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SONA: President's credibility in fighting corruption could be enhanced by releasing full details of Nkandla upgrade

In his State of the Nation Address President Jacob Zuma should demonstrate his commitment to accountability and transparency by announcing the release of the Nkandla upgrade report to the public.

“If the government wants to be taken seriously in the fight against corruption, details on Nkandla upgrade should be released. Government’s commitment to fighting corruption will be unconvincing for as long as there is no transparency on how public money was used in the upgrade of the President’s Nkandla residence,” said Corruption Watch’s executive director David Lewis.

In addition to being transparent about the Nkandla issue, Corruption Watch expects the State of the Nation address to provide practical solutions to addressing corruption as a factor that perpetuates poverty, unemployment and other social injustices in the country.

President Zuma is expected to pay heed to the recommendations made by the Public Service Commission that managers in the public service should be prohibited from any involvement in commercial dealings with the State.

“Considering the high levels of conflict of interest and the service delivery challenges that abound, it is paramount that those who serve in government should focus on providing the best services to the country, rather than promoting their personal business interests, ” Lewis said,

Corruption Watch also expects the government to pay attention to the role of corruption in hindering progress within the public education system. Corruption Watch has received a high number of complaints about the abuse of public resources by principals, teachers and members of school governing bodies.

Tackling and exposing corruption at school level is one of Corruption Watch’s priorities for 2013. The organisation also plans to target procurement and supply-chain management, as well as corruption in small towns.

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