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**MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
04 FEBRUARY 2025**

SPECIAL TRIBUNAL DISMISSES FORMER NLC OFFICIAL'S BID TO OVERTURN PENSION INTERDICT

The Special Tribunal has dismissed the application of former National Lotteries Commission (NLC) Chief Risk Officer Marubini Ramatsekisa to overturn an order it gave to interdict his pension fund from paying out his benefits.

The Special Tribunal order, dated 23 January 2025, also ruled that Ramatsekisa must pay the costs of this application. In December 2023, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) obtained an order from the Special Tribunal to interdict pension payout due Ramatsekisa. Ramatsekisa allegedly orchestrated a scheme that resulted in the NLC losing approximately R4 million.

The Special Tribunal order interdicts Ramatsekisa from withdrawing his pension benefits of approximately R1.7 million. The pension funds will remain interdicted pending the SIU's finalisation of an application to be brought against him.

He resigned from the NLC after the lottery commission instituted disciplinary proceedings against him to allegedly avoid accountability. Immediately after he resigned, Ramatsekisa wrote to his pension fund administrator that he intended to withdraw his pension benefits, prompting the SIU to seek an interdict swiftly.

The SIU's investigation into NLC's affairs found that Ramatsekisa was a key player and willing facilitator of an elaborate scheme to defraud the commission through proactive funding. The SIU uncovered evidence linking Ramatsekisa to losses of approximately R4 million suffered by the NLC. The SIU intends to institute civil proceedings against Ramatsekisa to recover damages suffered by NLC because of his conduct.

The SIU's investigation revealed that on 20 February 2019, Ramatsekisa prepared a proposal for proactive funding and recommended that the acting chief operating officer approve pro-active funding of approximately R4 million to conduct a study that will assist in developing the Khoi-San language.

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Three weeks later, three people acquired and became directors of a dormant shelf company named Zibsicraft NPC. From the documents in the SIU's possession, Zibsicraft NPC then applied to the NLC for grant funding. The application was not stamped, so the client liaison officer never processed it. The application was dated 25 March 2019, ten days after they had acquired the company.

The application was accompanied by financial statements prepared for the periods ending 28 February 2018 and 28 February 2019. However, the NPO only opened a bank account on 19 March 2019, six days before it applied for funding.

The SIU found that of the R4 million, R2.2 million allegedly went towards purchasing property for a church named the Higher Grace Christ Redeemer Church. The former NLC Board Chairperson, Alfred Nevhutanda, and his wife, Mrs Tshilidzi Rachel Nevhutanda, represented the church in the offer to purchase it.

The SIU was authorised by President Cyril Ramaphosa in terms of Proclamation R32 of 2020 to investigate allegations of corruption and maladministration in the affairs of NLC and the conduct of NLC officials and to recover any financial losses suffered by the State.

The order of the Special Tribunal is part of implementing SIU investigation outcomes and consequence management to recover financial losses suffered by State institutions because of corruption or negligence.

The SIU is empowered to institute a civil action in the High Court or a Special Tribunal to correct any wrongdoing uncovered during investigations caused by corruption, fraud, or maladministration. In line with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996, the SIU refers any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.

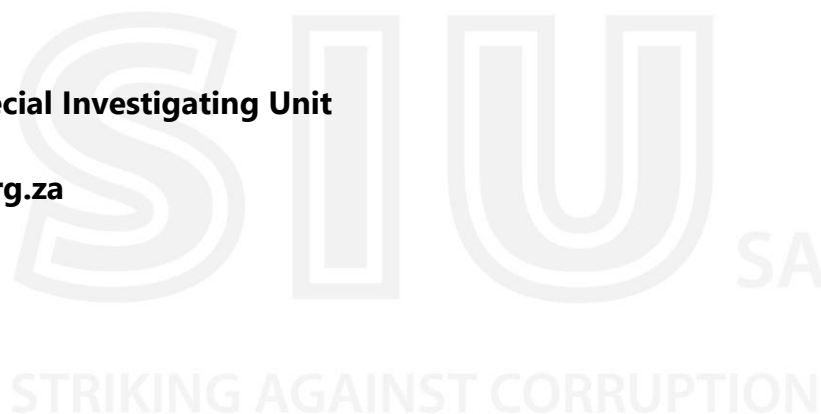
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