

**IN THE JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY TO INQUIRE INTO
ALLEGATIONS OF STATE CAPTURE, CORRUPTION AND FRAUD IN
THE PUBLIC SECTOR, INCLUDING ORGANS OF STATE**

STATEMENT OF MS MABEL PATRONELLA (“VYTJIE”) MENTOR

I, the undersigned,

MABEL PATRONELLA (“VYTJIE”) MENTOR

do hereby state as follows:

1. I am an adult female residing in Cape Town.
2. Except where the contrary is expressly stated or clear from the context, the facts contained in this statement are within my personal knowledge. To the best of my knowledge, they are true and correct. Where I make legal representations, I do so on the advice of my legal representatives, which advice I believe to be correct.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

3. I make this statement in order to assist the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector including Organs of State (**the Commission**), which was established in terms of section 84(2)(f) of the Constitution of the Republic of South

Africa, 1996.

4. The Commission was appointed to conduct investigations into matters of public and national interest concerning allegations of state capture, corruption, and fraud. More specifically, I am advised that paragraph 1.1 of the Terms of Reference mandates the Commission to investigate allegations of impropriety and corruption in the appointment and removal of Cabinet Ministers.¹ This is a subject which I address in my statement.
5. I was the seventh respondent in the North Gauteng High Court proceedings brought by the former President Mr Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma (**Mr Zuma**) to review and set aside certain paragraphs of the Public Protector's remedial action in her "*State of Capture*" Report (**the review**).
6. As will become evident below, I was interviewed and co-operated fully with the former Public Prosecutor's investigations into state capture. In my answering affidavit to Mr Zuma's founding affidavit in the review, I provided a synopsis of the facts to which I can directly attest regarding

¹ Paragraph 1.1 of the Terms of Reference provides as follows: The Commission shall inquire into, make findings, report on and make recommendations concerning the following, guided by the Public Protector's state of capture report, the Constitution, relevant legislation, policies, and guidelines, as well as the order of the North Gauteng High Court of 14 December 2017 under case number 9139/2016:-

whether, and to what extent and by whom attempts were made through any form of inducement or for any gain of whatsoever nature to influence members of the National Executive (including Deputy Ministers), office bearers and/or functionaries employed by or office bearers of any state institution or organ of state or directors of the boards of SOE's. In particular, the commission must investigate the veracity of allegations that former Deputy Minister of Finance, Mr Mcebisi Jonas and Ms Mentor were offered Cabinet positions by the Gupta family"



'state capture', and which have now culminated in my providing this statement.

7. In what follows, I provide direct, first-hand evidence that members of the Gupta family were indeed involved in offering me a Ministerial position in exchange for favouring their commercial interests. In addition, that this was done with the knowledge and approval of Mr Zuma.

8. In what follows, I address the following in turn:

8.1 My history and involvement with the ANC/UDF;

My China visit in 2010;

8.2 The offer made to me by Ajay Gupta that I become Minister of Public Enterprises; and

8.3 My disclosure of the offer made to me by Ajay Gupta.

MY HISTORY AND INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ANC/UDF

9. At the beginning of my political career I was an active member of the African National Congress (**the ANC**) and the United Democratic Front (**the UDF**). In the 1980s, I held various positions in these organisations at local, regional and provincial levels. I served in the underground as well as political mass-mobilisation activities of both the ANC and UDF.

10. During the 1980s, I also served in the South African Federation of Transvaal Women (**FEDTRAW**), which was a formation of Women



within the ANC and UDF. I was also an active member of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO). SAYCO was a South African youth congress, established on the instruction of the ANC, and which was affiliated to the UDF. I served in various leadership positions of SAYCO. This included being the leader at ground level in the Galeshewe Youth Congress (GAYCO) which was a branch of SAYCO. I was also an Executive member at regional/provincial level of the Northern Cape Youth Congress (NOCAYCO).

11. During the 1980s and 1990s I was also a representative of the Northern Cape in the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC). The mandate of this structure was to organise around matters of education in order to correct the adverse effects of the Apartheid Education system on those who were oppressed by the system.
12. I was also a member of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).
13. Shortly after the second democratic local government elections, I was appointed as a councillor at District Municipality level serving on the Mayoral Committee in the Diamandveld Region of the Northern Cape (situated in the Kimberly Region as it was then known). I was responsible for Social Development in the district.
14. In 1999 I became the Deputy Secretary of the ANC in the Francis-Baard Region (Kimberly region according to the ANC demarcation at the time). I led delegates of that region at the ANC Provincial Conference that year.



15. In 2000 I was also appointed to serve as a Public Representative in the South African Nursing Council (which is a Statutory Body) by President Nelson Mandela together with Hon. Manto Tshabalala-Msimang who was the Minister of Health at the time. My main role was to deal with the Professional Conduct of Nurses, to participate in the wholesale review and the re-pegging of all Health Qualifications in the country as well as to bench-mark all health qualifications in line with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
16. In 2002, I became a Member of Parliament for the ANC in the National Assembly.
17. In 2004, I was elected as Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises.
18. I was also made an ANC Whip for Discipline in 2004.
19. Very shortly thereafter, I was promoted to become the National Chairperson of the ANC Caucus in Parliament. I held that position from 2004 to 2008. By virtue of that position, I sat on the National Executive Committee (**the NEC**) of the ANC.
20. In approximately 2008, however, I was removed as National Chairperson of the ANC Caucus. I should mention that shortly after Mr Zuma's appointment as ANC President, I was told that I had to be removed because I was not officially an NEC member, which was allegedly required for the position. This is notwithstanding that I had been appointed to the post without having been elected as a NEC member, which was public knowledge at the time. I accordingly held the position



for just over four years from 2004 – 2008. By the time I was removed from the position I was the longest serving ANC Chair of Caucus in Parliament.

21. In around November 2010, I also ceased being the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises. However, I remained a Member of Parliament. I believe I was removed because I refused to meet with Mr Zuma while in China on his state visit, which I deal with in detail below. I also believe I was removed from this position because I refused to assist in the closure of the SAA-Indian route, which I also address below; and I believe that the reason given for my removal – that it was because of the allegations around Transnet having paid for my visit to China – was simply a ruse and an attempt to discredit me.
22. In or around October 2014, towards the end of the Parliamentary term, I was unable to perform my duties as a Member of Parliament. This was because I was hospitalised due to gruesome injuries sustained under mysterious circumstances which incapacitated me and prevented me from performing my Parliamentary duties.
23. I however remained a Member of Parliament during that time, until the end of the 2014 term.
24. I was therefore a Member of Parliament for twelve years.
25. While serving as a Member of Parliament, I was a Member of various Portfolio Committees including:
 - 25.1 The Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises;



- 25.2 The Portfolio Committee on Education;
- 25.3 The Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration;
- 25.4 The Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence;
- 25.5 The Joint Rules Committee of Parliament;
- 25.6 The National Assembly Rules Committee;
- 25.7 The Private Members Legislative Proposals Committee. This Committee dealt with private member's legislative proposals. The ANC had never considered or accepted proposals that came from opposing parties. I championed for the right of opposition parties to be allowed to propose the review of legislation. This was instrumental in abolishing floor crossing. I supported these causes often in the face of opposition from my own party;
- 25.8 The Portfolio Committee on Justice;
- 25.9 The *ad hoc* Committee on Zuma/Ngcuka (which related to various allegations against former President Mr Zuma). I should add here that I was instrumental in ensuring that the outcome of the Committee's work was not pre-determined. This entailed going against the instructions from Luthuli House to vindicate Mr Zuma and apportion blame to Mr Ngcuka;
- 25.10 The *ad hoc* Committee on the Protection of State Information. It was public knowledge that I denounced the ANC's position of



protecting the State at the expense of citizens' rights to privacy;
and

- 25.11 The Food Security for South Africa Caucus. This was not a Committee. However, I mention it because whilst I was a member of the caucus, I championed the issue of food security versus the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO). I had placed the issue on the agenda of the Caucus rather than allowing it to be dealt with at a Committee level.
- 25.12 I would also like to mention that I used the Caucus platform to fight against sexual harassment of women, including women in Parliament, and was instrumental in instituting disciplinary proceedings against an ANC Chief Whip in Parliament for having sexually harassed a twenty-one-year old woman that was serving as an intern in Parliament at the time and I am happy to report that he lost his position as Chief Whip and his seat in Parliament as a result.
- 25.13 I also used my position as Chair of Caucus and Chair of various committees to advocate for other strategic and important causes such as changes to the Electoral Act, moving from an overly Proportional Representation position to one based more on constituency so that the electorate is more empowered to hold elected politicians accountable.
- 25.14 Another cause which I was involved in was the equitable restoration of pension benefits of the then Spoornet employees since their pension fund was ring-fenced and ceased to grow in



the democratic dispensation.

MY CHINA VISIT IN 2010

26. In or around August 2010, I undertook a trip to China as part of a Presidential State visit to that country. One of the purposes of the visit was to explore solutions to the issue of repeated electric power outages, which had been an ongoing issue for the South African government's power utility, Eskom Holdings SOC Limited (**Eskom**) since approximately 2008. Eskom reported to the Portfolio Committee of Public Enterprises, of which I was the chair. Thus, we naturally had a keen interest in trying to assist and work with Eskom in dealing with the matter. During our discussions with Eskom as a Committee, they had cited amongst other things the matter of coal and its transportation to them by Transnet as an impeding factor in dealing with electric power shortage. For that reason Transnet also became one of the SOEs that we engaged in dealing with the issues of power shortages.
27. At the time, the entire Portfolio Committee was looking for leads and partnerships, including internationally, that could work with Eskom to help solve the issue of power outages, which was reaching a point of crisis.
28. Around that time I received correspondence from representatives of the State-Owned Enterprises in China inviting me to China. I tabled those letters of invitation before the Portfolio Committee and I informed them that I would undertake a preliminary visit to China, which was to be followed by a visit of the entire Committee. We already had an application for all of us to go to China approved for the following

financial year of 2010/2011. My visit was agreed upon and I accordingly left for China alone as Chairperson of the Committee. I had been to China on a previous occasion, on invitation to deal with the very same issues.

29. Parliament was in recess for August as a result of Women's month and activities incidental thereto, and this created issues for me in terms of making arrangements for traveling to China.
30. Transnet paid for my travel bookings and accommodation. This was because the Eskom Executive leadership and its Board were abroad at that time, also trying to conclude partnerships to address the issues surrounding power outages. The intention was that Transnet would be reimbursed from my Parliamentary travel allocation before the end of that financial year.
31. I was required to fly via Dubai as I was a very late addition to the State visit. When I received my flight details from Transnet, I noticed that my ticket had been booked in First Class on Emirates Airline. When I enquired why this was so, I was informed that most flights were fully booked as there were many groupings from both business and government going to China. I was informed that Transnet was only able to secure me a First Class ticket on Emirates.
32. Once Transnet agreed to pay for my accommodation and travel I made enquiries from the Department of International Relations as to the details of joining the State visit as per my invitation from the Chinese. They explained the process to me and then directed me to seek accreditation with the Department of Trade and Industry as it was that department that



was the Lead-Department in relation to the State Visit.

33. The contact person I was directed to was Iqbal Sharma who was a Deputy Director General (DDG) at Trade and Industry Department at the time.
34. Whilst aboard the flight from South Africa to Dubai, I was approached by Duduzane Zuma (“**Duduzane**”) who was also on the same flight. Duduzane is the son of former President Mr Zuma. He introduced himself to me. This was the first time that I had met him. When Duduzane approached me, he was with an Indian man. He asked if he could introduce me to the Indian man who accompanied him. He may have been accompanied by another Indian man, but I was only introduced to one of them. I said yes to Duduzane’s request, and he introduced the Indian man as his “partner”. I assumed Duduzane to mean a business partner. As I set out more clearly below, I now know that the Indian man was Mr Rajesh Gupta. I should note at this point that on the flight to Dubai, Rajesh Gupta mentioned to me that “his brother” was a member of the President’s “*advance team*” (the significance of which will be explained below).
35. Duduzane then asked to introduce me to a black man who was seated elsewhere. He referred to this man as his “Chairman”. I do not know what he meant by the reference to “Chairman”. I assumed Dududzane to mean this in a business sense. The black man who Duduzane introduced me to was Mr Fana Hlongwane.
36. By the time I arrived in China it was already the first day of the State Visit. I was late as my bookings were made at the last minute. On my



arrival in China and on the first day of the State visit, the outdoor opening ceremony proceedings of the visit had begun. I had to skip this as I was required to register and get accredited for the Business meetings as well as for the State Banquet.

37. When I arrived at the Registration Hall, I looked for someone that could assist me as I was late because my booking had been made at the last minute. I spotted the Indian man that Duduzane had introduced me to on the flight.
38. I approached the Indian man to whom I was introduced on the flight (Rajesh Gupta). I requested his assistance with the accreditation process. He directed me to a table where another Indian man was seated, who assisted me with the general accreditation process. After I was assisted with that general accreditation, I was directed to another man, at another table. He told me that this man was responsible for Accreditation for the State Banquet. When I went over to the other man he promptly assisted me with the accreditation and handed me the special tag required for the State Banquet that was to take place later that evening.
39. I recall very distinctly that the Indian men (whom, as I have stated, I now know to be the Gupta brothers), played what appeared to be an oversight role at the meeting that day and they certainly appeared to be in charge of the logistics. The men were also very busy and constantly entered and exited the room in which the proceedings were taking place. I initially thought they were the security detail for the Presidential visit but after seeing how familiar they were with Ministers – talking freely and frequently with them – I became convinced they were not simply the security detail.



40. I began paying attention to the three Indian men in an attempt to place them and their respective roles. Whereas everyone else present wore only one tag around his or her neck, the three Indian men sported two tags each. One of their tags looked like the tag worn by everyone else but their other tag was different. I was unable to identify its purpose. They were also carrying two-way radios and they appeared to be in charge of the logistics for the South African contingent of the State visit.
41. As will become evident below, I subsequently came to learn that these three men were the Gupta brothers; namely Ajay, Atul and Rajesh.
42. After the ceremonial part, we all gathered into one large plenary hall where I spotted about twelve South African Ministers and saw many business people from South Africa. I felt that the Ministers who were present were cold towards me, which I found hurtful and puzzling.
43. At the end of the proceedings, I retreated to my hotel room. There was a State Banquet scheduled for later that evening. Upon my return to my hotel room, I decided against attending the State Banquet. Instead, I decided to stay in and order room service.
44. Whilst in my hotel room, I was contacted by the hotel reception desk, informing me that two Indian men were asking for my room number. I was advised that the men were claiming to be South African and they said they were part of the Presidential State visit.
45. I asked the receptionist to ask the men a few questions on my behalf. One of the Indian men was given the phone by the receptionist in order to speak to me. He introduced himself to me. I heard the word "Gupta".



I deduced that the man was from the Gupta family as those were the only Indian males whom I had encountered that day who appeared to be closely associated with Duduzane.

46. He told me that the President, Mr Jacob Zuma had sent him to my hotel to invite me to meet with him at the Chinese Presidential guesthouse, where he was staying. Since we were speaking on the telephone and not in person, I did not see the man and I am not sure which Gupta brother he was.
47. I asked the man if he worked for the Presidency. He replied that they were part of the "*Presidential delegation*", which he also referred to interchangeably as the President's "*advance team*". I did not understand what he meant by the term "*Presidential delegation*" as it is broad and would comprise many different officials. I therefore asked the man to provide further clarity. He then informed me that he was part of the "*Presidential entourage*".
48. When I asked the man on the telephone how I could possibly agree to be driven by complete strangers at night in a foreign country, he said that he took care of all President Zuma's state visits; that he lead the former President Zuma's "*advance team*" ahead of his State visits, which meant he went ahead of the President to check on security, logistics, etc. This also suggested to me that he was one of the Gupta brothers because Rajesh Gupta had told me on the flight to Dubai that his brother was a member of the President's "*advance team*".
49. I enquired how the man had come to know which hotel I was staying in. The man informed me that he had a background in security and that he



was well connected. I found it disturbing that he knew this because, as far as I was aware, I was staying at a different hotel to other persons that were part of the State Visit who I knew. Transnet had arranged accommodation for me at a different hotel, which was adjacent to the offices of the China Central Television building. I found this very disconcerting.

50. The man repeated that they were waiting to take me to the guesthouse where Mr Jacob Zuma was staying, for a private meeting. He said they would take me to the banquet afterwards. I was concerned for my safety because I did not know the man or how he had obtained my accommodation details. It also seemed strange to me that the former President Zuma would have requested to meet with me privately at night. Another of the reasons why I did not wish to go with the man was because I was wary of being alone at night with Mr Zuma, because I had heard stories about him and women. I consequently declined the meeting and the invitation to take me to the banquet.
51. After I declined to meet with Mr Zuma, the man said that they would contact the President and get back to me. A few minutes later, the man telephoned me again and informed me that Mr Zuma was waiting for me and that he would not leave to go to the banquet until he had met with me. I again declined. The man repeated that the President insisted that I go to meet him. I again declined. The man continued to phone me and his tone became threatening.
52. I asked the man how I could possibly lend myself to being driven by a stranger in a foreign country at night on the basis of what that man was telling me. I was also concerned because I thought it strange that I had



been trying for months to set up a meeting with the president but now suddenly, in a foreign land and at night, the president allegedly wished to see me. He became irritated and told me to stop wasting his time and the time of the President. I feared for my safety with this man trying to bully me into an alleged meeting with the President at night. Even if it was a legitimate invitation or instruction from the President to see him, I was also wary of being alone with the President at night in a foreign country. I had heard many stories about the President and women.

53. I was not prepared to risk my safety so I decided to tell the man for the very last time that I was going nowhere with him and that I was not going to attend the State Banquet.
54. Without saying so in as many words, he appeared to be questioning my refusal to meet with the President. . I eventually took the phone off the hook. I found the experience unnerving and troubling.
55. In a state of fright, I temporarily switched off my cell phone too, but after a while and after doing some thinking I switched it on again as I had decided to retrieve the number of the Chinese leader of the SOE's that I was going to meet with the next day on the margins of the State Visit. I told him that something had cropped up that was security related and that necessitated that we hold our meeting at the hotel instead of at the venue of the State Visit.
56. The following day we had a meeting which lasted the entire day at my hotel. By the end of the meeting, I was pleased that I had firm proposals that I could take back to Eskom and to my Committee.



57. I decided to bring forward my return to South Africa. To the best of my recollection I was meant to be in China for four days, but I had concluded my business with those I had to meet in China, and was assured that our agreement would become part of the Broad Agreements that were going to be signed between the hosting Chinese President and Mr Zuma. I was also feeling disheartened by the manner in which I had been treated by the other Ministers on the first day and I wished to go home. In addition, I was feeling particularly concerned for my safety after the call from the man who told me that he wanted to take me to meet with former President Zuma. After being unable to get hold of my secretary, I called the travel agency that Transnet had used to make my bookings and changed my booking to return home ahead of time.
58. Shortly after my return from China I was contacted by a certain journalist from the *Sunday Times*. He asked me questions pertaining to my visit to China as part of the State Visit. I was very surprised at this as I had just returned and I knew there was nothing untoward with my trip to China. I should mention in this regard that the Public Protector (Adv. Madonsela) and the Speaker of Parliament (Mr Max Sisulu) did not find me guilty of any wrongdoing.

THE OFFER MADE OF THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

59. I had been trying for some time to meet with Mr Zuma regarding the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor² amongst other issues. I had been sending

² The Pebble Bed-Modular-Reactor (PBMR) was a Nuclear Study project of Government. The project was overseen by two Departments and Ministries, one being the Energy Ministry and its Department (where policy for the project was regulated) and the Ministry as well as the Department of Public



numerous messages and requests through various channels.

60. I had communicated with Ms Lakela Kaunda (**Ms Kaunda**), who at the time I thought was Mr Zuma's personal assistant, in order to secure a meeting with Mr Zuma. On one Sunday evening in or around October 2010, about a week or so before the cabinet reshuffle, I received a telephone call from Ms Kaunda, to say that the President could see me the following day. I think Ms Kaunda was his PA although it could have been a different position but she definitely appeared to be from the president's office.
61. Ms Kaunda informed me that Mr Zuma would be available to meet with me the next day, being a Monday.
62. Ms Kaunda advised that a certain individual, would get in contact with me regarding the meeting. She further advised that if the individual failed to contact me, I should contact him on a number, which she provided to me. I do not recall if I asked for the person's number or if Ms Kaunda volunteered it to me.

Enterprises for Operational as well as Cost Allocation purposes. The PBMR was a Project of Eskom. Eskom was in partnership with an American Company by the name of Westinghouse.

When Mr Zuma became president of the ANC, even before he became president of the country, a political decision was taken by him and those that were in the leadership with him, to do away with the PBMR project. I found this decision to be highly irrational, as it did not make any political, financial or economic sense. I was still chairing the Portfolio Committee on the State-Owned Enterprises (S.O.E.s) when this irrational decision was taken. I was very worried and extremely uncomfortable with the decision to cancel that important and very strategic project.



63. I cannot recall whether I called the person or if he called me but we spoke later that evening. As far as a recall, I booked myself on a flight with South African Airways (SAA) from Cape Town to Johannesburg. The man offered me a ticket but I informed him that I needed to book it as I also had to make arrangements with the Passenger Assistance Unit as I was on crutches. I accordingly requested information regarding travel arrangements once I landed at the airport. In particular, I relayed to him my concerns regarding the short notice of the meeting and the fact that I used a wheelchair when I travel, as well as my concerns regarding transportation to take me to Mr Zuma since I was still recovering from an injury at the time and I was using crutches to walk.
64. The name of the man given to me by Ms Kaunda was Atul Gupta, together with his telephone number. The man reassured me that the logistics for travelling from OR Tambo International Airport had all been taken care of and that there would be someone waiting for me upon my arrival in order to take me to Former President Zuma.
65. I flew to Johannesburg on Monday morning and was met by two Indian men, one of whom was holding a placard with my name. They were Atul Gupta and Rajesh Gupta. The two men escorted me to their vehicle. I should mention that even though I had briefly encountered them on my visit to China, I believe that I only recognised one of them and even then I did not pay much attention or register that they were the Gupta brothers when they came to collect me at the airport. This is probably also because judging from their appearance; I initially thought that they were security or drivers for the President. I believed they were from the President's office as their attire and demeanour appeared very official. They wore dark suits, wore ear-pieces (for communicating) and



sunglasses. I do not recall the make of the vehicle save for the fact that it was a black twin cab "bakkie" with tinted windows and elevated wheels.

66. I found glossy magazines and newspapers in the vehicle. In order to keep myself occupied, I paged through them as we drove. I noticed that some of the magazines were about Sahara Computers and others about cricket. I was expecting to be taken to the Union Building to meet with the President. I was of the firm belief that one meets the President at either the Union Building or the Presidential home or possibly at Luthuli House on Mondays, which is where the President often is as the NEC of the ANC meets at Luthuli House on Mondays.
67. I was therefore surprised when, after driving for some time (but not long enough to have reached Pretoria), I noticed that we had come to a stop in a semi-industrial area. I enquired if this was the venue where I would be meeting with Mr Zuma. The two men informed me that we were still on our way to see Mr Zuma but that they first wanted me to meet someone else. They said it was their older brother whom they wanted to introduce me to. I asked why I would need to meet their brother, but I do not recall them answering.
68. We were parked in what appeared to be a parking lot similar to a parking lot at a shopping complex. I noticed that "Sahara" was written on the outside of the building at which we had stopped. I attach hereto marked "MPM1" a picture of the building. I was taken into the building and made to wait for a considerable amount of time for this person whom I had to meet.
69. I became irritated because it was unclear to me what was happening. At



the time, I only made the connection from advertisements that Sahara was a computer company but I did not know at that point that it was a Gupta company. I also recognised the name Sahara as it was touted as a major company playing a central role in a particular project in the Eastern Cape Economic Development Zone. That is what was on my mind as I climbed out of the car. I was led to the end of a L-shaped corridor, where I was shown to a well-worn chair and coffee table displaying many Sahara magazines and recent newspapers.

70. While waiting to be introduced to this person, I called my friend Daphne Mashile Nkosi (**Ms Nkosi**), who lives in Johannesburg, and informed her that I was in Johannesburg, on my way to see Mr Zuma in Pretoria at the Union Building. I told her I was scheduled to fly back to Cape Town later that day and I asked her if I could overnight at her home should I be delayed.
71. I was left sitting there as the men disappeared. I noticed that they had two-way radios. The one man, whom I later came to know as Atul Gupta, was constantly on the radio speaking in a foreign language. He informed me that the man I was to meet was still busy on a telephone call. I continued to wait and became increasingly annoyed and worried that I would be late for my meeting with Mr Zuma.
72. I was eventually taken into an office where an individual was introduced to me. I now know this man to be Ajay Gupta. Ajay Gupta remained seated when I entered the office. It was neither a posh nor a big office. He sat behind a desk.
73. After introducing himself to me as the eldest of the brothers who had met



me at the airport, he then proceeded to ask me questions about my family life. I should say that he greeted me by my surname before I could even tell him who I was. He said he was aware that I was a prominent Member of Parliament and that he had seen me on television and read of me in the media. He was very complimentary about my work. He appeared to know a lot about me.

74. It was initially difficult to strike up a conversation. He asked about my children. He seemed to show a particular interest in my son and wished to know where he went to school, how old he was, whether he played sport and so on. I mentioned that my son plays cricket for the Western Province junior team. He then told me all about his interest in cricket. Ajay Gupta then informed me that they had a suite at the Newlands cricket stadium in Cape Town and that he could get me tickets to the cricket whenever there was a game, in order for me to use their suite. I responded vaguely saying something like "Maybe my son would like that. I will ask him if he is interested". He also offered me a cricket bat for my son but I said I had bought him a new one recently. He said I should let him know when he needs another one and I said I will ask him.
75. As a matter of courtesy, I reciprocated and asked him about his family. He said that he had sent his youngest brother to study in the USA and that shortly thereafter, when the brother returned to India, they developed an interest in cricket and he sent the brother to South Africa ahead of him and he followed later. I also mentioned that I had noticed he was into computers because of "Sahara".
76. I noticed that Ajay Gupta was wearing a gold ring with a ruby stone on



his pointing finger. I asked about it and he informed me that it belonged to his father but that he (Ajay Gupta) had inherited it and now wears it as his father passed away and he was now the patriarch and in the Hindu culture it must be displayed on that finger to demonstrate his status and rank.

77. After the conversation about our families we sat in awkward silence. It is at this point that I expressed my concern regarding the time. I said it was getting late and that I had a meeting. To my surprise, Ajay Gupta knew that I was to be meeting with Mr Jacob Zuma. I had not disclosed this to him. He informed me that Mr Zuma had been delayed at Luthuli house as he said there had been a "COSATU strike" on that day. I was extremely perturbed by his intimate knowledge of the whereabouts of the President. When I left, Ajay Gupta informed me that we would meet again, which I took to mean as an exchange of pleasantries, wrapping up our conversation. He also said that the two men that had fetched me from the airport would take me to a place where I would wait for the President as he was running late. I assumed they would be taking me to Pretoria. At the time, I thought that the encounter was rather peculiar. In addition, it was unclear to me why I had been brought to meet with this man.

78. We (the other two Gupta brothers who had collected me from the airport and I) then drove from the Sahara building until we arrived at a huge residential home, which I did not recognise. The two brothers spoke to the security guards at the entrance, and then entered the premises. I now know that this is the Gupta home in Saxonwold which appears in the pictures attached hereto marked "MPM2".

79. I was unsure where we were. I asked why we still had to stop at yet



another place along the way to my meeting with Mr Zuma. I was under the impression that the meeting would be held at the Union Buildings. The two men said that I was to wait for Mr Zuma there.

80. The home was structured like a compound with a few mansion like houses. I was then taken into the biggest of the houses. The interior was very beautiful, with marble stairs at the entrance and expensive-looking artwork on the interior walls. We went up a few stairs, which led to what I would describe as a waiting room. It was an extremely spacious room even though it had only two sofas and a coffee table. I gathered it was still a work in progress.
81. Atul Gupta showed me the restrooms in the house. I used the facilities for ladies. The facilities were opulent and beautifully designed with gold details on the handles of the door and the toilet cistern handles. The bathrooms were not very spacious, but they also had very beautiful gold-plated mirrors that looked like they were of French design.
82. While waiting, Atul Gupta informed me that Ajay Gupta, whom I had met earlier at the Sahara building, would also be coming to meet with me. I was surprised as I had just met with him at the Sahara premises and was confused as to what was going on. Atul informed me further that Mr Zuma was delayed at Luthuli house. I was asked to be patient and to wait for him.
83. I sat on one of the couches in the waiting room. Atul Gupta asked if I would have anything to eat or drink. Out of politeness, I said yes. He informed me that he would go and fetch their Chef in order for me to be informed what was available. He then brought a young man who was



barefooted and wearing a vest. The young man went down on one knee (he almost bowed to me) and spoke to me in a foreign language that I was not familiar with. Atul Gupta informed me that the man was their chef and that they had brought him to South Africa from India. I was offered various lunch options. I chose mutton curry. I was uncomfortable with the man kneeling before us. I asked Atul Gupta to please inform him to stand up.

84. I was made to wait a long time, during which time I made another telephone call to Ms Nkosi. I told her that my meeting was running late and it was possible that I was not going to make my flight back to Cape Town. She assured me that I could stay at her house that evening if the need arose. The other reason that I called her was because I was feeling uneasy and wanted the comfort of someone knowing what was going on. As I did not know the place, I was unable to let her know the address and simply told her I was brought to a strange house to apparently wait for the President.
85. After waiting for a substantial amount of time – approximately two but maybe three hours – Ajay Gupta came into the room but through a different entrance from the one that I had entered through.
86. He greeted me once more and sat on the other couch. He then went on to ask about the uranium in the Northern Cape, saying that he knew I was from that province. He said that uranium was needed for nuclear energy and that they would soon be the main supplier of uranium to the Government's nuclear programme.
87. He referred to a legal problem that Denel had in India and stated that he



could solve it, as they were close to the Indian Government. This matter was top secret. I was accordingly surprised that he knew about it.

88. He then told me that he was aware that I was meeting with Mr Zuma in order to discuss, amongst other things, the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor. I was shocked that he knew this information. Ajay Gupta started talking about the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor and remarked that it should be closed because it was “burning money”.
89. Ajay Gupta went on to talk about the turnaround strategy of SAA and that it was not yielding results. He commented that the SAA route to India was not profitable and it was costing the country a lot of money. He stated that he thought that SAA’s India route should be stopped. I pointed to the bilateral relations between India and South Africa and the fact that passengers and goods are transported via the India route on a daily basis. I asked him what would happen to those passengers and goods if the airline route was cancelled. He told me not to worry as they were in a partnership with an airline that could take over this route.
90. Immediately after his statements about SAA’s India route, Ajay Gupta then very casually, and much to my astonishment, proceeded to offer me the position of Minister of Public Enterprises if I would agree to facilitate the closure of SAA’s India route when I became Minister. Ajay Gupta said there would be a cabinet reshuffle in the next week or so and he said he had an offer for me. He said that I could be the next Minister of Public Enterprises if I agreed to facilitate the closure of the route.
91. It is an understatement to say that I was shocked by the offer. I was stunned and wondered how Ajay Gupta had so much power. I responded,



firstly by informing him that the SAA statistics showed that the flight to India was doing very well. Secondly, I asked how he could be in a position to offer me a position as a minister. Ajay Gupta said he would put in a word with the President for me. After this statement there was silence in the room after which Ajay stated: "*We usually do*". I perceived his tone to be boastful. I then asked him who "*we*" was but he did not respond.

92. I was growing very agitated and angry and began to speak very loudly. I had become confrontational and began raising my voice. It was at that moment that Mr Zuma suddenly entered the room. He walked in from the same direction that Ajay Gupta had entered (as opposed to the entrance that I was brought through).
93. I immediately stood up to greet Mr Zuma, as is protocol. Ajay Gupta did not stand. Mr Zuma and Ajay Gupta did not greet each other.
94. I recall being struck at how swiftly Mr Zuma entered the room, at the very moment that I was telling Ajay Gupta that I would never take a position from a stranger (as those can only be offered by the President or Luthuli House), and at the moment that I was becoming increasingly agitated. I was very angry and voiced my concerns with Mr Zuma about the information that Ajay Gupta had and the offer which he had made to me.
95. Despite what I had just told him, Mr Zuma was very calm and kept telling me to calm down. Mr Zuma did not seem at all concerned or surprised when I informed him that Ajay Gupta had just offered me a ministerial position and I asked how he could possibly do that. Mr Zuma



simply repeated to me that I should not worry.

96. At the time, I felt more upset at the prospect that Mr Zuma was perhaps faulting me for my anger when he should actually have found fault in what I had just told him about Ajay Gupta. Mr Zuma did not negate or contradict anything I had just told him about what had passed between Ajay Gupta and I just moments before his arrival. When I realised that Mr Zuma was not taking it seriously, I decided it would be best to remove myself from the situation.
97. Still very angry and emotional at that point, I asked Mr Zuma to excuse me, indicating that I would miss my flight if I did not leave. I also apologised to Mr Zuma for not having agreed to see him in China. He simply kept on saying that all was fine and that I should keep calm.
98. Mr Zuma informed me that had he known that I was walking on crutches, he would not have had me travel from Cape Town to Johannesburg to meet with him. As Mr Zuma escorted me out he was offered food but declined, saying that he would be eating at his son Duduzane Zuma's house. Mr Zuma explained that his son lived "*next door*" to the house we were just in, in the same 'complex', and that his son often complained that he (Mr Jacob Zuma) was always eating at this house where the encounter had just occurred.
99. Mr Zuma walked me all the way to the twin cab "bakkie", carrying my handbag as I was walking with crutches. Ajay Gupta did not accompany us. He remained seated when Mr Zuma and I left the room, just as he had done when the President had entered the room. Mr Zuma then bid me farewell, saying: "*Hamba kahle Ntombazane, Kuzolunga. Zinakekele*".



meaning; “Go well young woman, everything will be OK. Look after yourself”. He also said that we would see each other again. He helped me into the car, still trying to calm me down and apologised for making me come to Johannesburg when I was on crutches. He continually referred to me as a “*Ntombazane*”.

100. As we drove off, I called Ms Nkosi once again and told her that the meeting did not take place but that I would brief her when I saw her in person. I was uncomfortable talking on the phone about the incident while in the car with the two Gupta brothers. I was then driven back to the airport.
101. Approximately one week or so later, and much to my surprise, Mr Zuma shuffled his cabinet as Ajay Gupta said he would. Indeed, Ms Hogan was removed from her position as Minister of Public Enterprises. As part of this reshuffle, Mr Zuma replaced Ms Hogan with Mr Gigaba as Minister of Public Enterprises.
102. It is my understanding that after the re-shuffle, SAA abandoned its SA-India route, and a Gupta-associated airline took over the route.

MY DISCLOSURE OF THE OFFER MADE TO ME BY AJAY GUPTA

First disclosures

103. I did not go public on the Saxonwold incident immediately. The Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence, of which I was a member, met on Wednesdays. Shortly after my encounter with Mr Zuma and the Guptas at their residence, I did disclose to a few members of the Committee



what had happened at my recent meeting with Mr Zuma. They were Hlengiwe Mgabadi, Dennis Bloem and Siyabonga Cwele (the chair of the Committee). They all took an interest in my account.

104. At the Committee meeting one or two of the members informed the chairperson at the time (Cwele) that they thought we ought to discuss certain individuals known as the Guptas. Cwele, however, persuaded the Committee not to take the matter further as Cwele informed us that he would take the matter to Luthuli House for consideration. Thereafter, we never heard of the matter again.
105. I should mention that I had a meeting with Gwede Mantashe and Jessie Duarte for in order to discuss certain issues. This was the second meeting which I had with them. By the time I met with them at Luthuli House the incident in Saxonworld had already occurred with Former President Zuma and Ajay Gupta. We discussed the China trip and my unhappiness regarding the China trip and about being unjustly treated as a result of the trip and the increasing corruption in the SOEs, which I was overseeing. I went as far as asking them to remove me from my position in parliament as I was very hurt because of all of these things. I also mentioned the Saxonworld incident and Gwede Mantashe left and said that he had another meeting and that Jessie Duarte should continue with the meeting. Jessie appeared to not want to discuss the matter.

Media and social media

106. In or around February 2013, reports emerged in the media that members of the Gupta family had used the Waterkloof air force base to land chartered planes with guests arriving from India in order to attend a



wedding of Vega Gupta and Aakash Jahajgarrha. The bride to be was the daughter of Achla Gupta who is the only sister to the Gupta brothers. After seeing the reports I made various posts on Facebook regarding the Gupta family.. At the time, my posts did not receive any media attention.

107. It was at this point, and because of the ongoing reports relating to the Gupta family, and my own research which I was conducting, that I truly began to realise the real magnitude of the power they were wielding in South Africa. I began regularly posting about the Gupta family.
108. On 14 March 2016, Mr Johan Abrie, a Democratic Alliance Member of Parliament, and an acquaintance and "*Facebook friend*", posted a picture on Facebook in which the face of a Gupta family member had been superimposed onto the South African Government emblem.
109. I responded to the Facebook post and, in effect, stated that the Gupta family had offered me the position of Minister of Public Enterprises when Barbara Hogan was removed, on condition that I would drop the SAA route to India and give it to them. A copy of the picture that Mr Abrie posted and response are attached and marked "**MPM3**" and "**MPM4**".
110. I stated as follows:

"But they hap previously asked me to become Minister of Public Enterprises when Barbara Hogan got the chop, provided that I would drop the SAA flight-route to India and give to them. I refused and so I was never made a Minister. The President was in another room when they offered me this in Saxonwold."



111. On 15 March 2016, the Presidency issued a statement in response to my comment, stating that "President Zuma has no recollection of Ms Mentor. He is therefore unable to comment on any alleged incident in her career". I attach the statement hereto marked "MPM5"
112. I then posted the following facebook post, a copy of which is attached marked "MPM6":

"I chaired the ANC National Parliamentary Caucus when President Zuma was a Deputy President. He sat next to me and spoke through me and with me in Caucus each Thursday when Parliament was in session. I sat with him in the ANC's Political Committee each month too. He is the one who was sent by the TOP 6 then to tell me that the ANCC has deputed me to be the Chair of Caucus then. He is the one who introduced me to the ANC Caucus then as a new Chair of Caucus. I had a bi-monthly with him in his Tuynhuis Offices then. He knew me right from when we arrived from exile. He met me frequently on the ground in the Northern Cape on many occasions. I know President Mbeki and Kgalema Motlanthe will never ever say they have no recollection of me. As for the Guptas. I am not done yet, a lot still need to be told ... will leave this here for now. I will only talk to the media if necessary from Friday late. The scoundrels can continue to insult the bark. If anything happens to me or my family, you all know who to suspect. I am NOT scared thou. I know my Redeemer Lives!"

113. On 17 March 2016 I further posted:

"President Zuma was in that Gupta house with me on that day. He came in after I rejected the offer. He accompanied me down the 4/5/6 marble (covered) wide stairs at the entrance of the Gupta house to their black twin-cab with heavily black-tinted windows which taking me back to the airport. I was on crutches. It was about 5 - 7 days or so before Barbara Hogan was reshuffled as a Minister of Public Enterprises. The rest I will reveal at the right time."



114. A copy of this post is “MPM7”
115. Journalists began approaching me for comments after this Facebook post. I made statements to a number of journalists regarding the circumstances under which members of the Gupta family had offered me a ministerial post. As a result, a number of articles were subsequently published in this regard.
116. On about 16 March 2016, Mr Mcebisi Jonas released a statement detailing his own encounters with the Gupta family and Mr Zuma. According to this statement, members of the Gupta family offered Mr Jonas the position of Minister of Finance prior to the removal of the erstwhile Minister of Finance, Mr Nhlanhla Nene.
117. There were reports that the ANC would be investigating the state capture matter. I suggested that there may be other people who were not ANC members that might also have some information on the matter and that the State should therefore investigate.

The Hawks

118. Shortly afterwards, on or about 26 May 2016 I went to lay charges against Mr Zuma and some Ministers of Cabinet and certain board members of certain state owned enterprises with the Durbanville South African Police Service (SAPS). My statement was handwritten in my house by a Captain Pieterse, from a Major General Veary's office, and who was accompanied by a Captain van Wyngaard.
119. I subsequently requested my statement from the police but I was told it



was with the Hawks. The SAPS Detective division said it was no longer with them. I was told that General Ntmeza of the Hawks had flown someone by jet to fetch my statement from SAPS Western Cape Detective division to take it to his offices.

120. A member of the Hawks, Advocate Mtolo along with another member of the Hawks whose name I do not recall, then came to my house with a typed version of the statement. Advocate Mtolo advised me that the reason for the delay was that I had complained about President Zuma and that their hands were consequently tied. They could not proceed with my complaint while the president was named in my complaint. After much deliberation, I agreed to remove Mr Zuma's name from the affidavit in the hopes that the Hawks would investigate my complaints. As far as I am aware, the Hawks do not seem to be actively investigating the matter and there does not seem to have been any progress in this regard.
121. At the time I made handwritten changes on the statement as it did not accurately capture what I had told Peterson and Van Wygaard and had various errors. Advocate Mtolo and I agreed that he would return to my home with a properly typed statement incorporating the changes and insertions which I had made, this however did not happen. I attach the statement hereto marked "MPM8".
122. At some point I went to lay a charge against Mr Ntmeza and Advocate Mtolo. I laid a charge of obstructing justice at the IPID office in Belville. I took pictures of myself outside of the police station and posted them on my Facebook page.
123. After I had made many enquiries on the progress of the charges I laid and



after I had demanded my original Statement from the Police and the Hawks on several occasions to no avail in or about in mid-December 2016, I received a telephone call from Advocate Mtolo and a certain Advocate Voggel of the NPA from Pretoria. They requested to meet with me on around the 14th of December of the same year.

The Public Protector

124. The DA, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and other organisations subsequently requested the Public Protector to open an investigation into my and Mr Jonas's allegations. In effect, the Public Protector was asked to investigate whether the president allowed members of the Gupta family to influence and play a role in appointing cabinet ministers in exchange for executive decisions favourable to the business interests of the Gupta family.
125. The Public Protector did indeed initiate such an investigation. In or around August 2016, the Public Protector interviewed me as part of her investigation into the issue of "*state capture*" by the Gupta family. This was hardly surprising given that my disclosures were partly the reason that the DA and others requested the Public Protector to investigate the issue.
126. In addition, as far as I am aware, I am the only person to have knowledge (and to have made a public statement to that effect) that this happened with Mr Zuma's knowledge and approval while he was President. I have willingly co-operated with the Public Protector throughout.
127. In October 2016, it was reported in the media that Mr Zuma, still the



President at the time, was requesting a list of witnesses from the Public Protector. I viewed this as an attempt by the President to intimidate those persons who had given evidence to the Public Protector against him. In order to show that I was not going to be intimidated and to stand up to what I perceived as threats of intimidation against me and others who had provided information to the Public Protector, I posted the following on Facebook (retrieved from a twitter account) (a screenshot of the post is attached and marked "MPM9"):

"Dear Zuma. I spoke to the PP. I revealed things about. You and your folly relationship with the Guptas through your son. I can go one-on-one with you on a publicly televised hearing only AFTER the PP releases her Report, with or without you having responded to the questions she posed to you six months ago..! am NOT scared of you, of your lies, of your tricks, your delaying tactics, your attempted intimidation, your harassment, and what you normally do to people. You are a coward that hides behind State power all the time. Where ever have you heard a person that is being investigated by the PP making the silly demands you are making? Power has really ran to your head. I feel sorry for you"

128. A few days later, my Facebook account was hacked. It was also blocked. This had happened previously as well, subsequent to my disclosure made in March 2016. I found it more than a mere coincidence that my account was blocked after making the disclosures referred to.
129. Even today, I still suspect that my account was hacked because I posted adverse and damaging information about the president and his relationship with the Gupta family. My account has been hacked on more than one occasion thereafter.
130. I made the disclosures set out above and willingly co-operated with the Public Protector because I believe that the issue of "*state capture*" is the



single greatest threat to our constitutional democracy since the end of apartheid.

131. I understand that I will be asked to confirm the contents of this statement under oath at the Inquiry.

132. I reserve my rights to supplement this statement if necessary.



MABEL PATRONELLA MENTOR

25 July 2018
DATE