

R2K picket blocked: Goes to court

The Right2Know Campaign lodged an urgent appeal in the Pretoria High Court yesterday after the Tshwane Metro and Police blocked the organisation from picketing outside the Seriti Arms Procurement Commission.



The Seriti Arms Procurement Commission is hearing the evidence of senior politicians this week and the Right2Know Campaign says it believes that this presents an opportunity for former Ministers Kasrils, Lekota and Manuel to give full account of why the country committed to spend almost R70bn on weapons in the late 1990s.

The Arms Procurement Commission was established after almost 15 years of pressure by civil society groups. However, R2K says it is deeply concerned by attempts to limit civil society participation in this process.

The organisation says the latest example of these attempts was the refusal by the Tshwane Metro Police to allow R2K to stage a peaceful protest outside the commission on 12 June (former finance minister Trevor Manuel appeared before the commission yesterday). R2K says the refusal to allow the protest "follows a string of correspondence with the Tshwane Metro Police who have shown every intention to prohibit the picket (including citing the draconian apartheid-era National Key Points Act) instead of facilitating it as they are required by law".

R2K says the decision by the Tshwane Metro Police not to allow the protest is "deeply concerning and R2K will continue to pursue legal means to ensure our democratic right to protest".

In its statement, R2K says the Tshwane Metro Police claims that a permit had already been granted for two different organisations to picket in Tshwane on Thursday and the three units of police officers would be deployed to police those gatherings.

R2K says it has been forced to lodge an urgent appeal to the Tshwane High Court to ensure that its right to protest is respected, and the matter will be heard this morning at 7am.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>