



# ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL MAGISTRATES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Celebrating 20 years of Justice for all

## ARMSA Post Conference: Press Statement

1. The Association of Regional Magistrates of Southern Africa (ARMSA) had occasion to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> year in existence over the weekend 15 to 17 May 2015.
2. The Annual General Congress noted with concern:
  - The lack of administrative independence of the South African Lower Court Judiciary and the Regional Courts in particular. This could be attained by supplying an adequate budget to the Office of the Chief Justice.
  - The lack of financial security - the decrease in real terms of remuneration that has occurred over the past seven years.
  - The failure of the Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers to address the above concern.
  - The lack of sufficient resources to speedily and efficiently dispense justice in the Regional Courts.
  - The failure to attend to the Magistrates regulations. The current regulations strengthen the notion that the Minister of Justice still controls the Lower Court Judiciary.
3. The meeting echoed and supported the sentiments expressed by the Chief Justice of South Africa, Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng that our judicial independence should be vigorously defended, and any encroachment thereupon should be challenged in a responsible manner. The Chief Justice also stated that without an independent judiciary our democracy is doomed.
4. The meeting resolved to give its full support to the Chief Justice in his endeavour to achieve administrative independence for all the courts in South Africa.