

## Joemat-Pettersson accused of violating code

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson is guilty of violating the executive ethics code and is getting away with it, the DA said on Monday (3 December).



Tina Joemat-Pettersson

"[She] seems to be escaping any real consequences for her actions," Democratic Alliance MP Annette Steyn said in a statement.

"The minister spent R1.6m on hotel stays in one year, including R400,000 for 28 days at one B-and-B [bed-and-breakfast]," she said.

"Yet, in October 2011, President Jacob Zuma fired the late Minister Sicelo Shiceka after the Public Protector found that his R840,000 stays at the *One and Only* in Cape Town and trips to Switzerland constituted a violation of the Executive Ethics Act."

Steyn said this raised questions about the protection Joemat-Pettersson was getting from Zuma.

Public Protector Thuli Madonsela has recommended that Zuma should consider reprimanding Joemat-Pettersson for violating the executive ethics code.

Madonsela said the department's acting director general should recover about R150,000 which Joemat-Pettersson unlawfully incurred for return flights for her two children and their au pair from Sweden to South Africa in January 2010.

The minister travelled to Sweden in December 2009 on official business, but combined the trip with a family holiday, which started on December 23, at the end of the official visit.

Madonsela also investigated whether Joemat-Pettersson used public funds to occupy expensive accommodation at hotels while awaiting the allocation of her official residences in Cape Town and Pretoria.

The *City Press* reported that Joemat-Pettersson claimed she cut short her holiday in Sweden and urgently flew back to South Africa -- at a cost of R400,000 taxpayer -- to help out with Zuma's wedding.

On Monday (3 December), the presidency said this media report and others had been "noted".

"The presidency is not aware of the said request," said presidential spokesman Mac Maharaj.

He said Madonsela's report was being "processed".

"We urge that space be allowed for proper processing of the report and for the minister to be given the opportunity to respond to the president on the entire report. Speculation will not assist the process."

Steyn said she would put a motion to Parliament's National Assembly next year that Joemat-Pettersson be fired.

"President Zuma cannot be allowed to shield his political allies from the consequences of their actions," she said.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

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