

UDC 343.85:343.9.02(680)

CERIF: S 149

DOI: 10.51204/Anali_PFBU_26302A

Uglješa RADULOVIĆ, PhD*

WHISTLEBLOWERS AS AGENTS EXPOSING SYSTEMIC CRIMINALITY: A STUDY OF TWO SOUTH AFRICAN PERIODS

The Republic of South Africa's recent history, and contemporary period, has fallen victim to systemic criminality, which this article argues has transpired across two periods, namely state capture under Jacob Zuma's presidency and the contemporary period encompassing the capture of the policing apparatus. The full extent of both cases of capture emerged because of disclosures by whistleblowers. Across both periods, whistleblowers have faced retaliation. This article, however, contends that an observable pattern of escalation in retaliation has transpired. It determines that state capture whistleblowers were largely subjected to social and legal retaliation, while policing apparatus whistleblowers have been frequently subjected to physical retaliation (assassinations). This is the result of inadequate measures taken to address previous instances of systemic criminality, thereby setting a precedent in which wrongdoers seldom face meaningful punitive consequences. The recommendation is that the South African state authorities need to react quickly to reverse the trend.

Key words: *State capture. – Systemic criminality. – Whistleblowing.*

* Senior Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, uradulovic@uj.ac.za, ORCID iD: 0000-0002-0245-9857.

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary period in the Republic of South Africa, along with its recent history, has been vitiated by frequent revelations regarding high-level malfeasance, manifesting as corruption and capture of integral state elements, leaving a profound impact on the country. This capture, executed through illicit and covert influence over state affairs, has persisted over two periods.

The first period encompasses state capture during the presidency of Jacob Zuma. The second period, which is currently being detailed by a commission of inquiry, entails the capture of South Africa's policing apparatus. This article, therefore, seeks to explore the recent periods of systematic criminality that have deeply affected South Africa's democracy. Central to this exploration are the narratives of whistleblowers that have brought this criminality to the fore. The act of whistleblowing can be understood as "the disclosure by organization members (former or current) of illegal, immoral or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organizations that may be able to effect action" (Near, Miceli 1985, 4).

Employing this long-standing seminal understanding of the concept, this article accepts that a disclosure needs to entail the reporting of a perceived wrongdoing to an authority that has the capacity to effect remedial action, but it broadens the understanding of the whistleblower agent to include an organizational insider as opposed to a constricting requirement of the agent having to be an employee. This is supported by Peter Jubb's (1999, 83) notion that the agent (or "actor" element, as Jubb refers to it) merely needs to be a person with privileged access to an organization's information or data, effectively reducing the agent requirement to "insider". This article also accepts that the whistleblower does not need to exclusively make a disclosure to an internal authority. Rather, as Vandekerckhove (2006, 25) has indicated, a whistleblower can make a disclosure to "internal authorities, external authorities or the media". Therefore, a disclosure can be made via three tiers: first, internally to an authority "within the organization"; second, externally to an agency outside of the confines of the organization (Park *et al.* 2008, 930); and third, publicly to the media with the third tier acting as "a watchdog over the second tier" (Vandekerckhove 2006, 18).

Therefore, considering that whistleblowers are organizational insiders that have reported an illicit act to an internal, external or public authority, this article examines how such individuals have served as agents exposing systemic criminality. It examines two broader high-profile cases (or, effectively, periods of capture) that have transpired, and are currently transpiring, in South Africa – state capture under Jacob Zuma's presidency

and the capture of the policing apparatus as the contemporary period. The objective of this article is, thus, to examine not only the two periods of systemic criminality but also the role of whistleblowers in exposing both periods. Furthermore, since one of the primary concerns of this article is that of the roles of whistleblowers in exposing systemic criminality, it aims to illustrate the nature of retaliation experienced by whistleblowers across periods – positing that an observable pattern of escalation in retaliation has transpired, signaling an evolution from the Zuma-era state capture to the contemporary capture of the policing apparatus (with a new tendency of wrongdoers to deploy physically violent reprisals). In addressing its objective, this article utilizes documents as sources of data. For the purposes of social scientific research, a document entails any material that can be read, is readily available for analysis, and is relevant to the topic under study (Bryman 2012, 523). This article, thus, relies on pertinent digital and print news outputs, relevant academic research, and books concerned with both systemic criminality and disclosure.

2. CONTEXTUALIZING CAPTURE

It is of utmost importance to begin the contextualization of capture in South Africa by conceding that it is not a new phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a phenomenon that has widely affected the territory of present-day South Africa from the very arrival of the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) – the Dutch East India Company – in Table Bay on the Cape Peninsula. European colonization of the southern tip of Africa was accompanied by several cases of capture, stretching from Dutch arrival through to apartheid rule (Blackman, Dall 2021; Radulovic 2025). In a rereading of South Africa's history, one could present the argument that the country was founded with capture in mind.

The introductory contextualization within this article intentionally refrains from the use of the central noun “state”, but rather refers exclusively to capture. The motivation is twofold. First, at the time of the capture of the Cape Colony, when VOC governing agents executed not only the capture of the said colony but also of the land itself, “the Colony was not a state in the sense of a nation or territory as an organised political community under one government” (Radulovic 2025). Thus, how (and when) we understand and define the South African state to have been founded in its contemporary form is merely a matter of semantics. Second, with recent revelations pertaining to the capture of South Africa's policing apparatus, it would entail prematurely defining the capture of the apparatus as a capture of the state (with it, at

present, not being directly comparable to the common understanding of state capture as it transpired under Jacob Zuma's presidency). Regardless, the term state capture still holds value and relevance in both cases, since its primary constituting concepts drive an understanding of the implications of a clandestine network capturing elements integral to the healthy functioning of a state – for the purposes of private gain.

Thus, it is relevant to provide an understanding of state capture and then delve into the intricacies of the systematic criminality that has plagued South Africa. The term “state capture” was initially applied to Eastern European states undergoing post-socialist transitions tainted by interference and irregularities (Longhurst 2016, 151; Myburgh 2017, 4; Uzelac 2003, 103). However, this phenomenon has since been identified as manifesting in mature liberal democracies, prominently enacted by the finance sector in both the United States and Western Europe (Radulovic 2025). This is effectively a form of systematic corruption with far-reaching consequences. With state capture fully realized, private actors encroach on state affairs by directing state policies to serve their private interests (Desai 2018, 501; Fazekas, Tóth 2016, 320).

A network intent on shaping state outcomes must develop substantial organizational capacity to realize its objectives. This is achieved through recurrent and increasingly systematized transactions (Bhorat *et al.* 2017, 5). The actors engaged in such illicit behavior strategically consolidate around pivotal state institutions, enabling them to advance private interests to the detriment of collective welfare (Fazekas, Tóth 2016, 320). Over time, this network acquires the capacity to “influence the design and adoption of new laws, rules, and regulations”, while simultaneously manipulating existing frameworks (Mbaku 2018, 772). Realizing these ends necessitates collusive practices that divert public resources, facilitated through the coordinated involvement of private beneficiaries and compromised officials (Desai 2018, 501; Trantidis, Tsagkroni 2017, 263).

The consequences of state capture are dire. It leads to an absolute state descent, resulting in the deterioration of the rule of law, severe economic implications affecting both individual citizens and the state as a whole, and thus a loss of citizen confidence transpires.

2.1. The Zuma Era: The Capture of the State

The two cases of capture examined for this study were selected because they have both significantly impacted South Africa; both are extremely severe instances of capture, and both cases (or periods) have resulted in the formation of commissions of inquiry tasked with uncovering the full depth of systemic criminality. The first case is that of state capture during Jacob Zuma's presidency, which commenced on 9 May 2009. What preceded this appointment was a highly contested jostle for the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) – a political party that had started as a liberation movement, negotiated a peaceful transition from segregationist white minority rule to democracy, and eventually firmly established itself as the absolutely dominant political force in South Africa. The intra-ANC power struggle that preceded Jacob Zuma's presidency, between anti-apartheid struggle stalwarts (the outgoing president, Thabo Mbeki, and the incoming president, Jacob Zuma), would steer South Africa in the direction of state capture. Thabo Mbeki had grown increasingly unpopular as president, with the 52nd national elective conference of the ANC in December 2007 being testament to this. The conference "showed resentment against Mbeki and his followers for their determination to cling to power and in effect deprive ANC comrades, arguably at least as qualified as the incumbents, of a turn to drink from the trough" (Booyesen 2011, 35).

At the conference, Mbeki was ousted as president of the ANC. Nine months later, he would eventually be ousted as the president of South Africa. The four interrelated factors that drove the ousting of Mbeki were intra-ANC democratic rotation, a "revenge" against Mbeki for having acted against certain members of the ANC, party member greed and careerism, and policy and ideological differences (largely centered around divergent meanings of, and motivations for, nationalization) (Booyesen 2011, 35). The ANC party leaders ultimately announced that they removed Mbeki from office because "he had used the country's law-enforcement system to undermine Zuma's chances of succeeding him" (Lindow 2008). The succeeding Jacob Zuma would, in due course, build a network that would embed systemic criminality into the fabric of South Africa's governing apparatus.

The ANC had negotiated a triple transition, encompassing social, political and economic change (Uys 2014, 205–213). This negotiated transition would end apartheid and, consequently, exploitative white minority rule (Radulovic 2026, 51). The ANC, graduating from a liberation movement, was a crucial cog in facilitating this relatively peaceful negotiated transition, granted that while the country did not descend into a civil conflict, at the time, there was the presence of political violence – largely stemming from two historically

black political parties vying for public support leading up to the transition (Kaufman 2017, 511–513; Radulovic 2023b, 64). One of these parties was the ANC. Nevertheless, the ANC was the principal force for transformation in South Africa. It would lose its status as the principal force for transformation through a silent coup organized around a relatively small core network comprised of Jacob Zuma and his collaborators (Bhorat *et al.* 2017, 2). The ensuing outcome would be the capture of the state.

Jacob Zuma built a network of collusion organized largely around himself, close relatives, ministers and politicians loyal to him, as well as influential private individuals. The key actors in this arrangement were the Gupta family (three Indian brothers that had migrated to South Africa in the early 1990s and established a powerful information technology company) along with Jacob Zuma and most notably his son, Duduzane (Basson, du Toit 2017, 56 and 60; Myburgh 2017, 21; Pauw 2017, 20). The Gupta family, through its close affiliation with Jacob and Duduzane Zuma, leveraged state decision-making and consequently secured lucrative state contracts (Desai 2018, 500). Complicit ministers and politicians would also benefit from this relationship, with many crucial state-owned enterprises being misappropriated for the benefit of a few private corrupters and corrupted officials. The long reach of this capture would extend well past merely Gupta influence, and subsequently engage other actors and government enterprises.

Capitalizing on the vulnerability of the state, owing to the top echelons of the government being compromised, additional opportunists stepped in to capture facets of the state (and it would be unrelated to the Zuma-Gupta network, yet still perpetrated under the Zuma presidency) (Radulovic 2023a, 104). As a consequence, state institutions such as the Department of Correctional Services and the Public Investment Corporation (PIC), the largest asset manager on the African continent, were subjected to processes of state capture (Mahlaka 2019; PIC Commission 2019; Styan, Vecchiatto 2019, 39). This capture was executed by a new cohort of actors with strong affiliations to the ANC.

The financial damage incurred by South Africa was substantial. Early estimates placed that financial damage at ZAR 1.5 trillion (approximately EUR 79.5 billion in early 2026) (Merten 2019). Despite the profound quantifiable financial losses for the country, significant socio-economic strain was also exerted on the populace and the country's international standing was greatly eroded (Radulovic 2024, 55). At a structural level, state capture precipitated a collapse of public trust in governmental institutions, debilitated key economic sectors tasked with fostering growth, and undermined both domestic and global confidence in South Africa's economic stability (Bhorat *et al.* 2017, 63).

The Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector including Organs of State (conventionally referred to as the Zondo Commission¹) was tasked with determining the scale of capture that ensnared the country. The Commission produced an extensive five-part report which established that several state-owned enterprises capitulated under state capture. For example, part one of the report identified that the national flag carrier airline, South African Airways (SAA), had its leasing agreements, and catering, procurement and treasury divisions perverted for the benefit of the corrupt network (Zondo 2022a, 2–447). It was further established that the Government Communication and Information System was captured by a Gupta-linked entity in order to misappropriate government funding (Zondo 2022b, 450–623). Even the South African Revenue Service was the victim of the siphoning of funds via a private entity (Zondo 2022c, 625–714).

Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo offered several recommendations which were detailed in the Commission's report (with the last part of the report released on 22 June 2022). Yet, a mid-2025 progress report indicated that, of the 218 recommendations, only approximately 4.5% of the cases had been fully finalized, with "the outcomes of acquittal, withdrawal, or termination of investigation [being] ringfenced within the banner of 'finalised'", which signals that little action has been taken to hold the perpetrators of state capture to account and that the judiciary has responded very slowly to the Zondo recommendations (Radulovic 2025). The state capture revelations did, however, result in the eventual removal of Jacob Zuma as president of South Africa. One could consider it a removal in the broader sense, even though he opted to resign as president of South Africa on 14 February 2018, since he was instructed by the ANC to do so, failing which he would have faced a motion of no confidence supported by his own political party (Merten 2018). These circumstances developed as a consequence of the state capture allegations, despite Jacob Zuma having been the one to establish the Zondo Commission in January 2018 in order to investigate the allegations of state capture (albeit having faced mounting public and political pressure to do so).

¹ Raymond Zondo chaired the eponymous Zondo Commission from 2018 to 2022. At the time of his appointment as the chairperson of the said commission, he was serving as the Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa. He would later occupy the role of Chief Justice of South Africa, until his retirement in 2024.

2.2. The Contemporary Period: The Capture of South Africa's Policing Apparatus

Systemic criminality in South Africa did not come to a definite end despite the state capture revelations, Zuma stepping down as president, and the Zondo Commission recommendations. Rather, what eventually transpired was a transition into a new period in which the locus of capture shifted from the executive and administrative centers of the state to the institutions tasked with enforcing the law. Thus, this second period has effectively been characterized by the progressive capture of South Africa's policing apparatus. While distinct from the Zuma-era state capture, the capture of the policing apparatus has directly undermined the state's capacity for crime control and it has, subsequently, also undermined the rule of law.

Unlike the former (and more common understanding of) state capture, which centered on the manipulation of policy formation and procurement fraud, the capture of the policing apparatus operates through the strategic neutralization, repurposing, and paralysis of law enforcement functions. This form of capture does not primarily seek to control the key functions of the state (as was the case under the Zuma-era state capture), but rather it seeks to infiltrate policing structures so that criminal networks are able to shield themselves from detection, disrupt investigations, and intimidate or eliminate perceived threats.

Revelations regarding the spectacular scale of the capture of the policing apparatus began emerging when the Provincial Police Commissioner of the KwaZulu-Natal Province, Lieutenant-General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi, convened a media briefing on 6 July 2025, alleging that the Minister of Police and the Deputy National Police Commissioner were protecting a criminal syndicate (Singh 2025). President Cyril Ramaphosa (who succeeded Jacob Zuma as president on 15 February 2018) announced the establishment of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Criminality, Political Interference, and Corruption in the Criminal Justice System (widely referred to as the Madlanga Commission²) shortly after Lieutenant-General Mkhwanazi went public with his allegations. The Madlanga Commission proceedings commenced on 17 September 2025 and, as of mid-2026, are still ongoing.

² Mbuyiseli Madlanga, a retired judge, presides over the eponymously named Madlanga Commission. His last appointment before retirement was as the Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa in the Constitutional Court.

The Madlanga Commission revelations have exposed, and continue to expose, a deep justice crisis in South Africa. In accomplishing this, the Madlanga Commission has thus far detailed a web of systemic criminality, involving political actors, senior law enforcement officials, intelligence operatives, and even segments of the judiciary. Lieutenant-General Mkhwanazi's allegations commenced with his interpretation of why the Political Killings Task Team (PKTT), which he led, was disbanded. The PKTT was a specialized police operations unit assigned to the investigation of politically motivated murders in the KwaZulu-Natal province (a province with a long history of contestation for resources and violent political conflict) (Ngcobo 2025; Radulovic 2025). It was disbanded allegedly in order to cease investigations into the illicit operations of a criminal syndicate with connections to politicians, senior police officials, and state prosecutors (Nozulela & Mlambo 2025).

Inadvertently, it would be the very disbandment of the PKTT that would draw attention to the capture of the policing apparatus. Since its disbandment led to Lieutenant-General Mkhwanazi going public with his allegations and the Madlanga Commission subsequently being established, the disbandment of the PKTT was thus, paradoxically, the very catalyst that would put in motion the events that exposed the capture of the policing apparatus. Crucially, the Madlanga Commission exposed the existence of the Big Five.³

Testifying before the Madlanga Commission, Lieutenant-General Dumisani Khumalo, who was the chief of the South African Police Service (SAPS) Crime Intelligence Division⁴ until 2025, exposed that the Big Five cartel had “penetrated South Africa’s political sphere and is also involved in tender fraud, extortion, kidnappings and contract killings” (Dolley 2025). Khumalo would go on to allege that the cartel had captured the criminal justice system by enlisting the collaboration of judicial and law enforcement officials, in order “to manipulate investigations, suppress evidence and obstruct legal proceedings that threatened its operations” (Dolley 2025). During his testimony, Khumalo named several individuals connected to the Big Five cartel “creating the impression that the Big Five has connections extending from the top of the police ministry” (Dolley 2025). Through collected testimonies, two of the kingpins of the Big Five have become

³ Appropriately named after the eponymous Big Five animals of Africa – lion, leopard, elephant, rhinoceros, and buffalo – which are the most difficult to hunt on foot. All Big Five animals can currently be found on the South African banknotes.

⁴ The intelligence agency responsible for tracking criminal elements within South Africa.

known. Khumalo stated that one of the kingpins, influential businessman Vusimuzi “Cat” Matlala, was funding the Minister of Police’s delegates at ANC events, who would, in return, provide classified police intelligence (Moichela 2025a). Cat Matlala’s key point of political influence was “political fixer” Brown Mogotsi, whom he used “to infiltrate the political sphere, control the SAPS, and also influence the judiciary” (Moichela 2025a).

The other known kingpin allegedly constituting one part of the Big Five cartel, Katiso “KT” Molefe, has also been named at the epicenter of the Madlanga Commission revelations. Molefe, also a businessman, has a long history of being involved in the public sector and was also once the Gauteng⁵ Provincial Manager for the National Lotteries Board. Molefe is facing “multiple charges, including murder, conspiracy to commit murder, and possession of unlicensed firearms and ammunition” (Majadibodu 2025). He also stands accused of masterminding the assassination of South African musician Oupa Sefoka, popularly known as DJ Sumbody. According to an anonymous witness testifying before the Madlanga Commission (referred to on record as Witness B), Katiso Molefe’s nephew, Lucky Molefe, manipulated a multi-million-rand tender involving Transnet⁶ (Moloi 2025). Once investigations were launched into the tender, engineer Armand Swart was assassinated in what was a case of mistaken identity – the assassins had incorrectly presumed that Swart had blown the whistle on the tender fraud (Moloi 2025). Katiso Molefe and veteran detective Michael Pule Tau have been placed in the vicinity of Swart’s murder days before he was assassinated, allegedly having been there to conduct scouting activities (Khanyile 2025).

Michael Pule Tau, along with other hitmen, was arrested in connection to the Swart murder (Seeletsa 2025). Tau, being a veteran detective, “had unfettered access to police profiling tools” which equipped him with “invaluable intelligence” to carry out the murder of Swart (Wicks 2025, 213). Four of the assassins implicated in Swart’s death have also been formally arraigned in connection with the murder of DJ Sumbody, and, according to the national police spokesperson, the same weapons were used in both killings (Koka 2025b). The forensic analysis of seized cellular phones has led to “Katiso Molefe being identified as a central figure” in the Swart murder conspiracy (Wicks 2025, 212). With both Molefe and Matlala being implicated as kingpins forming part of the Big Five cartel, and their access to

⁵ Gauteng is the most populous province in South Africa, with Johannesburg (the financial capital) and Pretoria (the executive capital) both being located in the province.

⁶ A South African state-owned rail, port and pipeline company.

policing agents and the accompanying police resources, the criminal capture of South Africa's policing apparatus has raised significant concerns regarding how compromised the state has become.

3. EXPOSING SYSTEMIC CRIMINALITY ACROSS PERIODS

Both the Zuma-era state capture revelations and contemporary allegations of the capture of the policing apparatus have largely come to the fore (or have, at the very least, been adequately detailed) because of the disclosures of whistleblowers.

3.1. State Capture Whistleblowers

The state capture revelations were primarily the result of whistleblowers coming forward with information that would have otherwise remained undiscovered. Arguably the critical discourse moment that foregrounded state capture was the act of two anonymous whistleblowers. "Stan" and "John" had acquired hard drives that belonged to a company owned by the Gupta Family – Sahara Computers (the same company where Duduzane Zuma was once employed as an intern) (Radulovic 2024, 54; Uys 2022, 74). The hard drives contained 300 000 emails that detailed nefarious relationships between the Gupta Family, Duduzane Zuma, numerous government officials, and chief executive officers of a number of state-owned enterprises (Uys 2022, 74). "Stan" and "John" approached a prominent South African lawyer who, with the assistance of independent media outlets, publicized the information (Uys 2022, 74–75). The emails would come to be known as the Gupta Leaks, "ultimately contribut[ing] to the establishment of the Zondo Commission" where they were formally admitted as evidence (Uys 2022, 75).

The key information detailing state capture was further supplemented with disclosures from several other whistleblowers. Part one of the report produced by the Zondo Commission determined that the operations of SAA and its associated companies had become compromised and perverted (Zondo 2022a, 2–447), and a large contribution to the detailing of the nefarious affairs at SAA was the result of Cynthia Stimpel's disclosure. Stimpel was SAA's Group Treasurer when she opposed a deal worth ZAR 256,000,000 (approximately EUR 13,500,000 in early 2026) which she deemed suspicious (Radulovic 2023a, 105). She immediately made a disclosure to the National Treasury (Stimpel 2021, 123), yet no action was taken by the institution (Radulovic 2023b, 69). She then painstakingly

compiled evidence (through the accrual of several quotes determining that the deal had an inflated cost) and made an internal disclosure – which was also ignored. She was ultimately forced to make a public disclosure, through the use of independent media and the support of a non-governmental organization, and the inflated deal was consequently annulled (Radulovic 2023a, 105). The deal, orchestrated by one of Jacob Zuma's close political allies, would have financially compromised an already thinly-stretched state-owned enterprise. Stimpel had effectively stopped the capture of SAA.

Mosilo Mothepu was another whistleblower whose disclosure was crucial in detailing part of the vast scope of state capture under Zuma. Mothepu served as the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of Trillian Financial Advisory, a firm that held close business ties with Salim Essa, one of the Gupta Family's closest associates (Radulovic 2023b, 69). Witnessing malfeasance within the organization, Mothepu decided to resign from Trillian Financial Advisory. She would later blow the whistle to Public Protector Thuli Madonsela.⁷ Mothepu's disclosure was reinforced by Bianca Goodson's corroboration. Goodson was the Chief Executive Officer of Trillian Management Consulting. Both Trillian Financial Advisory and Trillian Management Consulting were subsidiaries of the holding group – Trillian Capital Partners. Mothepu and Goodson learned that Trillian's owner, Eric Wood, and Gupta-linked business mogul Mohamed Bobat were engaged in the process of the appointment of the minister of finance (Radulovic 2023b, 70). Private companies and individuals were not supposed to have any knowledge of such government decisions and procedures. Other malversations emerged during this period and, as a consequence, Bianca decided to resign from Trillian.

Mothepu had provided advocate Madonsela with Goodson's telephone number and Goodson was subsequently called by the Office of the Public Protector (Wiener 2020, 260–261). As a consequence of the call, she composed a detailed statement explaining the nefarious dealings at Trillian (Wiener 2020, 261–262). Goodson's statement also disclosed how Trillian had invoiced South Africa's national power utility for apparent services rendered, as part of an illicit transaction (Basson, du Toit 2017, 118). Coupled with Mothepu's earlier disclosure to the Public Protector, which detailed Trillian's politically-

⁷ The Public Protector is one of six core independent state institutions established according to Chapter Nine of the South African Constitution. The primary role of these institutions is to safeguard democracy without political interference. The primary mandate of the Office of the Public Protector is to investigate matters pertaining to, and protect the public from, maladministration emanating from government and public functions.

connected affairs via Gupta-linked associates, Goodson would help to firmly establish how the financial perversion and misappropriation of government enterprises was conducted via a private entity.

During the state capture period, the emergence of additional opportunists led to the capture of the PIC. Largely responsible for the investment of state pensions, the PIC was targeted by wrongdoers for financial misappropriation. When allegations regarding the capture of the PIC emerged, its Chief Executive Officer, Dan Matjila, was implicated at the center of these allegations. The allegations emerged from an anonymous whistleblower, “James Nogu”, who claimed that the board members were engaging in impropriety and that Matjila “was financing his girlfriend from the PIC budget” (Radulovic 2023b, 68). Simphiwe Mayisela, who worked at the PIC as the head of information technology security for only a brief period of time, was requested to uncover the origin of the emails and thus uncover the true identity of “James Nogu” (Radulovic 2023a, 105). To obtain this information, Mayisela needed super administrator privileges on the PIC’s cybersecurity platform, which he applied for by opening a case with the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation. Mayisela sought to apply for a Section 205 subpoena, in line with the 1977 Criminal Procedure Act No. 51,⁸ which is granted by a magistrate for the purpose of retrieving information regarding alleged offences. The police expressed interest in the case that Mayisela had opened, and required his cooperation in investigating the corruption rather than investigating the identity of “Nogu” (Radulovic 2023b, 68).

Mayisela complied with the police request and was granted super administrator privileges via the Section 205 subpoena. He then retrieved sensitive data which contained allegations that Matjila was abusing “PIC funds by directing them towards girlfriends, and irrational staff increments and bonuses” (Radulovic 2023b, 68). Mayisela subsequently provided this information to the police, and later testified before the PIC Commission of Inquiry.⁹ Similar to other state capture whistleblowers, Mayisela’s role was crucial in dismantling the capture of a state entity under the Zuma presidency.

⁸ Criminal Procedure Act No. 51, *Government Gazette* 143(5532).

⁹ The PIC Commission of Inquiry was tasked with investigating improprieties within the PIC. Mayisela’s evidence was of crucial importance at the said commission.

3.2. Policing Apparatus Whistleblowers

While the state capture revelations exposed a system that was compromised largely for the financial benefit of a few (yet, admittedly, the misappropriation of key government institutions and functions does not present a minor crime), the capture of the policing apparatus has signaled toward a more ominous intent.

Lieutenant-General Mkhwanazi was the first whistleblower to expose the capture of South Africa's policing apparatus during its current period, which appears to be the greatest interference in South African police matters to date. Mkhwanazi enacted the role of a whistleblower and, per Near and Miceli's (1985, 4) foundational definition, he qualifies for this status on the basis of being in the employ of the SAPS, and exposing what he believed to be organizational wrongdoing (perpetrated by members of, or associated with, the SAPS) via a public disclosure (holding a media briefing). Mkhwanazi alleged that Minister of Police Senzo Mchunu had been "colluding with underworld figures", was involved in the disbandment of the PKTT, and had interfered "in criminal investigations linked to a syndicate spanning police generals, prosecutors, business people and gangsters" (Cowan 2025, 208).

These were not the first allegations that South Africa's policing apparatus had intimate dealings with organized crime, with Cowan (2025, 209) remarking that "systemic corruption has plagued the institution for decades". These decades of abuse "paved the way for what SAPS has become today: a deeply compromised institution, vulnerable to political interference and organised crime influence at the highest levels" (Cowan 2025, 213). Yet, the sheer scope of the revelations uncovered that decade-long corruption within the SAPS ultimately led to the capture and breakdown of the institution. With Mkhwanazi naming senior police officials, judges, and criminal networks involved in the capture of the policing apparatus across South African provinces, his disclosure exposed a deep web of collusion.

Mkhwanazi's allegations were supported by the allegations brought forward by Lieutenant-General Khumalo. Khumalo, also acting as a whistleblower, provided "large files of evidence" to the Madlanga Commission and took the stand to illustrate both internal and external threats faced by the policing apparatus (Moatshe 2025a). Critically, Khumalo identified both Katiso Molefe and Cat Matlala as "two of the leaders of the notorious Big Five cartel" that had infiltrated the policing apparatus (Moatshe 2025a). Khumalo would go on to testify that Matlala made payments to compromised individuals in order to gain access to highly sensitive police information,

stifle criminal investigations into his activities, and coordinate payments from the SAPS to a Matlala-owned company (Moatshe 2025a). Khumalo also identified several compromised police officials in his testimony.

Revo Spies, retired deputy chief of the Ekurhuleni Metro Police Department (EMPD),¹⁰ also testified before the Madlanga Commission. He revealed that “private vehicles were registered as municipal vehicles and installed with the state’s blue lights by Julius Mkhwanazi, the EMPD’s deputy chief of police,” and that these vehicles belonged to Cat Matlala (Koka 2025a). He further testified that police officials within “EMPD’s specialised services unit allegedly ran a criminal racket, hijacking trucks and disappearing with their freight” (Cruywagen 2025). Spies implicated Julius Mkhwanazi as an accessory to murder and in the concealment of evidence through the sanitization of a crime scene (Cruywagen 2025). The crime scene was linked to a murder where a victim was tortured by EMPD police officials, who used a rubber tube to induce suffocation. Spies would go on to testify how a whistleblower, Jaco Hanekom – who had exposed another unlawful EMPD operation by providing video footage of an EMPD-orchestrated theft – was assassinated for having done so (Cruywagen 2025).

Hanekom would be the first of two whistleblowers who were murdered after having exposed EMPD-linked criminal activity. In an assassination that has grabbed both national and international attention, Marius van der Merwe was killed outside his home on 5 December 2025. Van der Merwe, who had testified before the Madlanga Commission (partially off-screen and under the pseudonym Witness D, although his voice had not been distorted and it would have been easy to identify him through the details he provided) alleged that EMPD officers orchestrated a murder cover-up. It was the same case referred to by Spies. At the site of the crime, van der Merwe witnessed EMPD officers drag the suspect of a warehouse break-in into a room and torture him to death. Van der Merwe was then instructed, allegedly by Julius Mkhwanazi, to dispose of the body, which he did (Moichela 2025b). He provided his testimony regarding the matter, in detail, before the Madlanga Commission. Cumulatively, these disclosures aided in detailing the extent to which South Africa’s policing apparatus had not only been captured by criminal enterprise but had also become an accomplice to criminal enterprise.

¹⁰ The EMPD is a police department responsible for crime prevention, traffic law enforcement, and municipal by-law enforcement in the City of Ekurhuleni, a large suburb of the City of Johannesburg.

4. EXAMINATION ACROSS PERIODS: A GRADUATION TO FREQUENT PHYSICAL RETALIATION

Despite having brought systemic criminality to the fore, whistleblowers have felt the burden of reprisals. The history of South African whistleblowers is abundant with narratives of retaliation (see Uys, Radulovic 2025) and the state capture whistleblowers have endured their fair share of reprisals. Fearing for their physical safety, “Stan” and “John” were relocated abroad and continue to remain anonymous (Radulovic 2024, 58–59).

Stimpel, on the other hand, faced actual retaliation. She was suspended from work with “insolence” cited as the reason for her suspension and, according to her employer, she had allegedly failed to comply with SAA’s internal whistleblowing policy. Beyond the disciplinary proceedings, after having left SAA, Stimpel was unemployable for some time, and found herself undesirable to prospective employers due to the negative label associated with being a whistleblower. She was ostracized by former SAA colleagues as well as friends, again due to the negative stigma attached to her in the wake of the disclosure. She also faced strategies that delayed legal outcome and she had to sit before the Labour Court and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration¹¹. Mothepu was also ostracized in the workplace, and experienced character assassination. She was accused of several legal contraventions by Trillian and, as a consequence, spent 13 months and ZAR 1,300,000 (approximately EUR 67,500 in early 2026) defending herself from the charges. She also lived in fear for her physical safety and took precautionary measures to ensure no harm came to her. Mayisela was also suspended (albeit without charge) and faced organizational disciplinary proceedings. He faced significant reputational damage and has since found it difficult to find employment. Moreover, he was subjected to public censure by the PIC Commission for having violated the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act.¹² Mayisela and members of his family also endured intimidating telephone calls, although nothing further transpired with regards to physical retaliation (Radulovic 2023a, 106–112).

The reprisals faced by state capture whistleblowers were indeed significant and greatly impacted their lives. However, the severity of retaliation faced by policing apparatus whistleblowers appears to have

¹¹ The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration is an independent tribunal that adjudicates labor disputes between employees and employers.

¹² The Electronic Communications and Transactions Act No. 25, *Government Gazette* 446(23708), regulates administration and control of electronic communications and exchanges.

graduated in magnitude. Lieutenant-General Mkhwanazi, much like the state capture whistleblowers, has faced an onslaught of social and legal retaliation. Mkhwanazi had built a reputation of being a credible police officer, and he has challenged corruption in the policing apparatus perpetrated by his political bosses on two separate occasions (Ngcobo 2025), despite it opening him up to scrutiny by detractors. A businessman, Calvin Mathibeli, accused Mkhwanazi of being corrupt, “captured by private interests or linked to organised crime syndicates” (Ndou 2026). A court ordered that Mathibeli retract the statements and prohibited him from making such allegations in the future, yet Mathibeli plans to challenge the ruling. Forensic investigator Paul O’Sullivan also made allegations that Mkhwanazi is corrupt. Mkhwanazi reacted by filing a defamation lawsuit against him and O’Sullivan responded with a counterclaim. Most recently, a member of parliament publicly accused Mkhwanazi of “disregarding the law” and being “a constitutional delinquent” (Merrington 2026). Mkhwanazi’s colleague, Lieutenant-General Khumalo, was arrested on allegations of fraud and corruption even prior to coming forward with his bombshell revelations. Mkhwanazi has indicated that he believes that “Khumalo’s arrest was strategic, aiming to disrupt investigations into powerful drug cartels and organised crime syndicates” (Moatshe 2025b).

Evidently, much of the retaliation faced by Mkhwanazi and Khumalo has been of a social and legal nature. Yet, other policing apparatus whistleblowers have fallen victim to physical retaliation, i.e. “a deliberate and premeditated act of physically assaulting the whistleblower, often involving the use of a weapon, or threatening to cause physical harm” (Radulovic 2023a, 112). Uys (2022, 119) has indicated that even the mere threat of physical retaliation affects the whistleblower’s quality of life after disclosure. The experiences of several policing apparatus whistleblowers have indicated an observable escalation in the severity of retaliation, namely physical retaliation. The assassination of EMPD-linked whistleblower Jaco Hanekom is evidence of this. Marius van der Merwe’s murder after his Madlanga Commission testimony raised concerns in the top echelons of the state as well as amongst members of the public. To further compound the issue, van der Merwe was murdered in front of his family when arriving home, having been shot in the head and leg with an AK-47¹³ assault rifle (Zeeman 2025).

Van der Merwe was offered official state protection but had apparently declined it. Other potential Madlanga Commission witnesses and whistleblowers have expressed fear for their lives citing security concerns emanating from threats, with one such individual alleging that “their home

¹³ Officially referred to as the Avtomat Kalashnikova.

had been broken into recently, just days after they found their alarm system had been tampered with” (Zeeman 2025). The investigation into the motive for van der Merwe’s murder is still ongoing. The assassination of a person mistaken for a whistleblower, Armand Swart, only further aggravates the issue of instilled fear for future policing apparatus whistleblowers. These victims are all linked, in some way, to the activities of the alleged cartel that has carried out the capture of the policing apparatus. Previously, Babita Deokaran was murdered for exposing hospital procurement fraud (Uys, Radulovic 2025, 106), where Cat Matlala was one of the beneficiaries of the corrupt deals (Westerdale 2025). Deokaran has been recognized as a whistleblowing martyr since her murder in 2021.

It is important to note that whistleblowers had been assassinated in South Africa prior to the Madlanga revelations (see Uys 2022, 75–78 and 120); however, the frequency of assassination, occurring in a relatively short period of time, has raised significant safety concerns for whistleblowers, particularly for those exposing the capture of the policing apparatus. This article has noted that state capture whistleblowers were not readily assassinated, while the assassinations of policing apparatus whistleblowers are frequent. It must be conceded that the motives of these assassinations are being investigated, as are the perpetrators, and that unrelated factors could be behind these assassinations. Yet, the abundance of such assassinations is cause for concern.

5. CONCLUSION

If systemic criminality is not adequately addressed, it runs the risk of reemerging and running more rampant. Such has been the case in South Africa, with the Zondo recommendations not being adequately realized. Aside from being slow to implement, these recommendations have yielded ineffective results, as only 4.5% of the cases have been finalized. As a consequence, South Africa has been experiencing a spillover from the state capture era. The cases of state capture and the capture of the policing apparatus are unrelated cases of capture, but the lack of political will and the absence of actions taken to protect and secure whistleblowers and their disclosures (post-state capture) have resulted in brazen assassinations during the contemporary period of capture.

The assassinations related to policing apparatus capture constitute an escalation from the social and legal retaliation faced by state capture whistleblowers. Ultimately, a weak follow-through by state authorities has paved the way for this escalation in retaliation. This has signaled an

institutional rupture where the state, failing to effectively sanction the constituents of a prior network of capture, has inadvertently allowed criminal networks to penetrate new domains. These new and evolved criminal networks act more violently against those that would seek to expose them. Such escalation also represents a qualitative shift in criminality, one where the methods of the networks executing systemic criminality have become increasingly violent.

To address this escalation, it is necessary for all three branches of the government of South Africa to take a reactive approach to past incidents of capture and build a proactive system that would render future whistleblowers safer. The legislature should therefore move hastily to draft a new (adequate) whistleblower protection law. At present there is promise of a new whistleblower protection law with a draft Bill in circulation, but serious remedial action appears to be lacking, with the political machinery moving at a slow pace to institute reforms. The executive should immediately thereafter implement the said law, and the judiciary should be trained on how to interpret that law. All three branches of government are interdependent and, as such, a failure in one branch would cascade into systemic paralysis where, for example, legislative delay would lead to executive inertia and thus result in judicial incapacity. Therefore, monitoring throughout the entire reform process would need to be implemented systematically.

However, an over-reliance on a state-based solution would not yield a comprehensive and adequate outcome for whistleblowers; this is, in part, because it would reduce the disclosures of whistleblowers to legal jargon, as well as lead to whistleblowers' narratives being used as political tools. In addition to reforms conducted by state authorities, political will would also be necessary for holding former and current wrongdoers to account. This is difficult to achieve in a context where elite complicity is the primary contributor to the lack of political will. With the absence of political will, whistleblowers will continue to find themselves at the mercy of wrongdoers that are left to commit crimes with inadequate (if any) punitive measures taken against them. Yet, even in such contexts, whistleblowers need to be understood as agents of democratic accountability rather than simply as victims. They enact a role that actively challenges corrupt structures, with their treatment simply reflecting the moral health of the polity (an escalation in the severity of retaliation signals a decline in the moral health of the polity). It should be noted that without the aforementioned reparative measures, criminal syndicates would further entrench themselves within the policing apparatus (and other elements of the state), assassination would be normalized as a response to disclosure, leading to the erosion of public trust in disclosure mechanisms.

Although this paper focuses on two South African periods of systemic criminality, its findings could be extended to other geographical or institutional contexts. The findings, determining that inadequate measures in response to state capture led to the evolution of a new form of capture, can be transferred to, and tested in, other contexts grappling with systemic criminality. Having recognized that the concept of state capture was first utilized in transitional post-socialist Eastern European states, and that the construct is also not absent from neoliberal Western contexts, the findings of this paper could be employed for comparative analysis with these, and similar, contexts. In addition to future comparative analyses, the recommendations of reform via state authorities could also be tested in various environments. Moreover, future research could interrogate an unresolved limitation of this paper – namely, the absence of recommendations for confronting the lack of political will (compounded by elite complicity) to enact meaningful structural change by addressing systematic criminality through the adequate protection of whistleblowers.

REFERENCES

- [1] Basson, Adriaan, Pieter du Toit. 2017. *Enemy of the People: How Jacob Zuma Stole South Africa and How the People Fought Back*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- [2] Bhorat, Haroon, Mbongiseni Buthelezi, Ivor Chipkin, Sikhulekile Duma, Lumkile Mondi, Camaren Peter, Mzukisi Qobo, Mark Swilling, Hannah Friedenstien. 2017. *Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa Is Being Stolen*. Stellenbosch: State Capacity Research Project.
- [3] Blackman, Matthew, Nick Dall. 2021. *Rogues' Gallery: An Irreverent History of Corruption in South Africa, from the VOC to the ANC*. Cape Town: Penguin Books.
- [4] Booyesen, Susan. 2011. *The African National Congress and the Regeneration of Political Power*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- [5] Bryman, Alan. 2012. *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- [6] Cowan, Kyle. 2025. *Mafia Land: Inside South Africa's Darkest Cartels*. Cape Town: Penguin Random House South Africa.

- [7] Cruywagen, Vincent. 2025. Ekurhuleni metro police officers involved in theft, torture, murder, commission told. *Daily Maverick*, 10 November. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2025-11-10-ekurhuleni-metro-police-officers-involved-in-theft-torture-murder-commission-told>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [8] Desai, Ashwin. 4/2018. The Zuma moment: Between tender-based capitalists and radical economic transformation. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 36: 499–513.
- [9] Dolley, Caryn. 2025. Big Five cartel's dark web of political ties and criminal operations unveiled by Dumisani Khumalo. *Daily Maverick*, 29 September. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2025-09-29-big-five-cartels-dark-web-of-political-ties-and-criminal-operations-unveiled-by-dumisani-khumalo>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [10] Fazekas, Mihály, István J. Tóth. 2/2016. From corruption to state capture: A new analytical framework with empirical applications from Hungary. *Political Research Quarterly* 69: 320–334.
- [11] Jubb, Peter B. 1/1999. Whistleblowing: A restrictive definition and interpretation. *Journal of Business Ethics* 21: 77–94.
- [12] Kaufman, Stuart J. 4/2017. South Africa's civil war, 1985–1995. *South African Journal of International Affairs* 24: 501–521.
- [13] Khanyile, Gcwalisile. 2025. How KT Molefe and hitman 'personally scouted' slain Armand Swarts' workplace. *IOL*, 23 October. <https://iol.co.za/capetimes/news/2025-10-23-how-kt-molefe-and-hitman-personally-scouted-slain-armand-swarts-workplace>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [14] Koka, Mpho. 2025a. Ex-EMPD boss reveals cops charged with abduction were never disciplined. *Sunday World*, 10 November. <https://sundayworld.co.za/news/ex-empd-boss-reveals-cops-charged-with-abduction-were-never-disciplined>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [15] Koka, Mpho. 2025b. DJ Sumbody murder accused Katiso Molefe's case postponed. *Sunday World*, 11 November. <https://sundayworld.co.za/news/dj-sumbody-murder-accused-katiso-molefes-case-postponed>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [16] Lindow, Megan. 2008. Why South Africa's Mbeki Resigned. *Time*, 20 September. <https://time.com/archive/6944458/why-south-africas-mbeki-resigned>, last visited August 20, 2026.

- [17] Longhurst, Kerry. 2/2016. Implementing the DCFTA in the context of state capture: Assessing the position of small and medium enterprises. *Eastern Journal of European Studies* 7: 145–164.
- [18] Mahlaka, Ray. 2019. PIC Inquiry: Gigaba implicated in hand-picking PIC board members at the height of State Capture. *Daily Maverick*, 10 July. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-07-10-pic-inquiry-gigaba-implicated-in-hand-picking-pic-board-members-at-the-height-of-state-capture>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [19] Majadibodu, Simon. 2025. Alleged crime kingpin Katiso “KT” Molefe granted R400,000 bail after appeal. *IOL*, 10 October. <https://iol.co.za/news/crime-and-courts/2025-10-10-alleged-crime-kingpin-katiso-kt-molefe-granted-r400000-bail-after-appeal>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [20] Mbaku, John M. 4/2018. Rule of law, state capture, and human development in Africa. *American University International Law Review* 33: 771–836.
- [21] Merrington, Zalene. 2026. General Mkhwanazi is a constitutional delinquent: Adams. *SABC News*, 5 March. <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/general-mkhwanazi-is-a-constitutional-delinquent-adams>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [22] Merten, Marianne. 2018. President’s End: While Zuma did resign, Parliament had a plan anyway. *Daily Maverick*, 15 February. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-02-15-presidents-end-while-zuma-did-resign-parliament-had-a-plan-anyway>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [23] Merten, Marianne. 2019. State Capture wipes out third of SA’s R4.9-trillion GDP – never mind lost trust, confidence, opportunity. *Daily Maverick*, 1 March. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-03-01-state-capture-wipes-out-third-of-sas-r4-9-trillion-gdp-never-mind-lost-trust-confidence-opportunity>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [24] Moatshe, Rapula. 2025a. Lieutenant General Khumalo reveals internal threats to SAPS during commission testimony. *The Star*, 29 September. <https://thestar.co.za/news/2025-09-29-lieutenant-general-khumalo-reveals-internal-threats-to-saps-during-commission-testimony>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [25] Moatshe, Rapula. 2025b. Lieutenant-General Khumalo exposes misinformation campaign targeting the Political Killings Task Team. *The Star*, 1 October. <https://thestar.co.za/news/2025-10-01-lieutenant-general-khumalo-exposes-misinformation-campaign-targeting-the-political-killings-task-team>, last visited August 20, 2026.

- [26] Moichela, Kamogelo. 2025a. SAPS Crime Intelligence boss links Minister Mchunu's ANC allies to 'Big 5 Cartel' |Madlanga Commission. *IOL*, 30 September. <https://iol.co.za/news/politics/2025-09-30-saps-crime-intelligence-boss-links-minister-mchunu-allies-to-big-5-cartel-madlanga-commission>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [27] Moichela, Kamogelo. 2025b. Witness D's testimony exposes police cover-up at Madlanga Commission, leading to his assassination. *IOL*, 6 December. <https://iol.co.za/news/crime-and-courts/2025-12-06-madlanga-commission-how-witness-d-exposed-empds-mkhwanazi-murder-cover-up-weeks-later-hes-assassinated-in-brakpan>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [28] Moloi, Herman. 2025. Witness tells why "KT" Molefe's nephew wanted Transnet whistleblower dead. *Sowetan*, 23 October. <https://www.sowetan.co.za/news/2025-10-23-witness-tells-why-kt-molefes-nephew-lucky-wanted-swart-dead/>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [29] Myburgh, Pieter-Louis. 2017. *The Republic of Gupta: A story of state capture*. Cape Town: Penguin Random House South Africa.
- [30] Ndou, Clive. 2026. Legal fight between Mkhwanazi and Mathibeli far from over. *The Witness*, 3 March. <https://witness.co.za/news/2026/03/03/legal-fight-between-mkhwanazi-and-mathibeli-far-from-over>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [31] Near, Janet P., Marcia P. Miceli. 1985. Organizational Dissidence: The Case of Whistle-Blowing. *Journal of Business Ethics* 4: 1–16.
- [32] Ngcobo, Khanyisile. 2025. Top policeman shakes South Africa with explosive allegations about his boss. *BBC*, 19 July. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c39zygp0d8yo>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [33] Nozulela, Mthobisi, Sihle Mlambo. 2025. 'Combat ready' KZN top cop Lt Gen Mkhwanazi makes damning allegations against Police Minister Senzo Mchunu. *The Star*, 6 July. <https://thestar.co.za/news/politics/2025-07-06-gloves-off-kzn-top-cop-lt-gen-mkhwanazi-accuses-police-minister-senzo-mchunu-of-interference-in-police-operations>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [34] Park, Heungsik, John Blenkinsopp, Mustafa K. Oktem, Ugur Omurgonulsen. 4/2008. Cultural Orientation and Attitudes toward Different Forms of Whistleblowing: A Comparison of South Korea, Turkey, and the U.K. *Journal of Business Ethics* 82: 929–939.
- [35] Pauw, Jacques. 2017. *The President's Keepers: Those Keeping Zuma in Power and out of Prison*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.

- [36] PIC Commission. 2019. Our Mandate. www.justice.gov.za/commissions/pic (last visited 20 August 2026).
- [37] Radulovic, Ugljesa. 4/2023a. The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance? Whistleblowing within the Context of State Capture in South Africa. *The Thinker* 97: 101–115.
- [38] Radulovic, Ugljesa. 3/2023b. The Role of Whistleblowing as a Mechanism to Prevent State Capture: A Case from the Global South. *NBP. Nauka, bezbednost, policija* 28: 62–74.
- [39] Radulovic, Ugljesa. 2/2024. Media and the case of state capture in South Africa: How independent outlets aided whistleblowers in communicating their messages. *Clinical Sociology Review* 19: 49–79.
- [40] Radulovic, Ugljesa. 2025. Capture and Disclosure: South Africa's Past, Present, and Tipping Point. *E-International Relations*, 25 November. https://www.e-ir.org/p/capture-and-disclosure-south-africas-466?utm_source=publication-search, last visited August 25, 2026.
- [41] Radulovic, Ugljesa. 1/2026. The Political Economy of High-Stakes Whistleblowing in South Africa. *NBP. Nauka, bezbednost, policija* 31: 47–61.
- [42] Seeletsa, Molefe. 2025. Crime Intelligence boss explains why investigations into organised crime need to be different. *The Citizen*, 4 November. <https://www.citizen.co.za/news/pktt-investigative-model-crime-intelligence-khumalo>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [43] Singh, Orrin. 2025. Madlanga Commission | Timeline of police crisis: How did we get here. *Eyewitness News*, 17 September. <https://www.ewn.co.za/2025/09/17/madlanga-commission-timeline-of-police-crisis-how-did-we-get-here>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [44] Stimpel, Cynthia. 2021. *Hijackers on Board: How One Courageous Whistleblower Fought Against the Capture of SAA*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- [45] Styan, James-Brent, Paul Vecchiatto. 2019. *The Bosasa Billions: How the ANC Sold its Soul for Braaipacks, Booze and Bags of Cash*. Pretoria: LAPA Publishers.
- [46] Trantidis, Aris, Vasiliki Tsagkroni. 2/2017. Clientelism and corruption: Institutional adaptation of state capture strategies in view of resource scarcity in Greece. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 19: 263–281.

- [47] Uys, Tina. 2014. Riding off into the sunset? Establishing an inclusive post-apartheid South African community. 201–219 in *Community intervention: Clinical sociology perspectives*, edited by Jan M. Fritz and Jacques Rhéaume. New York, NY: Springer.
- [48] Uys, Tina. 2022. *Whistleblowing and the Sociological Imagination*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [49] Uys, Tina, Ugljesa Radulovic. 1/2025. Truth to Power: A Historical Overview of Whistleblowing in South Africa. *South African Review of Sociology* 55: 95–112.
- [50] Uzelac, Slavica. 1/2/2003. Corruption in Transition Countries: “How to Capture a State” – The Example of Montenegro. *SEER: Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* 6: 103–116.
- [51] Vandekerckhove, Wim. 2006. *Whistleblowing and Organizational Responsibility: A Global Assessment*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- [52] Westerdale, Jarryd. 2025. ‘Cat’ Matlala caught again: SIU reveals three syndicates in Thembisa hospital corruption. *The Citizen*, 29 September. <https://www.citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/crime/siu-three-syndicates-thembisa-hospital-corruption-linked-cat-matlala>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [53] Wicks, Jeff. 2025. *The Shadow State: Why Babita Deokaran had to die*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- [54] Wiener, Mandy. 2020. *The Whistleblowers*. Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan South Africa.
- [55] Zeeman, Kyle. 2025. Madlanga Commission at risk? Witnesses ready to pull out after Marius van der Merwe ‘hit’. *The Citizen*, 6 December. <https://www.citizen.co.za/news/madlanga-commission-risk-witnesses-marius-van-der-merwe-hit>, last visited August 20, 2026.
- [56] Zondo, Raymond M. M. 2022a. *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture Report: Part 1 Vol. 1: South African Airways and its Associated Companies*. Johannesburg: Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture.
- [57] Zondo, Raymond M. M. 2022b. *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture Report: Part 1 Vol. 2: The New Age*. Johannesburg: Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture.

- [58] Zondo, Raymond M. M. 2022c. *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture Report: Part 1 Vol. 3: South African Revenue Services (SARS) and Public Procurement in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture.

Article history:

Received: 11. 3. 2026.

Accepted: 19. 8. 2026.