

SA advocate in hot water in Swaziland

The Law Society of Swaziland (LSS) says the South African advocate who is prosecuting in the murder trial of Sipho Shongwe failed to disclose relevant information in his application for admission. The society is vigorously opposing the application for admission filed by Advocate Michael Hellens, a former acting High Court judge in SA, is accused of having failed to disclose that he was once charged with unprofessional conduct. The [Times of Swaziland](#) reports that Hellens was accused of taking a bag containing R500 000 in cash as a 'gift' from self-confessed tobacco smuggler and alleged fraudster Adriano Mazzotti. LSS secretary-general Thulani Maseko pointed out that a story linking Hellens to the theft appeared in the *Sunday Times* on 5 November 2017. It stated that Hellens admitted to accepting the cash and was reprimanded by the Johannesburg Bar Council. Maseko said **'Hellens has failed to satisfy the requirements for admission of a non-resident advocate as set out in Section 5 (2) as read with Section 28 to 30 of the Legal Practitioners Act'**. [Legalbrief](#) reports that Hellens has also represented former President Jacob Zuma in his corruption case as well as his son Duduzane in his culpable homicide case. In addition, he has acted for the Gupta family in their successful efforts to challenge Asset Forfeiture Unit seizures of R250m as alleged 'proceeds of crime' linked to the Estina dairy project.