

Press Release

For immediate release

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South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

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IRR response to Jacob Zuma comments this evening

The political importance of the Nkandla judgement has been overstated. The ANC will not permit external critics to determine who its leader is. This is somewhat understandable.

Our considered view is that the Zuma exit is likely to be a far more orderly and less dramatic departure – staged over the next 18 months – than the sudden once off announcement some analysts anticipated for this evening.

Our strong sense is that Mr Zuma will step-down shortly after the ANC's December 2017 conference. This may open the way for a then relatively united ANC to contest the 2019 election on a possibly reformist platform. We are also of the view that analysts are reading too much into Mr Zuma's future as a proxy for South Africa's future.

The crises confronting SA extend very much beyond Mr Zuma and have their origins in events that pre-date his coming to office. These crises are essentially economic in nature and will require reforms to labour, empowerment and property rights policy to address.

It is moves in these three areas that will have a more definitive impact on South Africa's future than whether Mr Zuma remains in office for the next 18 or so months.

Ends.
