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### **Corruption Watch urges stronger measures to enhance integrity within SAPS**

Corruption Watch (CW), in its submission yesterday on the Draft White Paper on the Police to the Civilian Secretariat for the Police, has raised particular concern at the widely perceived prevalence of corruption and lack of accountability at the leadership level of the police, and a prevailing sense of inappropriate appointments to key leadership positions in the service.

What is needed, stated CW, is a thorough re-evaluation of the mechanisms for hiring and firing key appointees, with checks and balances to ensure that these processes are de-politicised. CW strongly supported the inclusion of the National Development Plan's recommendations for the establishment of a national policing board with multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary expertise, which will go a long way towards setting objective standards and overseeing the selection, appointment and promotion of people to senior leadership positions.

David Lewis, executive director of CW, said that: 'while we acknowledge that there is no simple solution for instilling integrity in the police service, the strategies aimed at eliminating corruption in the police must include clear and concrete provisions for ensuring that only appropriately skilled, experienced, committed and honest people are appointed to leadership positions in the service.'

In order to build a professional police service, and develop the individual qualities required in a police officer, CW recommended that strategies be developed to attract honest and dedicated young people to the service. Among CW's other recommendations were the inclusion in the white paper of the police's own anti-corruption strategy adopted in 2011, as well as those envisaged in Chapter 14 of the National Development Plan, the possible re-establishment of the SAPS Internal Integrity Unit, and the re-examination of the powers and mandate of the Independent Police Investigative Directorate in investigating and sanctioning corruption in the police. An integrated approach to tackling corruption rests on the alignment of these various strategies, noted CW.

"The whole integrity of the police is in question, with public confidence continuing to decline. This white paper presents an opportunity for putting in place effective mechanisms to implement a complete turnaround of the police service, and its transformation into a sector that attracts the kind of people who hold dear the principles of transparency, integrity, and upholding the rule of law," said Lewis.

"The draft white paper is long on noble platitudes and short on concrete proposals. It is time to get real and acknowledge that the state of our criminal justice institutions, and particularly of their leadership, may be the greatest obstacle to tackling corruption."

**The submissions can be accessed at:** <http://bit.ly/1OGP7M1>

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