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Media Statement

CONDOLENCES TO JUDGE MOOSA

The Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa learnt with sadness and shock of the passing of a well-respected human rights activist, struggle icon, and a humble servant of our Judiciary, Judge Essa Moosa. Born in 1936, in District Six, Cape Town, he was admitted to practise as an attorney by the Cape Town High Court on 1 June 1962. He practised as such until December 1997 when he pursued a judicial calling. He was a Judge of the Western Cape Division of the High Court from May 1999 until his discharge from active service in February 2011 at the age of 75.

His unquenchable passion for human rights is borne out by his selfless and indefatigable defence of many political activists in matters relating to basic human rights like detention without trial, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, security and emergency legislation and regulations. He acted for many oppressed people including prominent leaders of political and community based organisations, like President Nelson Mandela.

Judge Moosa was a founding and executive member of the National Association of Democratic Lawyers which campaigned for the transformation of the legal profession and the Judiciary. He also served as a member of the Constitutional Committee of the African National Congress (ANC) that played a pivotal role in shaping South Africa into a non-racial and non-sexist constitutional democracy that it now is.

During his retirement, Judge Moosa has been serving as a Judge in the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation appointed to investigate complaints from members of the public against



the HAWKS and from the members of the HAWKS against members of the public including politicians and civil servants.

He was revered globally for his peace initiatives and for his track record as an outstanding human rights activist. This notwithstanding, he remained a humble servant of the people, especially the marginalised and the forgotten people all over the world. His death is not only a loss to South Africa but also to the global community. Prosperity will probably smile at the mention of his name because of the enormous contribution and selfless advancement of the fundamental rights of others.

On behalf of the Judiciary, I hereby express our condolences and wish Judge Moosa's family and friends comfort and strength during this difficult period.

Ends.

Issued by the Office of the Chief Justice