

Johnson appointed new NPA Investigating Directorate head

President Cyril Ramaphosa has appointed experienced prosecutor Advocate Andrea Johnson as the head of the National Prosecuting Authority's Investigating Directorate (NPA ID).



Andrea Johnson, new head of the NPA ID - SANews.gov.za

Johnson's appointment was announced on Monday following the resignation of former head Advocate Hermione Cronje in December last year.

The President said Johnson will lead the ID into a new phase – building on the work former head Cronje undertook since the ID's establishment in 2019.

“Under the leadership of Advocate Hermione Cronje since its establishment in 2019, the Investigating Directorate has enabled the NPA to more effectively prosecute state capture and other high-profile corruption cases.

“Advocate Andrea Johnson will be expected to lead the Investigating Directorate into the next phase of its work as the people of South Africa look to the criminal justice system to bring those responsible for state capture and corruption to book.

“In this regard, the Investigating Directorate will be able to draw on the extensive information compiled by the State Capture Commission and is being strengthened through the allocation of more resources,” President Ramaphosa said.

To further bolster the capacity of the NPA, President Ramaphosa also announced the appointments of Advocate Navilla Somaru as Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) in the Free State, Advocate Rachel Makhari-Sekhaolelo as the DPP in the North West and Advocate Nicolette Bell as DPP of the Western Cape.

Meanwhile, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) says it has “absolute confidence” in Johnson's ability deliver on the mandate of the prosecuting authority.



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At the time of her appointment, she was serving as the NPA's Acting Special Director of Priority Crimes Litigation Unit (PCLU) and the coordinator of the Organised Crime Component in the organisation.

In a statement, the NPA said Johnson's 26-year-long prosecutorial track record make her ideal for the position.

Johnson's vast experience includes working as a senior member of the now defunct Directorate of Special Operations (the Scorpions) and the high profile prosecutions of fraud accused businessman Brett Kebble corrupt former Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi and murderer Oscar Pistorius.

"This unique experience with the DSO is hugely significant to the current leadership required to take the IC forward [and] Advocate Johnson is well-placed to lead the ID during its next era which will be all about action and impact.

"She has demonstrated her commitment and resolve to serve the people of South Africa, to uphold the Constitution and the law, and to work tirelessly to ensure accountability for those who commit the most serious crimes in our country," the NPA said.

The NPA denounced what it called a "smear campaign" targeted at Johnson.

"Considering the current climate in which the ID operates, we expect these kinds of unjustified attacks to continue.

"The NPA leadership has absolute confidence in the integrity of Advocate Johnson, and we will not be distracted in our efforts to rebuild the rule of law in South Africa. If any investigations are required, we will conduct them transparently and share the findings as appropriate," the statement read.

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