

Response to Mail & Guardian

1 July 2009

Q: One can conclude from Mr Biyela's statement that Mr Moroka used your office and name to advance his own financial interests. Are you investigating his role and will you make your findings public?

A: In the absence of any firm evidence of wrongdoing by Mr Moroka, I am not inclined to pursue the matter but others may choose to do so. It is important to note that the Free State High Court was satisfied that I was not implicated in the matter as alleged. I continue to reserve my rights in respect of the defamatory claims made against me.

Q: Could you please describe the nature of your relationship with Mr Moroka? Has your business venture done any business for the Free State Government?

A: We have had a collegial business relationship for many years. The company is called Afro Pulse and has never done any business with the Free State Government.

Q: Could you please describe the substance of the meeting in your office on 19 June?

A: The meeting was in response to my invitation to business people to discuss economic development and job creation in the Free State. I have had similar meetings with numerous other business leaders and will continue to do so.

Additional Comments:

- During a long political and business career, the Free State Premier has made contact with literally thousands of people, some of whom may now claim to have special access to his office and influence over him. He advises people seeking to do business or interact with the Province to avoid influence peddlers¹ and to work only through the formal channels.

- The Premier's office remains open to individuals or organisations that want to talk with him about improved service delivery in the province. However, they should be aware that such interactions will be witnessed. Due process will be followed strictly should there be an opportunity to secure mutual benefits for the interviewee and the people of the Free State.

- For the record, the Premier has instructed his personal attorney to either dispose of his business interests or to place them in a blind trust

supervised by an independent third party.

- The Premier will shortly announce further measures to improve governance measures for the Provincial Government of the Free State.

Statement issued on behalf of the Free State Premier's Office

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