaints mechanism in respect of the DPCI. His appointment is effective immediately.

"A retired judge may be appointed by the Minister of Police, after consultation with the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and the Chief Justice," said the minister's spokesman Zweli Mnisi on Thursday (17 October).

He said the function of the retired judge was to receive and investigate complaints from any member of the public who can provide evidence of a serious and unlawful infringement of his or her rights caused by an investigation by the Hawks.

Complaints and infringements

The retired judge would also investigate complaints from any member of the DPCI who can provide evidence of any improper influence or interference whether of a political or any other nature exercised while conducting an investigation.

"The appointment of Moosa will contribute to ensuring that the Hawks executes its mandate in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution," Mnisi said.

"Organised crime, serious economic and transnational crimes as well as corruption, undermine our democracy and have a negative impact on society. Government is continuously seeking to improve the quality of law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system as a whole," he said.

He pointed out that this appointment will strengthen the investigative capacity of the directorate.

He said a communication strategy was also being developed to create public awareness about Moosa's role and functions relating to complaints against the Hawks, both within the SAPS and among the public.

Moosa was a judge in the High Court in the Western Cape. He has a strong human rights background, having previously practised as an attorney in Cape Town and represented many high profile political activists and organisations involved in the struggle for human rights and freedom during the apartheid era.

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