Cabinet held its ordinary meeting in Pretoria yesterday, 17 September 2008.

The meeting discussed the recent judgment in the court case between the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and Mr Jacob Zuma. Cabinet respects the judiciary and its decisions. However, Cabinet does not accept the suggestion that either the President or the Executive interfered with the prosecuting decisions of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) regarding the prosecution of any person or persons. The untested inference that there was political interference with the prosecuting decisions of the NPA in this or any other case is untrue, unfounded and does not hold water.

The Constitution and the NPA Act give the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development political oversight over the National Prosecuting Authority. However, the Minister does not participate in decisions about individual prosecutions. Therefore, the suggestion that the interaction between the Minister of Justice and the National Director of Public Prosecutions constitutes interference is incorrect.

Cabinet has decided to seek legal advice on the inferences made by Judge Nicholson that President Thabo Mbeki and the Executive interfered with the NPA regarding the decision to prosecute Mr Jacob Zuma. Government will continue to work hard to defend the integrity of all our constitutional structures and the country’s reputation as a constitutional state.

Cabinet welcomed the signing of the power sharing agreement by the leaders of political parties in Zimbabwe. The agreement marks the first step towards rebuilding that country and the South African government takes this opportunity to commend the people of Zimbabwe on this historic milestone. This agreement is clear evidence that it is possible for Africans to find solutions to African problems. The South African Government recognises the critical role played by the SADC facilitation mission under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki and congratulates him and the mediation team for fulfilling the mandate of the SADC Heads of State. All South Africans can be proud of the role played by the team in facilitating the talks that led to the signing of the agreement. The mediation team will remain engaged with the leadership of Zimbabwe to ensure that the agreement is implemented.
The agreement represents the beginning of a process of restoring peace and stability for the people of Zimbabwe, the SADC region and the entire continent. The next steps include addressing the challenge of beginning with the enormous task of rebuilding the economy of Zimbabwe. The immediate tasks include doing everything that will be necessary to resuscitate the agricultural industry ahead of the summer rains. In this regard, a Task Team led by the Departments of Agriculture, Foreign Affairs and National Treasury will work with other SADC countries to develop an emergency intervention plan.

The meeting noted and congratulated Team South Africa for their sterling performance at the Beijing Paralympic Games. The athletes demonstrated character, hard work, commitment and pride as they represented South Africa. Their 'gold run' became a daily occurrence which made many South Africans to look forward to each and every day of the Paralympics. Millions of youngsters in South Africa and all over the world will forever be inspired by these magnificent athletes. Team South Africa won a total of 30 medals (21 gold medals, 3 silver and 6 bronze.) These stars have eclipsed the 15 medals they won in Athens. All South Africans should be proud of this achievement. The President will host the athletes at a function that will be held to celebrate their achievements.

The revised remuneration dispensation for the Senior Management Service (SMS) was approved. The revised dispensation provides, among other things, for members of the SMS to be paid 75% of the market median and the introduction of a variable pay system that will take scope, size and responsibility of departments into account in the determination of SMS remuneration. The dispensation does away with the merit awards for SMS members and requires that the performance assessment of managers should be linked to the overall performance of departments. These initiatives are aimed at improving government’s ability to attract, recruit and retain high calibre professionals into the Public Service, and to improve performance and productivity.

The resolutions of the Third National Anti-Corruption Summit were noted and endorsed. The resolutions include the following: a clear articulation of the national integrity system; implementation of anti-corruption legislation; regulating and managing conflict of interests; legislative measures to ensure that companies involved in price fixing, market allocation and collusive tendering are prohibited from state tenders; ethical conduct and the need to expedite regulations for political party funding to encourage transparency. The leader of Government Business was given a mandate to expedite the drafting regulations on political party funding.

South Africa will host the African Union (AU) Diaspora Summit from 7–11 October 2008 at the Sandton Convention Centre. The Summit forms part of the AU's ongoing efforts to actively engage the African Diaspora in the development of the continent.
The theme of the Summit is: “Towards a United and Integrated Africa and its Diaspora”. The adoption of the Declaration, Programme of Action and its implementation mechanisms will be significant for the developmental imperatives of our continent as it will strengthen and deepen political and economic cooperation between Africa and its Diaspora.

South Africa’s Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for the period 1998-2008 was approved and will be submitted to the United Nations CEDAW Committee. This report assesses the status of women in society and the extent to which the implementation of gender mainstreaming has been achieved. The report will be published at the end of the year.

The proposed South African Schools Football World Cup Competition (SASFWCC) was noted and approved. This competition will, inter alia, promote knowledge of: the 2010 FIFA World Cup values of integrity, excellence, non-racism and anti-xenophobia, unity and tolerance. The symbols, flags and national anthems of participating countries will also be promoted.

Ambassador AS Minty’s candidature to the post of Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was noted and supported.

The meeting noted that the 63rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA63) will be held from 23 September to 1 October 2008. The theme for this year’s Assembly Debate is: “The Impact of the global food crisis on poverty and hunger in the world; the need to democratise the United Nations.” The agenda will include the following matters; strengthening the mandate of the UN; reaffirming the role of multilateralism; global governance; consolidation of the African agenda; and the promotion of South-South co-operation. The Handbook for the appointment of persons to boards of state and state controlled institutions was approved with amendments.

The following appointments were approved:

- Mr RB Maluleke was appointed as a Deputy director General in Statistics South Africa (StatsSA)
- Members to the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) Board of Directors; Ms W Luhabe (Chairperson), Ms B Njobe, Mr M Nkukhu, Ms M Hlahla, Mr S Moloko, Mr J Mtshali, Ms L Dlamini, Ms L Bethlehem, Mr S Mapetla and Mr R Pitot.
- Concurred with the re-appointment of Ms TE Nwedamutsu as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Independent Development Trust IDT, for a further five (5) years.

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS (GCIS)
Enquiries: Themba Maseko (Government Spokesperson)