

Corruption the enemy - Radebe

Corruption ought to be declared as the enemy of all South Africans, says Justice Minister Jeff Radebe.



(Image: GCIS)

Speaking at the launch of Cosatu's anti-corruption initiative - Corruption Watch - in Johannesburg on Thursday, the minister said corruption was a serious challenge and needed to be tackled collectively.

"Corruption must be declared our enemy as apartheid was the common enemy for all justice-loving citizens," he said.

Corruption was a serious concern for government, private sector, labour and civil society.

Radebe noted that government has taken steps to fight corruption, and in particular, highlighted the successes of the Asset Forfeiture Unit, which had netted the "top dogs of crime" and frozen assets worth billions.

Small scale corruption also needed to be addressed before it graduated into a culture of impunity that would lead to higher levels of corruption, he said.

Uncovering corruption - wherever it is found

The minister was optimistic that Corruption Watch would also highlight corruption in the private sector.

Where corruption was identified, those involved needed to be dealt with effectively, he urged.

Radebe said management in the public sector involved in corruption had to be dealt with harshly, irrespective of their rank and status.

Cosatu Secretary General Zwelinzima Vavi said Corruption Watch would allow citizens to be more involved in fighting corruption.

"A dream has come true - a dream to empower our people so that they may play a more meaningful role in a battle to combat the scourge of corruption."

The launch a Corruption Watch was a critical intervention at a time when there were daily reports of corruption. Each report of corruption had one common message - that corruption was "daylight theft from the poor", he said.

"Cosatu urges all its members and all South Africans to work closely with Corruption Watch to help get rid of this fatal cancer within our society," Vavi added.

Stand together against the 'monster of corruption'

Public Protector Thuli Madonsela applauded the initiative, saying Corruption Watch indicated that civil society was taking its rightful place in the fight against corruption.

South Africa needed a united front against corruption if the country was to triumph, and patriotic citizens needed to stand together against the "monster" of corruption as it had done with apartheid, she added.

David Lewis, Corruption Watch's executive director, explained that Corruption Watch will gather information about

corruption, analyse it and disseminate it to the public so that it could be used to combat corruption.

The main source of information will be the public, who will be asked to report their experiences or knowledge of corruption on the website or through SMSs.

Some of that information will go to the investigative unit who will decide if it needs further investigation or if it needs to be passed on to law enforcement agencies, Lewis said.

The information gathered will be analysed and the findings or trends will be made available on Corruption Watch's website for comment, he added.



(Image: GCS)

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