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| **MEDIA STATEMENT** **COMMITTEE FOR SECTION 194 ENQUIRY HEARS CROSS-EXAMINATION OF SPHELO SAMUEL**  **Parliament, Thursday, 28 August 2022 –** The Committee for Section 194 Enquiry into the Public Protector (PP) Adv Busisiwe Mkhwebane’s fitness to hold office today continued with cross-examination of Mr Sphelo Samuel the representative of the Free State Office of the Public Protector. In 2020 Mr Samuel requested the Speaker of the National Assembly (NA) to launch an investigation into Adv Mkhwebane. The main focus of his evidence yesterday was on Vrede Dairy investigation. The committee heard that Adv Mkhwebane, as the new PP, allegedly made attempts to ensure that no adverse findings against politicians were contained in the report and those included findings against the former Premier of the Free State Mr Ace Magashule and the former Free State’s MEC for Agriculture, Mr Mosebenzi Zwane. Mr Samuel said he accepted Adv Mkhwebane’s directive. Today, Adv Mpofu acting on behalf of Adv Mkhwebane stated that Mr Samuel undermined and underestimated Adv Mkhwebane.  Adv Mpofu disputed that and stated that Mr Samuel thought that the PP is not intellectually fit for the role.  He asked Mr Samuel if he thought Adv Mkhwebane was intimidated by him (Mr Samuel). In response Mr Samuel said that he believed that he could certainly handle certain things in the Office of the PP better than Adv Mkhwebane.  Mr Samuel said, according to him, the fact that Adv Mkhwebane never practised law is another main difference between him and her. He stated that Adv Mkhwebane was intellectually threatened by him and other managers. Mr Samuel further argued that Adv Mkhwebane struggled to lead meetings and discussions in their presence in the Office of the PP. He added that Adv Mkhwebane's restructuring of the Office of the PP also had adverse consequences on the quality of the PP’s report. Earlier in the day, Adv Mpofu emphasized that the PP never invited former Free State MEC for Agriculture Mr Mosebenzi Zwane to her 50th birthday party when the investigation of the Vrede Dairy Farm was still taking place and that matter was raised in Mr Samuel’s affidavit. Apparently Mr Zwane arrived in the party as someone’s guest as he was not invited. Mr Samuel went on in saying that Mr Zwane’s attendance to Adv Mkwhebane's birthday party was a conflict of interest. According to him that amounts to incompetence in the interpretation of the PP’s role, which could be seen as a misconduct. He said that, that created an impression that Adv Mkhwebane was protecting Mr Zwane. Adv Mpofu accused Mr Samuel of applying double standards. He contended that the  reinvestigation into the Vrede Dairy Farm was carried out, so the committee shouldn't be left with an impression that it was swept under the carpet. Adv Mpofu further put to Mr Samuel that the investigation of the Vrede Dairy Farm was conducted for three years under the former PP, Adv Thuli Madonsela. He said Mr Samuel took two years to investigate the role of the politicians, but Adv Mkhwebane took less time than both of them and still she is accused of sweeping things under the carpet. In response to that, Mr Samuel said that Adv Mkhwebane had resources which he did not have to conduct the investigation. Committee Chairperson Mr Qubudile Dyantyi cautioned Adv Mpofu several times during the cross-examination to scale down his interaction with the witness. Mr Dyantyi  indicated that the committee will continue with Mr Samuel tomorrow as well as recall Mr Hassen Ebrahim to conclude his testimony.  The enquiry is hybrid and can be followed live on Parliament’s media platforms. Committee documents can be found on its page on [Committee for Section 194 Enquiry - Parliament of South Africa](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=5bf8a2a5f4&e=da105e4f6a) **ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SECTION 194 ENQUIRY, MR QUBUDILE DYANTYI.** For media enquiries or interviews, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:**Name: Rajaa Azzakani (Ms)****Tel: 021 403 8437****Cell: 081 703 9542****E-mail:** razzakani@parliament.gov.za To keep up to date with the work of Parliament, please go to the daily Parliamentary Papers:[Parliamentary Programme](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=89305ca2ad&e=da105e4f6a), [Order Papers](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=c8e18dc5a9&e=da105e4f6a), [Minutes of Proceedings](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=f1cc198b0e&e=da105e4f6a), [ATCs](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=e664dd8aa6&e=da105e4f6a), [Question Papers](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=e3c58eb127&e=da105e4f6a), [Internal Question Papers](https://parliament.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=174940c63c5e06b60f5650bea&id=6306abcdb6&e=da105e4f6a). To access your Parliament online press control (Ctrl) and simultaneously click one of the icons below:

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