

Kader Asmal: Johannesburg Press Club extends condolences

The Johannesburg Press Club extends its condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of veteran ANC politician Kader Asmal, following his death in Cape Town last Wednesday, 22 June 2011.

"Kader Asmal was one of the old school freedom fighters. He was not afraid to speak his mind and stand up for what was right, no matter the circumstances," said Clare van Zwieter, chairperson of the Johannesburg Press Club. "He worked to end apartheid, he criticised Robert Mugabe, he stood up against the disbandment of the Scorpions and he spoke out against the [Protection of Information Bill](#). Sadly, he has left us at a time when South Africa is in need of guidance and counsel from wise heads motivated by what is best for all South Africans instead of political self-enrichment."

"Asmal possessed a firmness and virtue that sustained his character of transparency and honesty throughout his life," said Mixel de Kock, deputy chairperson of the Johannesburg Press Club. "More than anything else, Kader Asmal showed the world while little is required to overcome negative opinion and bad intentions, it takes the highest moral courage to rebuke great and good men for their conduct and to impeach their discernment."

Speaking at the 2008 Helen Joseph Memorial Lecture at the University of Johannesburg, Kader Asmal called on South African universities to inspire in their students a culture of promoting ethics and morality in public life. "We need to speak out, act and ensure that our own words and deeds contribute to the rejuvenation of the values of ethics and morality that propelled many of us to wage the struggle for our country's liberation."

These words are a fitting epitaph for him and the Johannesburg Press Club calls on its members and the residents of South Africa to try and live up to these words. South Africa needs people of the calibre of Kader Asmal and Albertina Sisulu.

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