

Pityana calls Zuma out on corruption

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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"Zuma must go" was the call from Siphos Pityana, AngloGold Ashanti chairman, and keynote speaker at the Joburg Indaba, which got off to a fiery start, living up to its reputation as a conference that delivers blunt and necessary conversation.

Pityana told the delegates that the country is in crisis in its economy, society, and the political sphere. "It's a crisis fuelled by patronage, corruption, mismanagement, unchecked power and widespread apathy. It is a crisis that compels me to persist with my call."

The elephant in the room, he says, is a president who lacks integrity and lacks honour. "None of the promises he makes to any segment of society can be held on to, because he lacks integrity."



Source: [ostudiopost](#)

Defending the constitution

When leadership fails as spectacularly as ours has done, he continues, it is ultimately ordinary citizens who must find the courage to speak out in defence of the constitution, and the sovereignty that it guarantees.

"If there is an assault on the public purse, and an apparent attempt to unlock the treasury to accelerate patronage to benefit

a well-connected few, it is civil society – and this includes the business community -- that must demand better.”

Leaders found guilty of corruption no longer fall on their swords for the greater good, instead they remain in office, with a president that laughs off any suggestion that government needs to be held responsible.

Comical if it were not so serious

“The head of state is the sponsor of corruption, while recession’s knock on the door of the economy gets more urgent. The response is not to stop the rot in the state-owned enterprises (SOEs), even though the need to do so is glaringly obvious.

Instead, the finance minister is hacked at and intimidated, rating agencies sneered at and business and ordinary citizen’s needs ignored, which is quietly chiselling away at the competitiveness of our country, with potentially disastrous long-term consequences.

He says it would be comical if it were not so serious. “The state capture is so vast; it is difficult to know what to do about it. Why derail the gravy train while on it, or you can remain quiet and hope against hope that things will improve, in case you anger those who opposes you... this is the silence that the government wants.”

Business starting to speak out

We are at a watershed for our democracy, he adds, saying that it cannot be business as usual. He also voiced the opinion that the business community has a vital role in saving South Africa. “Business is present in every home in this South Africa but it is a missing voice in discourse.”

In recent weeks, some businesses and their leaders have realised the importance of speaking out and are asking the right questions while voicing their concerns.

“And whilst business has made some tentative steps toward confronting the threat, these are nowhere near clear or insistent enough. The fact is, that if we each continue to keep our heads down, protecting our own, narrow, self-interest, the business environment that we are so desperately trying to protect with our silence will simply become unmanageable.”

He says this requires courage. “It requires steadfastness. It requires solidarity. It requires that business and others act together in solidarity. It requires us to listen to one another. And it requires us to do this now. We have to seize the moment, and save South Africa. Before it’s too late.”

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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