



**16 March 2021**

**Zondo commission - Former manager confirms Masango evidence on meeting with Koko, Essa**

A former senior manager at Eskom's Kusile power station says she had no reason to participate in a witch hunt against the power utility's former head of electricity generation, Matshela Koko. Nonhlanhla Kraai testified before the state capture commission on Tuesday.

Kraai's testimony had to do with an allegation by her former boss, Abram Masango, then programme director for Kusile, that Koko summoned him to a meeting with Gupta associate Salim Essa on 10 March 2015 at Essa's office in Melrose Arch. At this meeting, Masango alleged, Koko alerted him that he would be temporarily appointed to replace his boss, group head of capital Dan Marokane, who was to be suspended the following day.

"He said to me he was called by Mr Koko or Matshela to come to a meeting in Melrose Arch...it was a very strange, funny meeting," said Kraai, recalling a conversation with Masango later that afternoon. Kraai and Masango had been scheduled to meet at Kusile around lunchtime to go over a presentation prepared for a head office meeting. Masango had left Kusile in the morning for Megawatt Park with the understanding that he'd be back in time to meet with Kraai.

But upon leaving Megawatt Park, he received a call from Koko, who asked him to stop by Melrose Arch to meet with him. For Masango, this was not strange, as Marokane was on leave at the time, and under such circumstances he often reported to Koko, who was the head of commercial and technology at this point. He headed to Melrose Arch as instructed, despite this clearly clashing with his schedule at Kusile, and once there was introduced to Essa by Koko, who then told him about the pending suspensions. The three met in a boardroom of an office building that Masango believed belonged to Essa.

When she realised that he was running late for their meeting, Kraai tried to call Masango, but could not get through. He would later explain that his phone had been taken from him as he arrived at the meeting venue, and only returned after the meeting.

When he later called Kraai to explain his inability to make it back in time for the meeting, Masango explained that Koko had called him to the meeting where there was also "indoda emfisha yomdiya" (a short man of Indian descent). He would share more details at their next meeting at Kusile the following morning.

The next morning, Masango told Kraai that Koko told him that he'd be asked to act in Marokane's position at a meeting later that morning, 11 March, which meant that he would make another trip to Megawatt Park.

Kraai said he did not mention the suspensions, but she learned about this in an internal communique that was sent later and revealed that Marokane, Koko, GCEO Tshediso Matona and CFO Tsholofelo Molefe had been asked to step aside while an investigation was undertaken into

the management of the company. Masango's name was mentioned as Marokane's interim replacement.

Evidence leader Advocate Pule Seleka asked Kraai if she knew of Koko's previous testimony before the commission, where he accused her and Masango of colluding to implicate him in capture. Part of the reason, said Koko in his evidence, was that he had had a fallout with Masango over the latter's alleged involvement in a corruption scandal at Kusile. Kraai too was implicated in her own wrongdoing, said Koko, and wanted revenge.

"I did not join the bandwagon. I'm not colluding with Mr Masango. Based on the evidence I have given under oath to this commission, that's my version of my own truth, and truth only. It's not based on a collusion with Mr Masango," she said.

She added that she had no reason to join the "Koko hunt", a term Koko has coined to describe a campaign to discredit him and place him at the centre of corruption at Eskom.

Kraai resigned in July 2019 from her position as senior manager for fuel procurement after what she viewed as a breakdown in trust between herself and Eskom. She was investigated in 2019 over charges relating to an alleged conflict of interest based on her husband's private business, but never taken through a disciplinary process.

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