

Cyril Ramaphosa

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5th President of South Africa

Incumbent

Assumed office

15 February 2018

Preceded by

Jacob Zuma

Deputy President of South Africa

In office

26 May 2014 – 15 February 2018

Acting President: 14–15 February 2018

President

Jacob Zuma

Cyril Ramaphosa (born 17 November 1952) is a South African politician. He is the fifth and current President of South Africa since 15 February 2018. He followed the resignation of Jacob Zuma,[1] having taken office following a vote of the National Assembly on 15 February 2018.[2] Previously an anti-apartheid activist, trade union leader, and businessman, he served as the Deputy President of South Africa from 2014 to 2018.[3] He was elected President of the African National Congress (ANC) at the ANC National Conference in Nasrec, South of Johannesburg in December 2017. He is also Chairman of the National Planning Commission,[4] which is responsible for strategic planning for the future of the country, with the goal of rallying South Africa "around a common set of objectives and priorities to drive development over the longer term".[5]

He has been called a skillful negotiator[6] and strategist[7] who acted as the ANC's Chief Negotiator during South Africa's transition to democracy.[8] Ramaphosa built up the biggest and most powerful trade union in the country – the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).[9] He played a crucial role, with Roelf Meyer of the National Party, during the negotiations to bring about a peaceful end to apartheid and steer the country towards its first fully democratic elections in April 1994.[10] Ramaphosa was Nelson Mandela's

choice for future president.[11] **Ramaphosa is well known as a businessman, and his estimated net worth is over R6.4 billion (\$550 million) as of 2018,[12] with 31 properties[13] and previously-held notable ownership in companies such as McDonald's South Africa, chair of the board for MTN and member of the board for Lonmin. He also works for Coca-Cola Company.**

Despite his credentials as an important proponent of his country's peaceful transition to democracy, he has also been criticised for the conduct of his business interests[14][15][16][17][18] although he has never been indicted for illegal activity in any of these controversies. Controversial business dealings include his joint venture with Glencore[19] and allegations of benefitting illegally from coal deals with Eskom which he has staunchly denied,[20][21][20] during which Glencore was in the public spotlight for its tendentious business activities involving Tony Blair in the Middle East; and his employment on the board of directors of Lonmin while taking an active stance when the Marikana Massacre took place on Lonmin's Marikana premises. On 15 August 2012 he called for action against the Marikana miners' strike, which he called "dastardly criminal" conduct that needed "concomitant action" to be taken.[22] He later admitted and regretted his involvement in the act and said that it could have been avoided if contingency plans had been made prior to the labour strike.[23] He is a member of the Venda ethnic group and the first President of South Africa from that group.

Ramaphosa was born in Soweto, Johannesburg, on 17 November 1952,[24][25] the second of the three children to Erdmuth and retired policeman Samuel Ramaphosa.[26] He attended Tshilidzi Primary School and Sekano Ntoane High School in Soweto.[27] In 1971, he matriculated from Mphaphuli High School in Sibasa, Venda where he was elected head of the Student Christian Movement.[28] He subsequently registered to study law at the University of the North (Turfloop) in Limpopo Province in 1972.[29]

While at university, Ramaphosa became involved in student politics and joined the South African Students Organisation (SASO)[30] and the Black People's Convention (BPC).[31] This resulted in him being detained in solitary confinement for eleven months in 1974 under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act, 1967, for organising pro-Frelimo rallies.[32] In 1976 he was detained again, following the unrest in Soweto, and held for six months at John Vorster Square under the Terrorism Act.[32] After his release, he became a law clerk for a Johannesburg firm of attorneys and continued with his legal studies through

correspondence with the University of South Africa (UNISA), where he obtained his B. Proc. Degree in 1981.[33]

Political activist and trade union leader[edit]

After completing his legal qualifications and obtaining his degree, Ramaphosa joined the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) as an advisor in the legal department.[27][34] **In 1982, CUSA requested that Ramaphosa start a union for mineworkers;**[27] **this new union was launched in the same year and was named the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Ramaphosa was arrested in Lebowa, on the charge of organising or planning to take part in a meeting in Namakgale which had been banned by the local magistrate.**[35]

Fight against Apartheid[edit]

**In August 1982, CUSA resolved to form the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), and in December Ramaphosa became its first secretary. Ramaphosa was the conference organiser in the preparations leading to the formations of the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU). He delivered a keynote address at Cosatu's launch rally in Durban in December 1985. In March 1986 he was part of COSATU's delegation which met the African National Congress in Lusaka, Zambia.**[36]

**Ramaphosa was elected as the first General Secretary of the union, a position he held until he resigned in June 1991,[36] following his election as Secretary General of the African National Congress (ANC). Under his leadership, union membership grew from 6,000 in 1982 to 300,000 in 1992, giving it control of nearly half of the total black workforce in the South African mining industry. As general secretary, he, James Motlatsi (President of NUM), and Elijah Barayi (Vice-President of NUM) also led the mineworkers in one of the biggest strikes ever in South African history.**

In December 1988, Ramaphosa and other prominent members of the Soweto community met Soweto's Mayor to discuss the rent boycott crisis.

In January 1990, Ramaphosa accompanied released ANC political prisoners to Lusaka, Zambia. Ramaphosa served as chairman of the National Reception committee, which co-ordinated arrangements for the release of Nelson Mandela and subsequent welcome rallies within South Africa, and also became a member of the international Mandela Reception Committee. He was elected General-Secretary of the ANC in a conference held in Durban in July 1991.

Ramaphosa was a visiting Professor of Law at Stanford University in the United States in October 1991.

In 1985, the NUM broke away from CUSA and helped to establish the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). When COSATU joined forces with the

United Democratic Front (UDF) political movement against the National Party government of P. W. Botha, Ramaphosa took a leading role in what became known as the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM).

When Nelson Mandela was released from prison, Ramaphosa was on the National Reception Committee.[36]

Secretary General of the ANC[edit]

Subsequent to his election as Secretary General of the African National Congress in 1991, he became head of the negotiation team of the ANC in negotiating the end of apartheid with the National Party government.

Following the first fully democratic elections in 1994, Ramaphosa became a member of parliament; he was elected the chairperson of its Constitutional Assembly on 24 May 1994 and played a central role in the government of national unity.

After he lost the race to become President of South Africa to Thabo Mbeki, he resigned from his political positions in January 1997 and moved to the private sector, where he became a director of New Africa Investments Limited. He came in first place in the 1997 election to the ANC's National Executive Committee.[37]

While not a member of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Ramaphosa has claimed that he is a committed socialist.

The media continually speculated on Ramaphosa joining the race for the presidency of the ANC in 2007, before the 2009 South African presidential election.[38] However, he stated that he is not interested in the presidency. On 2 September 2007, The Sunday Times reported that Ramaphosa was in the election race, but by that evening he had released a statement once again holding back on any commitment.[39]

In December 2007, he was again elected to the ANC National Executive Committee, this time in 30th place with 1,910 votes.[37]

On 20 May 2012, prominent Afrikaner ANC member Derek Hanekom asked Ramaphosa to run for President of the ANC, stating that "We need leaders of comrade Cyril's calibre. I know Cyril is very good at business, but I really wish he would put all his money in a trust and step up for a higher and more senior position". Although it was unknown whether or not Ramaphosa will run for President of the ANC, he attempted to quieten the speculation by responding to Hanekom's comment by stating "You can't read anything [into what he said]. He was joking".

He officially became a candidate for the Deputy Presidency on 17 December 2012 and entered the race with the strong backing of the Zuma camp. On 18 December 2012, he was elected as Deputy President of the ANC. Cyril

Ramaphosa received 3,018 votes, while Mathews Phosa received 470 votes and Tokyo Sexwale received 463 votes.

Deputy President of South Africa (2014–18)[edit]

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Cyril Ramaphosa meets with Chilean president Michelle Bachelet, 2014  
Ramaphosa was appointed Deputy President by Jacob Zuma on 25 May 2014, and sworn into office by Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng the following day.[40] Following his appointment, Ramaphosa was made Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly in terms of section 91(4) of the Constitution. His responsibilities included: The affairs of the national executive in Parliament; the programming of parliamentary business initiated by the national executive, within the time allocated for that purpose and ensuring that Cabinet members attend to their parliamentary responsibilities.

On 3 June 2014, President Jacob Zuma announced that Ramaphosa would be appointed as Chairman of the National Planning Commission, with Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Jeff Radebe serving as the Commission's deputy chairman.[41]

In July 2014, Ramaphosa called for unity in the country, following calls by Julius Malema to scrap the singing of the Afrikaans portion of the national anthem. Ramaphosa said: "We are about building a nation and we must extend a hand of friendship, a hand of continued reconciliation to those who feel that the national anthem does not represent them any longer, and it can happen on both sides".[42]

Foreign relations[edit]

Vietnam and Singapore[edit]

Ramaphosa went on a two-day working visit to both the Vietnam and Singapore.[43] Ramaphosa said that South Africa and Vietnam needed to expand trade.[44] The two countries have also agreed to co-operate further on education.[45] Both working visits were undertaken to consolidate existing bilateral political, economic and trade relations between South Africa and the two countries. The visit to Singapore provided the South African delegation, led by Ramaphosa with an opportunity to learn from the Singapore model of

economic success and the role of state-owned enterprises and economic growth and national developmental objectives of the country. Bilateral trade has grown significantly with Singapore being South Africa's second-largest trading partner in the ASEAN region; by 2014 bilateral trade amounted to R28.9 billion compared to R23.5 billion in 2015.[46]

Davos[edit]

In January 2017 it was announced that president Jacob Zuma would not be leading the South African delegation to the World Economic Forum for the second time, the South African Government announced that Cyril Ramaphosa would be leading the delegation consisting of several South African cabinet officials to promote investment and business in the country.

Economy[edit]

Corruption[edit]

In November 2016 while speaking at the Limpopo Provincial Summit, Ramaphosa said that corruption was the root to the country's ailing economy. He stated that the South African Government and the South African business community had to find a way to combat corruption, although he didn't mention it by name. He suggested the summit should look at addressing quality and depth of leaders within the public and private sectors by adhering to the National Development Plan.[47]

In the lead up to the 53rd ANC National Conference he spoke of the need to remove corruption from the ANC itself[48] In his first speech to the Conference as ANC leader he pledged to stamp out corruption.[49]

President of the ANC[edit]

Ramaphosa has long been considered a potential presidential candidate and ran in the 1997 ANC Presidential election, losing to Thabo Mbeki.[50]

Ramaphosa announced that he would seek the ANC Presidency in 2017, with his second run for President.[51] Ramaphosa launched his campaign slogan as #CR17 Siyavuma.[52]

By August 2017, Ramaphosa had received the endorsement of the trade union COSATU, the National Union of Mineworkers as well as the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Gauteng provincial ANC leadership. Individuals who also stepped forward to support Ramaphosa include education minister Angie Motshekga, Cosatu's president Sdumo Dlamini, former finance minister Pravin Gordhan and former KwaZulu-Natal Premier Senzo Mchunu.[53]

On 18 December 2017, Ramaphosa was elected the president of the ANC at the party's 54th Elective Conference, defeating his rival Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, ex-wife of President Zuma, by 2440 votes to 2261.[54][55]

Presidency[edit]

Main article: List of international presidential trips made by Cyril Ramaphosa

Following Jacob Zuma's resignation, Ramaphosa was elected unopposed as President of South Africa by the National Assembly on 15 February 2018.[56] Ramaphosa took his oath of office in the presidential guesthouse, Tuynhuys, by Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng.[57][58][59]

Markets rallied strongly the day after Ramaphosa assumed the presidency with stocks rising by 5% and the rand reaching its firmest since early 2015.

Government bonds also increased in strength with the lead in benchmark instrument due in 2026 down 6.5 basis points to 8.165%.[citation needed]

On 16 February 2018, Ramaphosa gave his first State of the Nation Address as the President of South Africa, the first time in a democratic South Africa where the President delivered his State of the Nation Address without a Deputy President. Ramaphosa emphasised the need to grow the economy of South Africa, Tourism, youth employment as well as reducing the size of the Cabinet. In this speech, Ramaphosa also focused on the importance of keeping Mandela's legacy alive.[60]

Ramaphosa's speech was met with mostly positive reviews from Opposition Parties saying that his speech was positive and that it would bring about change, but that they would hold him accountable if he would make the same mistakes as Jacob Zuma did.[citation needed]

On 17 February, Ramaphosa as commander in chief of the South African National Defence Force attended the Armed Forces Inter-Faith Service at the Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley and made his first public speech as the President of South Africa.

On 26 February 2018, Ramaphosa who had inherited Jacob Zuma's cabinet, reshuffled cabinet for the first time removing many of the cabinet members who had been controversial through the Zuma era and who had close links to the Gupta family. Ramaphosa also named the Deputy president of the African National Congress and the Premier of Mpumalanga, David Mabuza as the country's Deputy President.

Ramaphosa made his first international trip as the President of South Africa on 2 March 2018 to the Republic of Angola and met with President João Lourenço as the chair of the SADC

Domestic Policy[edit]

Since Ramaphosa became president he has made land reform and the economy his main priorities. as well as dealing with the outbreak of listeriosis which has claimed the lives of over 100 since the start of 2018.

Business career[edit]

Among other positions, he is executive chairman of Shanduka Group, a company he founded. Shanduka Group has investments in the resources sector, energy sector, real estate, banking, insurance, and telecoms (SEACOM). He is also chairman of The Bidvest Group Limited, and MTN. His other non-executive directorships include Macsteel Holdings, Alexander Forbes and Standard Bank. In March 2007 he was appointed Non-Executive joint Chairman of Mondi, a leading international paper and packaging group, when the company demerged from Anglo American plc. In July 2013 he retired from the board of SABMiller plc.

**He is one of South Africa's richest men,[61] with an estimated wealth of R6.4 billion (\$550 million).[62]**

In 2011 Ramaphosa paid for a 20-year master franchise agreement to run 145 McDonald's restaurants in South Africa. Shortly after the 2012 general election, Ramaphosa announced that he was going to disinvest from Shanduka to fulfill his new responsibilities as Deputy President without the possibility of conflict of interest. McDonald's South Africa announced that there would be a process underway to replace Ramaphosa as the current development licensee of the fast food chain operation in South Africa.

In 2014 after becoming Deputy President of South Africa the Register of Members' interests, tabled at parliament, revealed Ramaphosa's wealth. Over and above the more than R76 million Ramaphosa accumulated in company shares, the documents showed that the former trade unionist and businessman owned 30 properties in Johannesburg and two apartments in Cape Town. The register also confirmed Ramaphosa's resignation from Lonmin, a directorship for which he was criticised during the Marikana massacre in 2012.

Farmer[edit]

During a visit to Uganda in 2004, Ramaphosa became interested in the Ankole cattle breed. Because of inadequate disease control measures in Uganda, the South African government denied him permission to import any of the breed. Instead, Ramaphosa purchased 43 cows from Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and shipped them to Kenya. There the cows were artificially inseminated, the embryos removed and shipped to South Africa, there



transferred to cows and then quarantined for two months. As of August 2017 Ramaphosa had 100 Ankole breeding cows at his Ntaba Nyoni farm in Mpumalanga.[63][64]

In 2017 Ramaphosa co-wrote a book on the breed, *Cattle of the Ages, Stories, and Portraits of the Ankole Cattle of Southern Africa*.<sup>[65]</sup>

Controversies<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: Marikana miners' strike

**The Marikana massacre,<sup>[66]</sup> as referred to in the media, occurred when police broke up an occupation by striking Lonmin workers of a "koppie" (hilltop) near Nkaneng shack settlement in Marikana on 16 August 2012. As a result of the police shootings, 34 miners died and an additional 78 miners were injured causing anger and outcry against the police and South African government. Further controversy emerged after it was discovered that most of the victims were shot in the back<sup>[67]</sup> and many victims were shot far from police lines.<sup>[68]</sup> The violence on 16 August 2012 was the single most lethal use of force by South African security forces against civilians since the end of the apartheid era.<sup>[69]</sup>**

During the Marikana Commission, it also emerged that Lonmin management solicited Ramaphosa, as Lonmin shareholder and ANC heavyweight, to coordinate "concomitant action" against "criminal" protesters and therefore is seen by many as being responsible for the massacre.<sup>[70][71]</sup>

Under the investigation of Farlam committee, Ramaphosa said that Lonmin lobbied government and the SAPS firstly to secure a massive police presence at Lonmin and secondly to characterise what was taking place as a criminal rather than an industrial relations event.<sup>[72]</sup>

The Marikana Commission of Inquiry ultimately found that given the deaths that had already occurred, his intervention did not cause the increase in police on site, nor did he know the operation would take place on 16 August.<sup>[73]</sup>

In August 2017, Ramaphosa was involved in a scandal which alleged he had been in several extramarital affairs and was involved in paying money to individuals while maintaining the affairs. Ramaphosa later denied the allegations claiming they were politically motivated to derail his presidential campaign.<sup>[74]</sup>

Honorary doctorates and awards<sup>[edit]</sup>

Among others, Ramaphosa has received honorary doctorates from the University of Natal, the University of Port Elizabeth, the University of Cape Town, the University of the North, the National University of Lesotho, National

University of Ireland Galway [75] the University of Massachusetts Boston[76] and the University of Pennsylvania.

Ramaphosa received the Olof Palme prize in Stockholm in October 1987.

He was awarded Honorary Actuary by the Actuarial Society of South Africa for his role in developing Actuarial professionals from historically disadvantaged communities in South Africa.[when?]

In 2004, he was voted 34th in the Top 100 Great South Africans.

Ramaphosa was included in the 2007 Time 100,[77] an annual list of 100 men and women whose power, talent or moral example is transforming the world.

International positions[edit]

In his role as a businessman, Ramaphosa is a member of the Coca-Cola Company International Advisory Board as well as the Unilever Africa Advisory Council. He was also the first deputy chairman of the Commonwealth Business Council.

Along with the ex-president of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, he was appointed an inspector of the Irish Republican Army weapon dumps in Northern Ireland.

Ramaphosa is the Honorary consul general for Iceland in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In the 2007–2008 Kenyan crisis, which followed the disputed re-election of President Mwai Kibaki in December 2007, Ramaphosa was unanimously chosen by the mediation team headed by Kofi Annan to be the chief mediator in charge of leading long-term talks. However, Kibaki's government expressed dissatisfaction with the choice of Ramaphosa, saying that he had business links with Kibaki's opponent Raila Odinga, and on 4 February Annan accepted Ramaphosa's withdrawal from the role of chief mediator.[78] According to Ramaphosa, Odinga visited him in 2007, but he did not have any "special interest" that would lead him to favour one side or the other;[79] however, he said that he could not be an effective mediator without "the trust and confidence of all parties" and that he, therefore, felt it would be best for him to return to South Africa to avoid becoming an obstacle in the negotiation.[80]

Personal life[edit]

Ramaphosa is a very private person and not much is known about his personal life. Ramaphosa had previously been married to businesswoman Nomazizi Mtshotshisa, but the couple divorced. He later married Tshepo Motsepe,[81] a medical doctor and the sister of South African mining billionaire Patrice Motsepe.[82] Ramaphosa has four children.[83]

He owns a luxury mansion at the foot of Lion's Head in Cape Town. Ramaphosa is known to be one of the richest people in South Africa, with an estimated net

worth of more than \$450,000,000 and has appeared in financial magazines such as Forbes Africa and Bloomberg.

Ramaphosa is also the founder of the Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation.