



The State's preferred and trusted anti-corruption, forensic investigation, and litigation agency.

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**MEDIA STATEMENT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
17 MAY 2024**

**SIU, HAWKS SEARCH HOME AFFAIRS OFFICES IN FIVE PROVINCES AND SEIZE EVIDENCE TO ASSIST IN AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION**

On 17 May 2024, at around 09:00, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) with the assistance of the Directorate of Priority Crimes Investigations, also known as the Hawks, conducted searches and seized evidence at Home Affairs offices in five provinces as part of an ongoing investigation into the affairs of the Department of Home Affairs. The SIU was granted a search warrant by the Special Tribunal, a judicial platform established to adjudicate on matters emanating from SIU investigations, on 10 May.

The searched offices and mirror imaging of a server took place in the following areas:

**Gauteng Province**

**Pretoria CBD:** Head Office of the Department of Home Affairs

**Centurion, Pretoria:** Home Affairs server room (mirror image)

**Marabastad, Pretoria:** Desmond Tutu Refugee Centre

**Limpopo Province**

**Musina:** Refugee Reception Centre

**Western Cape Province**

**Cape Town:** Refugee Reception Office Custom House

**Eastern Cape Province**

**Gqeberha:** Refugee Reception Centre

**KwaZulu Natal Province**

**Durban:** Refugee Reception Centre

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The searches follow a tip-off from a whistleblower that suggested that Home Affairs officials in the identified centres work with syndicates to duplicate application status files applied for in other offices and process them for a fee. The whistleblower also stated that the officials bypass immigration systems to enable foreign nationals who have entered the country illegally to remain in the country and acquire Permits illegally and unlawfully.

Furthermore, the whistleblower alleged that Home Affairs officials are delaying the finalisation of the asylum seeker permits to facilitate bogus asylum seekers. Through the permits which were obtained illegally and unlawfully, the bogus asylum seekers will use them to remain in the country and later use the same permits to apply for Permanent Resident Permits and ultimately, obtain South African citizenship. After getting citizenship, they qualify to get a maroon passport, which allows them to travel all over the world except their country of origin.

Members of the SIU and the Hawks seized computers, electronic pieces of equipment, and documents which will assist with the ongoing investigation.

President Cyril Ramaphosa authorised the SIU to investigate serious maladministration and improper conduct at Home Affairs through Proclamation 154 of 2024. The Proclamation empowers the SIU to probe serious maladministration relating to the issuance of—permanent residence permits; corporate visas; business visas; critical/exceptional skills work visas; study visas; retired persons' visas; work visas; and citizenship by naturalisation, contrary to the Immigration Act, 2002; the South African Citizenship Act, 1995; manuals, guidelines, circulars, practice notes or instructions applicable to Home Affairs; or manuals, policies, procedures, prescripts, instructions or practices of or applicable to the Department.

The Proclamation also empowers the SIU to investigate any irregular, unlawful or improper conduct by officials or employees of Home Affairs or any other person or entity, concerning the allegations being investigated.

The Proclamation covers allegations of unlawful and improper conduct that took place between 12 October 2004 and 16 February 2024, the date of the publication of the Proclamation or before 12 October 2004 and after the date of the Proclamation that is relevant to, connected with, incidental to the matters or involves the same persons, entities or contracts investigated.

In addition to investigating maladministration, malpractice, corruption and fraud, the SIU will identify system failures and make systematic recommendations to improve measures to prevent future recurrence.

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In line with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996 (SIU Act), the SIU will refer any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers during its investigations to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.

The SIU is empowered by the SIU Act to institute a civil action in the High Court or a Special Tribunal in its name to correct any wrongdoing uncovered during its investigation caused by acts of corruption, fraud, or maladministration.

**END.**

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**SIU SA**

STRIKING AGAINST CORRUPTION

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