

The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003 recognized only three positions of traditional leadership namely King, Senior Traditional Leader and Headmen or headwomen.

The Commission continued to investigate the issue of who was supposed to occupy the position of the six qualifying paramountcies and paramount chiefs.

However, during its investigation, there were disputes and new claims to the same positions that came to the fore. The Commission then had to investigate those claims and counter claims.

In January 2010, the Commission resolved some of the cases that were already in the cycle of investigation. In terms of the law, the Commission presented its report to the President.

THE FINDINGS

The findings of the Commission, which I have accepted, are as follows: South Africa has only seven legitimate Kingships/kings or queenships/queens and another six whose status will come to an end on the death of the current incumbent in the position.

KINGSHIPS THAT ARE RECOGNISED

The following Kingships and Kings are recognized in the Republic of South Africa:

1. AbaThembu: King Buyelekhaya Zwelibanzi Dalindyebo, Eastern Cape.
2. AmaXhosa: King Zwelonke Sigcawu, Eastern Cape.
3. AmaMpondo: King Zanozuko Tyelovuyo Sigcawu, Eastern Cape.
4. AmaZulu: King Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu, KwaZulu-Natal.
5. Bapedi ba Maroteng: King Thulare Victor Thulare, Limpopo.

Two kingships/queenships have also been recognized, but the Commission must still decide who the two rightful incumbents are.

Those are:

1. AmaNdebele wakwaManala and AmaNdebele as a whole from the lineage of the current king Makhosonke Enoch Mabhena (Makhosonke II); of Mpumalanga; and
2. VhaVenda from the lineage of Mphephu Ramabulane of Limpopo Province.

The incumbents will be determined by a new Commission, which will be set up through the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2009.

PARAMOUNTCIES THAT ARE NOT RECOGNISED

The following paramountcies and paramount chiefs, that are not recognised, shall be deemed to be kingships and queenships until the incumbents pass on.

Thereafter, the successors will be recognised by the relevant Premiers as Principal traditional leaders.

The affected paramountcies are the following:

1. Batlokwa ba Mota: King Lekunutu Cavandish Mota, Free State.
2. Bakwena baMopeli: King Thokwane Mopeli, Free State.
3. AmaRharhabe: King Bangilizwe Maxhobayakhawuleza Sandile, Eastern Cape.
4. Amampondo ase-Nyandeni: King Ndamase kaNdamase, Eastern Cape.

5. Ndzundza Mabhoko King Mbusi Mahlangu, Mpumalanga.
6. AbaThembu base-Rhode in the Eastern Cape.

Due to the passing on of King Zwelonke Matanzima, the community of AbaThembu base Rhode in the Eastern Cape will henceforth be known as a Principal Traditional Leadership.

This part of the Commission's work dealt only with matters relating to paramountcies, kingships and queenships. Part two will probe and make findings and recommendations on the next layer of traditional leadership, the Principal traditional Leadership, Senior Traditional Leadership and Headmanship.

We are aware that this report has been awaited with anxiety over a long period. We urge all communities to accept the findings in the spirit of correcting the wrongs of the past, and as part of the country's nation building efforts.

The Commission has confirmed facts that have been generally known all along historically.

Almost all the affected communities have known the circumstances around which some of the kingships or queenships were created.

The findings must help all affected communities to begin the path of acceptance, healing and reconciliation. We have always been able to find ways of resolving issues, and of accepting even the most difficult of solutions for the good of the country. We must face the truth, even if it is uncomfortable, and move forward.

As government, we will play our part to assist with a smooth transition to the new dispensation.

Traditional leadership plays a critical role in our communities. It is our commitment as government to strengthen the capacity of traditional leadership.

We established the Department of Traditional Affairs in April this year, to underline this critical focus on traditional leadership.

Last year, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform was established, and traditional leaders will play a pivotal role in its work.

We thank the Commission for the enormous work undertaken.

We also acknowledge the cooperation of traditional leaders and communities during this process.

I thank you.