



**International Association of Women Judges**  
*advancing human rights and equal justice for all*

**S.A Chapter:**

#### MEDIA STATEMENT



Justice Mandisa Muriel Lindelwa Maya, President of the Supreme Court of Appeal of South Africa (SCA) and the South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges (SAC-IAWJ), was elected Regional Director: West and Southern Africa on 7 May 2021, during the Africa Regional Meeting at the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) taking place in Auckland New Zealand from 7 - 9 May 2021. The IAWJ is an organisation that assembles judges from 82 countries and world regions, creating a wide global network devoted to the worldwide exchange of judicial experiences.

Justice Maya is the latest appointee from the Africa region and she joins the President Elect of the IAWJ, Justice Binta Nako (Nigeria) and Regional Director East and Central Africa Justice Hanna Okwengu (Kenya). She was nominated for this senior position by the SAC-IAWJ, seconded by the Botswana International Association of Women Judges National Chapter, under the leadership of the Hon. Justice Sanji Monageng, former Justice of the International Criminal Tribunal, Hague. Justice Monageng described Justice Maya as ‘an advocate for gender equality and justice, and the appointment of women in the judiciary.’

The nomination was supported by Malawi Women’s Association (WOJAM), which said “Justice Maya is the perfect candidate and nominee for the position... It is WOJAM’s belief that she will offer IAWJ her knowledge, experience as well as skills due to her vast

accomplishments and her commitment to justice especially the rule of law and protection of human rights shall be a huge advantage’.

The nomination was further supported by the Institute for African Women in Law (IAWL), a global organisation of lawyers dedicated to using the law for positive societal change and development which stands for enhancing the capacity of women for positive change. Its Executive Director, Prof. Jarpa Dawuni, Esq. Ph.D., remarked that ‘Justice Maya’s professional record, proven integrity, and her tireless advocacy for the rights of women and children is well demonstrated’.

Justice Maya holds B.Proc, LLB and LLM degrees and several honorary LLD degrees awarded in recognition of her contribution to the development in jurisprudence in South Africa as well as the empowerment of women in the legal profession and the judiciary. She is a Fulbright; Georgetown University Law & Gender Program; and Commonwealth Foundation Fellow and the recipient of the 2020 Duke University Law International Law Alumnus Award.

After teaching law at the former University of Transkei, while also practising at the Transkei Society of Advocates, she became a judge and sat in various divisions of the High Court and the Labour Courts before her elevation to the SCA. She has acted as a judge in the Constitutional Court of South Africa, the Supreme Court of Namibia and the Appeal Court of Lesotho. She promoted law reform as the Chairperson of the South African Law Reform Commission and is a member of the South African Judicial Service Commission, the South African Judicial Institute and the Duke Law Judicial Institute Leadership Council, among other leadership positions.

As IAWJ Regional Director, Justice Maya will represent all the members of the South and West Africa region and promote the IAWJ in bilateral and regional fora and promote inter-regional communication and collaboration.

Ends

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