intelligence
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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01 October 2025

REGISTRAR OF THE HIGH COURT OF SOUTH AFRICA
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HE Mr MC Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
Private Bag X1000
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BY HAND

Honourable President

WITHDRAWAL OF SECURITY CLEARANCE OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF INTELLIGENCE: ABUSE OF POWER

1. The letter from the Acting Director General of the State Security Agency to the Inspector-General of Intelligence, SSA DG/01/1/5/3, dated 23 September 2025 has reference (see attached letter for ease of reference).

2. It is not clear to me precisely why the Acting Director General has decided to withdraw my security clearance. While I intend appealing his decision to the Minister in The Presidency responsible for intelligence, I regard it as my duty to alert you to what I consider to be an unlawful exercise of the Acting Director General's powers under the intelligence services legislation. The effect of the Acting Director General's decision to remove my security clearance without informing me of the reason why, or allowing me an opportunity to respond, and the conditions attached to the withdrawal of my security clearance means that I have effectively been suspended from my position.

3. Since my appointment I have discharged my duties without fear, favour or prejudice to give effect to the assurance as well as ombud functions of the IGI. When called upon I have conducted functions as designated (in terms of section 7(7)(c) of the Oversight Act) by the respective Ministers in The Presidency (responsible for State Security) on two occasions, the Minister of Police as well as Your Excellency, the President.

4. I have always acted with due regard for national security as well as the requirements of the law, as reflected in my compliance with the disclosure provisions of the Oversight Act, when engaging Your Excellency (most recently) in a recent court matter lodged by the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI), as well as supporting the work of the Investigating Directorate Against Corruption (IDAC) in their prosecution of corruption in the SSA.

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5. Furthermore, given the Inspector-General of Intelligence's unfettered access provided for in the Oversight Act, I am acutely aware of my security responsibilities, and have diligently complied with security provisions.

6. A distinct feature of the democratic dispensation in our country has been the introduction of civilian control as well as independent civilian oversight of the intelligence services (SSA, Crime Intelligence and Defence Intelligence). In keeping with international best practice, one of the objectives of oversight is to insulate the Intelligence Services from political abuse without isolating them from executive governance.

7. However, limited understanding of what oversight and civilian monitoring entails has manifested, to a varied extent, across the Intelligence Community. As a consequence, since assuming office, I am facing increased resistance in the execution of my Constitutional duties, which has manifested as follows:

7.1 Reluctance to provide access to intelligence activities and products, delayed commencement, frequent delays and postponement, complaints of oversight fatigue as well as accusations and allegations of leakage of information. As a result I have had to impress on the respective Command/ Management of the respective Intelligence Services that no limitation on oversight will be tolerated and that I will not hesitate to seek remedies through the courts should the need arise. While this has fortunately not been necessary, it remains disappointing that an ostensible lack of understanding of the mandate and function of intelligence oversight in a democratic South Africa has been spoiled by what has been a constructive and collegial relationship.

7.2 My work has been significantly throttled by the lack of staff. In terms of the Oversight Act the Minister in The Presidency may appoint staff to the Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence after consultation with the Inspector-General of Intelligence. On assuming office, I was confronted with a severely understaffed Office. Matters only grew worse with the retirement, resignation/ transfer and early retirement of personnel. Despite our best efforts to recruit and appoint personnel, we have been confronted with significant delays and lack of urgency in the Ministry to appoint personnel to fill the vacancies. At this juncture no new core business staff member has been appointed since November 2014 and as a consequence operational core staff is only staffed at 30%.

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7.3 Defence Intelligence, in the course of oversight on the 2022/23 Financial Year, displayed a fundamental resistance to Intelligence Oversight. Oversight activities were delayed during 2023/24 given the Divisional Command Council's resistance to, and misinterpretation of the oversight mandate of the IGI in terms of the Oversight Act. Following extensive deliberation between ourselves and CDI some common ground was established and oversight of the Division could continue. However, even though the 2022/23 Certificate and Management Report on Defence Intelligence were endorsed by both the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans as well as the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence, DI eventually resorted to the courts (without any merit in our view) to have the 2022/23 DI Certificate and Oversight Report withdrawn (SANDF and Another//Inspector-General of Intelligence and Another) Case 143574//2024).

7.4 In November 2024, in keeping with the recommendations of the Mojapelo Panel for, amongst others, the IGI to investigate the role of the Intelligence Services in the circumstances around the docking, handling of cargo and departure of Lady R from Simon's Town in December 2022, you had requested me, to investigate the role of the SSA in the matter. In the course of this designated function I faced particular resistance from members, under instruction from the Chief of the SA National Defence Force, who declined to be interviewed, until the intervention of the National Security Advisor, Prof Mufamadi.

7.5 Peddled information (WhatsApp messages). I was alerted by CDI of WhatsApp messages allegedly between myself and other parties which purport to reflect my involvement in some kind of conspiracy. I reported this matter to the JSCI as well as the Office of the President. I also reported this matter to the SAPS for criminal investigation (Brooklyn SAPS: CAS 671/8/2025).

7.6 In January 2025, the Honourable Minister of Police, Mr Mchunu, designated certain functions to me in accordance with section 7(7)(c) of the Oversight Act, in terms of which I was requested to investigate certain matters relating to the Crime Intelligence Division of the South African Police Services. These matters related to allegations of irregular procurement of the Veroz Boutique Hotel in Pretoria North; utilising funds from the Secret Services Account; irregular appointment of a Brigadier, without meeting the minimum requirements of the post of Section Head: Technical Support Services; and whether or not the Component Head: Intelligence Analysis at Crime Intelligence was in possession of a valid security clearance. Subsequently, we received more complaints from members of the public, including members of Parliament regarding the procurement irregularities involving other covert buildings purchased by Crime Intelligence. We resolved to extend our investigation to include procurement of all covert buildings purchased in the financial year 2023/24 and 2024/25. During the course of our investigation, we experienced unprecedented interference, especially in respect of the investigation into the procurement of the Veroz Boutique Hotel in Pretoria.

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7.7 The Minister in The Presidency, Khumbudzo Ntshavheni (MP), in correspondence dated 11 February 2025, communicated to me the need to extend the duration of my investigation, to allow the work of the Gauteng Counter Intelligence Operations (GCI Ops) that necessitated the purchase of the said Hotel to be concluded, before my Office was given access to the GCI Ops project file. This communication was unprecedented and appeared to be peculiar for a Minister responsible for a different Service to interfere with an investigation initiated by another Minister (Minister of Police).

7.8 Subsequently, on 18 February 2025 a meeting was held between ourselves and General Masemola, wherein we explained the purpose of our investigation and assured him that we were not interfering with the GCI Ops, but mainly focused on the procurement of the Hotel. Despite this meeting, no access was granted to the GCI Ops project file. We however, concluded our investigation and submitted the investigation report to the Minister of Police on 2 May 2025.

7.9 In the SSA, oversight has essentially been suspended since 4 September 2025 as the Agency increasingly focused on the risk of oversight, raising spurious security concerns to delay and throttle oversight field work. In order to resume oversight my Office was required to submit documentation and provide information. Even though, in terms of the Oversight Act, access to information and premises may not be denied to the IGI on any grounds, in the spirit of maintaining good relations, I engaged the Acting DG SSA in good faith and provided as much assurance on their concerns as possible. Instead the Agency kept raising additional issues, which eventually led to a meeting with the Deputy Director-General (DDG) for Counter-Intelligence. We engaged the DDG in good faith, and

believed that the matter had been adequately addressed. However, matters were brought to a head when the Minister of Police, concerned about the possible leak of a meeting himself and the President, brought the matter to the attention of NICOC, who requested the SSA to investigate. In changing tack, disregarding their erstwhile oversight concerns, the SSA somehow connected my Office to this leak and I was consequently greatly surprised to have my own security competence questioned and my security clearance withdrawn.

8. Your Excellency, given the requirements of the position of the Inspector-General of Intelligence, I can assure you that I had a valid security clearance (issued by the SSA in 2021) when I was appointed in 2022. On my appointment the JSCI confirmed the validity of my security clearance, prior to my swearing in being presided over by the Minister in the Presidency, Hon Gungubele and the chairperson of the JSCI, Hon Maake. Instead this matter has now been weaponised by the SSA 3 years later (as a transferred clearance applicable to a government department) to neutralize me and prevent me from holding the Intelligence Services to account, which I am mandated to do in terms of the Constitution as well as the Oversight Act.

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9. Your Excellency appointed me and in terms of the Oversight Act and only you may remove me from my appointment, as provided for in the Oversight Act. The Acting DG SSA, has in fact usurped those powers by withdrawing my security clearance prematurely and without proper cause. He has abused the powers of the Agency to withdraw my security clearance for an improper purpose, rendering me unable to execute my Constitutional oversight mandate. This he has done without providing evidence to substantiate his actions, or engaging me. While I am in fact mandated to conduct oversight upon the Director-General and the SSA, he has in effect suspended me, which could never have been the intention of either the National Strategic Intelligence Act 39 of 1994 or the Oversight Act.

10. As previously stated, I am well aware of my security responsibility, and as my existing clearance expires in March 2026, in complying with SSA prescripts, I have already commenced with my re-vetting process, six months prior to expiry.

11. I believe it is vital that my existing security clearance be re-instated while my re-vetting is being completed as I have a duty to discharge – preparing for the Madlanga Commission, Parliamentary Ad hoc Committee, the DI court challenge as well as giving effect to my oversight mandate over all state Intelligence Services to provide assurance to the legislature, executive and the people that the Intelligence Services are acting within the ambit of their respective mandates.

12. Apart from my inability to perform my core functions as a result of the withdrawal of my clearance, I am precluded from performing day to day management and administrative functions or from accessing my office. As a result, the Office of the Inspector-General has been completely debilitated and oversight of the intelligence services cannot be performed.

Yours sincerely

Mr. I Fazel

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF INTELLIGENCE

CC: The National Security Advisor
(For Attention: Prof F.S. Mufamadi)
The Presidency

The Legal Advisor
(For Attention: Adv N. Jele)
The Presidency

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