

former Chief Justice Sandile Ngcobo. Another entailed a tribute to the late former Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson, noting that the late Chief Justice's contribution to the legal fraternity had left an indelible mark in defence of an independent legal profession, for which we owed our eternal gratitude to him. The conduct of the Zimbabwean Government in the arrest of Ms Beatrice Mtetwa, a renowned Zimbabwean Human Rights Lawyer, was also decried.

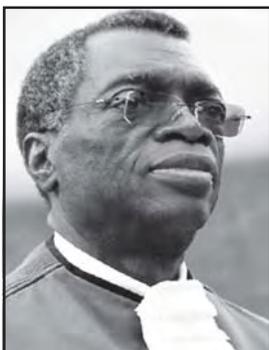
With the Legal Practice Bill being passed into law, in whatever shape, there appears to be one consequence at the Bar we cannot avoid. It is the fact that the practice of law in the country will require statutory registration. The one impact of this is that the independent advocates will fall under the same regulatory framework as the members of the Bar. I highlight this fact which has direct implications for one of the rules of the Bar which is at the core of our architecture – the rule that no member can practise from a building not approved by the relevant Bar Council. This rule, if not applied or applied to the independent advocates, will present its own difficulties. The most significant of that problem would be the resources, financial and human, necessary to address a number of practitioners that is probably twice that of the members of the Bar. On the other hand, to relinquish the rule will be perilous to the Bar. LET'S KEEP THINKING ... 

Endnotes

- ¹ My highest appreciation for the support and work of the Executive Committee; Pieter Pauw SC, convener and his team of the Rules Committee in Johannesburg; Nirmal Singh SC, the Ethics Sub-Committee in KZN; Parliamentary Committee in Cape Town – commenting on various Bills bearing relevance to the profession; Brahm du Plessis SC, chair for the newly constituted Human Rights Committee of the Johannesburg Bar and his team; Nante Diedericks SC, chair for the Road Accident Fund Committee at the Pretoria Bar; Gerrit Pretorius SC as convener, and his team for the Bursary Committee; Leon Dicker, convener of the Laws and Administration Committee of the Pretoria Bar; Thami Ncongwane SC, convener for the Finance Committee and his team; Timothy Bruinders SC, convener for the Advocacy Training Committee; Jannie van der Merwe, National Pupillage Coordinator; Rudi van Rooyen SC, as convener and his team on the Ad hoc committee on the Legal Practice Bill; the team compiling our submissions to the Judicial Commission; our representatives on various bodies – Kameshnie Pillay, Legal Aid South Africa; Pops Aboobaker SC, Professional Provident Society; Jacques Malan, Legal Provident Fund; Michael Kuper SC, director of AFSA; Hennie Mellet and his team for Advocate; the Secretariat, Elize Van den Heever and her team, Tracy Nothnagel and Susan Molefe, without whom the GCB is impossible to be and to have ever been and most certainly whose input will inspire the growth of the organisation from year to year in the future.
- ² The resignation by Advocate Izak Smuts SC. Izak Smuts also resigned as a representative of the advocates' profession on the Judicial Service Commission.
- ³ MJ Lowe SC (Eastern Cape); DS Fourie (North and South Gauteng Court); O Rogers SC and A Schippers SC (Western Cape); M Madlanga SC (Constitutional Court) and GC Wright (North and South Gauteng divisions).

Stop press: Media statement

Tribute by the General Council of the Bar of South Africa to the late former Chief Justice Pius Langa



The GCB is saddened to learn of the death of former Chief Justice Pius Langa who died today [24 July 2013] at the age of 74.

The former Chief Justice was born in Bushbuckridge on 25 March 1939. His legal career took off in 1977, after obtaining BJuris and LLB degrees from the University of South Africa. He was admitted in that year as an advocate of the Supreme Court of South Africa, practised at the Natal Bar and in early 1994, attained the rank of senior counsel.

Justice Langa had a distinguished career. When the Constitutional Court was established with the advent of a new democratic order in 1994, Justice Langa was appointed, together with ten others as the first judges of the new court. He became its Deputy President in August 1997 and in November 2001, assumed the position of Deputy Chief Justice of South Africa. He was appointed as Chief Justice and head of the Constitutional Court in June 2005 and served on that court with distinction until his retirement in October 2009.

Justice Langa was founder member of the National Democratic Lawyers (NADEL) and served as its president from 1988 until 1994. He has served on the boards and as trustee of various law-related institutions. He was also the Commissioner of the pre-Constitutional Human Rights Commission (later known as the Human Rights Committee).

Justice Langa has left an indelible mark in the constitutional jurisprudence of our country. He has helped South Africa to carve for itself a respected place in the world constitutional democracies. His humility as a person will be difficult to match. His legal acumen will remain a beacon for every lawyer to emulate and his legacy one that we as lawyers and as nation must protect.

The former Chief Justice was a recipient of the Sydney and Felicia Kentridge Award, a prestigious award conferred by the GCB to a person in recognition of dedication and excellence in service to law in Southern Africa.

The GCB extends its sincere condolences to the family of Justice Langa – a true son of Africa.

May his soul rest in peace. 

Ishmael Semanya SC, chairman of the GCB
24 July 2013