



17 October 2019

Zondo commission – Zuma’s October appearance cancelled, but November still on the schedule

Former president Jacob Zuma will no longer appear before the commission of inquiry into state capture next week as previously announced by its chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo.

The commission released a statement on Thursday saying that it received correspondence through Zuma’s legal representatives reporting his unavailability "owing to circumstances relating to his criminal trial". He was meant to appear from Monday to Friday for the first of two, week-long appearances, the second being in mid-November.

"The commission has taken note of this. Consequently, the former president will no longer appear before the commission next week," the statement read.

On Tuesday Zuma appeared in the Pietermaritzburg High Court for his fraud and corruption trial relating to the arms deal, where his lawyers told the court that he would appeal its dismissal of his application for a permanent stay of prosecution.

Zuma’s return to the commission follows his lawyers’ withdrawal from proceedings in July, citing an unfair line of questioning by commission legal team head Advocate Paul Pretorius. They also said Zuma was not prepared beforehand on the areas of evidence he would be led.

Through Zondo’s intervention, the two legal teams managed their stand-off and an agreement was reached regarding the areas of interest that he was to be questioned on. Last week a list of these was sent to Zuma and also made public by the commission, with the understanding that he would begin his appearance on 21 October.

The dates set out for next month remain the same, from 11 to 15 November.

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