

No women on NDPP selection panel – Presidency

The Presidency has expressed ‘deep concern’ that none of the candidates nominated by legal bodies for the panel to decide on who should lead the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) is a woman. According to **Business Day**, Khusela Diko, spokesperson for President Cyril Ramaphosa, said some bodies had only offered female candidates as ‘alternatives’ to the males they nominated as their first choices. The bodies making up the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions panel include the General Council of the Bar, Law Society, Black Lawyers Association, Advocates for Transformation, National Association of Democratic Lawyers and the Human Rights Commission. ‘The Presidency is concerned – given the magnitude of this decision and the fact that there are capable and qualified female legal professionals who could contribute a great deal to this process – that they are not being included as first choice panel members,’ Diko said. Meanwhile, Diko said **the presidential inquiries into the fitness to hold office of suspended NPA directors Nomgcobo Jiba and Lawrence Muregi were being run by an ‘excellent’ all-female legal team.** Those inquiries will be led by former Constitutional Court Justice Yvonne Mokgoro with the assistance of Kgomo Moroka SC and attorney Thenjiwe Vilakazi. The terms of reference for the inquiry will be developed by evidence leader Nazreen Bawa SC. Diko said this team showed that the Presidency was ‘leading by example’ in briefing female lawyers on high-profile matters.