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Sent: 10 September 2021 16:43
Subject: Intellidex, South Africa: Intra-ANC violence (Muni elections countdown I)



CAPITAL MARKETS RESEARCH SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Intra-ANC violence (Muni elections countdown I)

SOUTH AFRICA

10 September 2021

An increasing lack of funds in the ANC together with a potential further shrinking of seats (to a greater or lesser degree depending on the outcome of the ConCourt challenges) will keep contestation within the ANC high and with it levels of violence that are ongoing but only get coverage into elections. As part of the assessment of levels of underlying and ongoing violence in KZN that need to be contextualised especially post the July unrest, we have undertaken with investors a particular focus on the issue of intra-ANC violence that oscillates with the political cycle. Next year's ANC elective conference will also be in focus not just for the national events but also contestation to lower branch, district and province meetings and elections that will be ongoing too.

While SA is finally tackling long-needed reforms to parts of its economy with the momentum gained in liberalising the energy sector the most encouraging, one area that is neglected but needs urgent attention is local government. Riddled with incompetent or simply disinterested officials appointed through the ANC's cadre deployment policy, in wide swathes of the country local government is plagued by twin main threats: corruption and political violence.

Political assassinations, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, are prevalent.

This report looks at the historical linkages of political violence and ways to address the scourge. There are various reasons why this is continuing: mainly corruption, elections and factional wars that cannot be solved through normal political means as elements vie for power. All these factors, within the ANC, are likely to get worse before they get better in the coming internal and external (muni/parliamentary) elections – as the ANC slowly loses its majority.

We have not really stated a baseline for candidate list reopening for the (now confirmed) 1 November MTBPS, but have stated that precedent as well as our reading (and that of many

legal experts) of the last ConCourt order would seem to suggest that it is not reopened despite IEC's intentions.

Latest polling

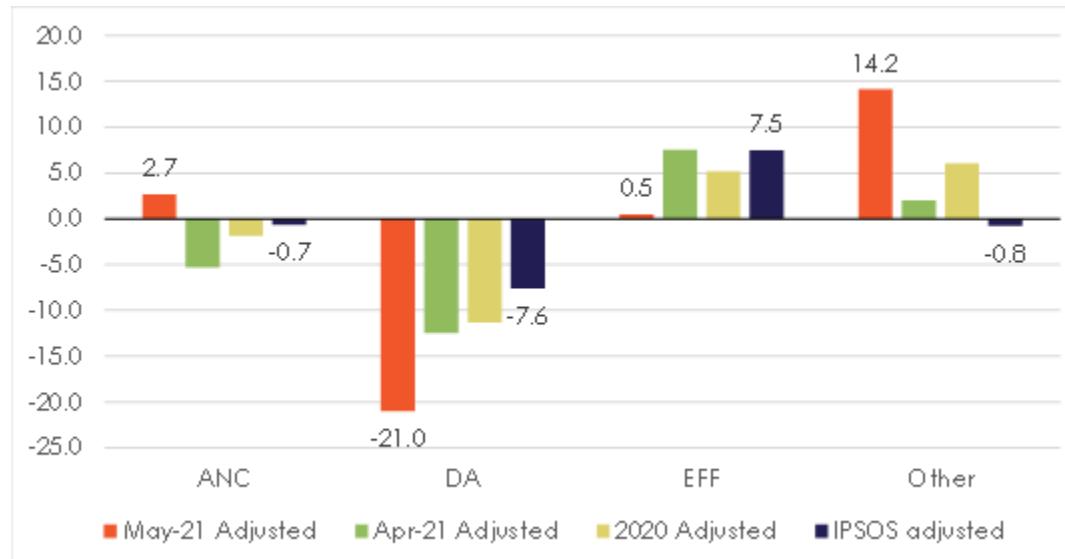
The level of contestation inside the ANC is quite clearly seen in the infighting, leaking etc at the moment around these local elections but the results are likely to make things worse.

We present below again our by-election swing-o-meter which is biased a little by what wards are up in what round, but shows a broadly consistent narrative. This doesn't have a lens on it of the ANC's registration problems but in terms of council outcomes that would clearly make the ANC in national national support terms (as expressed by votes leading to representation) being much worse.

We have added the recent IPSOS poll on party support. We find their polling extremely suspect in terms of how data is presented and it requires very careful inspection. The headlines recently that the ANC would drop to 49.3% of national vote share equivalent were deeply misleading. This was a % share of respondents that included people not revealing their vote or were not sure who to vote for. They also compare with 2019 results, when our frame must be 2016 given these are local elections where people always vote less for the ANC. The actual shift since 2016 for IPSOS trying to correct for how they present things is smaller and more in line with the average of recent by elections.

[Note this is not a forecast... we will be launching our muni-election forecast start October]

National equivalent swings from 2016 results for by-elections by date plus IPSOS swing of latest vs 2016 (pp)



Apartheid legacy

KZN has long been infamous for political violence, with the low-level civil war between the ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) spanning more than a decade from the 1980s until 1994. An estimated 20,000 people were killed during this period.

The conflict ended as the country entered the democratic era but it brought new problems to the province. Some IFP members joined the ANC to benefit from the ruling party's system of

vested interests, but that introduced a new fight for tenders and taxi routes, which in KZN are also synonymous with politics. This has made KZN a hot spot for political killings.

South African investigative journalist Greg Arde and veteran KZN researcher and interventionist human rights worker, Mary de Haas have often exclaimed that “a new form of political violence broke out, centred in KwaZulu-Natal, and began getting into its stride after Jacob Zuma became president in 2009”. This violence is not motivated by ideology and policy between two groups but “everything to do with money”.ⁱ

According to De Haas, who has been involved in research into, and documentation of, political violence in KZN since the mid-1980s, “around 90 municipal councillors, political party officials and senior municipal officials, have been murdered in KwaZulu-Natal since 2015” with most of them affiliated to the ANC. Arde alludes some of these killings as cover ups to the potential exposés of “corruption over tenders, kickbacks, budgets and the allocation of funds”.

Killings per province by category 2000-2017

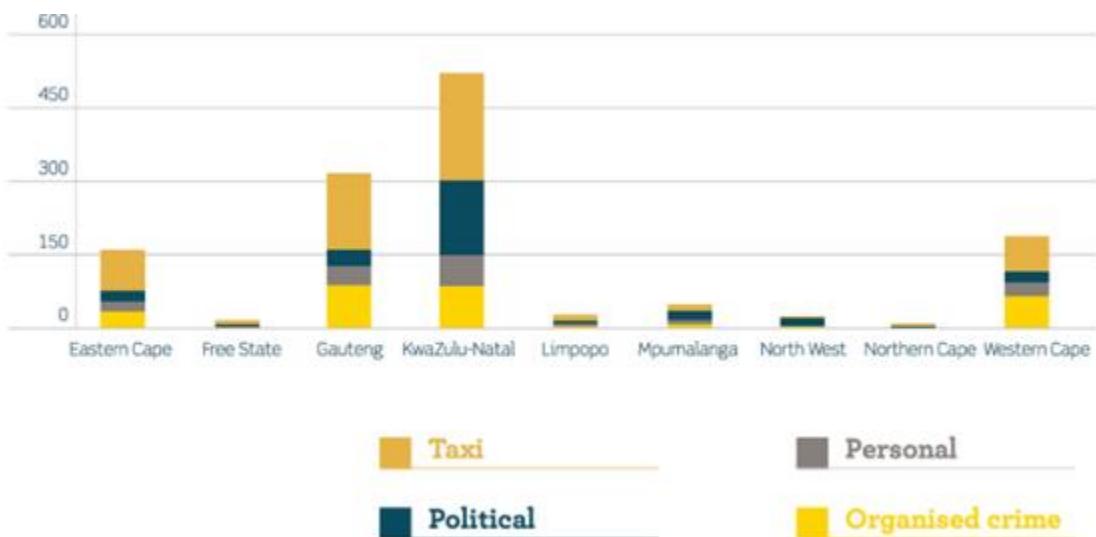


Figure 1, Source: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crimeⁱⁱ

The figure above shows that assassinations driven by organised crime, taxi violence and political violence take place in all provinces but are particularly serious in KZN, Gauteng, Western Cape and Eastern Cape.

Political assassinations in KZN, with 300 deaths between 2000 and 2017, are more than both Gauteng and the Western Cape combined. The province also leads in taxi-affiliated killings at a staggering 470 deaths.

There are still a high number of quasi-paramilitary forces in the province stemming from the 1980s when they were established for maintaining control during the ANC-IFP war. Some of the leaders from that time today act as leaders and kingmakers in communities, intervening in disputes of a political nature.ⁱⁱⁱ

Cadre deployment

People value being in political office as a measure of success. The ANC's cadre deployment policy excludes outsiders and, while its members often have insufficient educational

qualifications, they are highly motivated to entrench themselves in their positions, which provide access to wealth accumulation.

This is especially prevalent at municipal level where there is a relatively large caucus of councillors for the size of communities. These councillors have access to procurement mechanisms, budgets, and patronage – but with a lack of internal oversight and accountability mechanisms or the public oversight that is more prevalent at national level and to a lesser degree at provincial level.

These officials largely have no historical assets and therefore place a high premium on political office and acquiring elite positions within the dominant party. It is often their only path to wealth accumulation. This further justifies Arde's (2020) notion that "one either has the job or nothing at all. In the absence of qualifications, negative competition in the form of violence is the perfect recipe".^{iv}

This results, within the dominant ruling party itself, in intense contestation for even relatively low-level positions of power, which often manifests in intra-elite conflict within the party and structures of government.^v This is manifested by the fact that political killings, particularly since the 2000s are within the context of both inter-party and intra-party rivalries.

Timeline of political killings, 2016-18

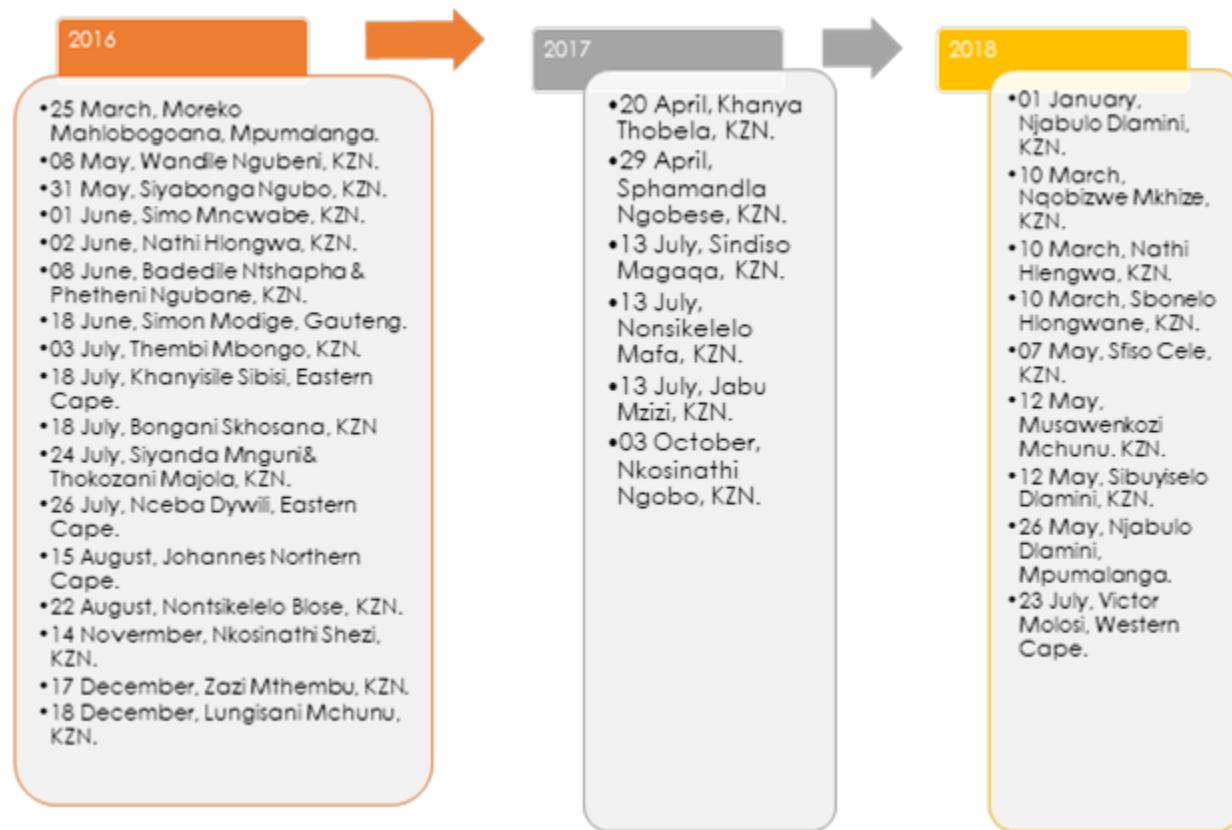


Figure 2, Source: SABC News^{vi}

Among the murders reported in the figure above, perhaps the highest profile is that of Sindiso Magaqa. He died in July 2017 from gunshot wounds from his shooting two months earlier. At the

time of the shooting, Magaqa had allegedly uncovered corruption within his party and local municipality of Umzimkhulu in his position as the ANC's national Youth League general secretary.

Among those implicated in his murder were a district mayor, a former policeman and a local powerful "tenderpreneur" linked to the ANC. To date, no one has been convicted of his murder and his friends, including Thabiso Zulu who was also a whistle blower and survived assassination attempts said "he continued living in fear as the State failed to provide him and others with protection"^{vii} against those suspected behind the attempts.

This is a general trend in such matters, as is evident in the unsolved murders of other prominent people in the ANC. Wandile Bozwana was a successful businessman and an ally to the party. He was murdered in Gauteng in 2015 and some influential figures like former North West premier Supra Mahumapelo were accused of being linked, while Fikile Mbalula was accused of concealing information to the police about one of the suspects he had allegedly been in contact with on the day of the murder.

Much never came out of the investigation, and both Mahumapelo and Mbalula were rewarded with key cabinet positions after the ordeal – even when the former accused the ANC of fabricating lies to deter him from exposing corruption within the party.

The Moerane Commission and the inter-ministerial committee

President Cyril Ramaphosa set up an inter-ministerial committee in 2018 of ministers in the security cluster to probe the incidents of violence in KwaZulu-Natal. Police Minister Bheki Cele vowed, alongside the president, that they will get to the bottom of these incidents, with Cele announcing in 2019 that those convictions had been made for various cases that the task team was dealing with, but these cases were never made public, eliciting doubt that such convictions happened in the first place.

The inter-ministerial committee was formed after the Moerane Commission had been set up in October 2016 by then KwaZulu-Natal Premier Willies Mchunu.^{viii} Mchunu established the commission to investigate the underlying causes of the murder and attempted murder of politicians in KZN.

The terms of reference of the commission were to investigate and report on:

- a. The number, nature, and locality of incidents of murder and attempted murder involving politicians, both as victims and suspects, in the province from 2011.
- b. Indications whether the incidents [were] related to political, ethnic, tribal, social, or criminal factors or any other internal or external influences or factors which may be considered relevant.
- c. The outcome of any police investigation and prosecution of the incidents, including the number of successful prosecutions, trials, and convictions of the perpetrators.
- d. The perceptions of the public, political parties, community structures and members of the relevant communities in respect of the underlying causes of the incidents of murder and attempted murder involving politicians, both as victims and suspects, and the effectiveness of the policing thereof by the police service in the province.

We will use some of the commission's findings and recommendations to conclude the paper and offer guidance on how to end politically motivated assassination in the country^{ix}: However, the commission had no authority to make recommendations regarding prosecutions. The recommendations below were only referred to the cabinet for consideration, but none have been successfully enacted yet.

1. **An improvement in internal structures in SA politics.** The commission recommended that political parties must take responsibility for the violent competition between their members for political positions and power and educate their members about democratic practices. It added that political parties must discipline members who were/are involved in any killings.
2. **Exploitation of the tender system.** Evidence of tender system fraud and manipulation by politicians, public officials and businesspeople is one of the leading causes of political killings. The commission recommended that the state investigate and revise procedures of tenders, so they are fair and transparent to avoid conflict.
3. **Political deployments in the government sector.** Cadre deployment is a major cause of fighting within communities and the commission found that appropriate qualifications for jobs in the government had to be enforced without exception to ensure deserving people are employed.
4. **Police manipulation of the system.** The commission found that the lack of convictions in these murders was directly linked to the police hiding evidence, incompetence, and political manipulation. This has led to a public loss of confidence in the justice system, leading to further corruption.

For political assassinations in South Africa to end, the ruling party needs to step up its efforts to drive corrupt officials and members out of office and uphold the law. This will set a clear precedent that the ANC does not promote violence and corruption – these two go hand in hand and as such, they need to be dealt with concurrently. Unfortunately, the ANC is proving itself to be ineffective in this endeavour, bearing in mind that accountability was non-existent during the Zuma presidency.

President Ramaphosa's administration has made it policy to suspend ANC members who are accused of corruption, but this is proving challenging. It's imperative, however, that the president pursues this policy relentlessly, from the top down to the bottom rungs of municipal government. Corruption is rife at each level.

A more concrete, immediate action that would signal his determination to root out corruption would be another cabinet reshuffle, ejecting those with factional, factional or vested interests and putting in place those that share the same values as him.

The last cabinet reshuffle on the 5th of August by President Ramaphosa was an opportunity for him to root out the corrupt individuals, but unfortunately the only highlight or rather welcomed ousting came at the resignation of Zweli Mkhize who stepped down from his position as health minister due to corruption allegations over contracts awarded fraudulently in the Digital Vibes scandal.

Mkhize's pending charges are an indication of the way the country wishes things to be done when it comes to rooting out corruption – but on the same light, former finance minister Tito Mboweni (also resigned) was replaced by Enoch Godongwana, who had previously been forced to resign as the deputy minister of economic development in 2012 over corruption allegations that resulted in the loss of R100-million to the South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union members' pension fund.

North West

There are five municipal mayors in the North West who were found to be underperforming and ordered to step down by the ANC's interim provincial committee. They refused, took the matter to court and won the right to be reinstated. This is even though the party had voted them out

during council meetings and elected new officials – leaving the municipalities with two people claiming legitimacy to the role.^x

This reflects the careerism and factionalism that is tearing the party apart. The ANC finds itself in war not just with opposition parties but with itself. The upcoming local elections present a unique problem that could potentially stir up violence in the province.

The succession problems in the ANC provincial are likely to cause more problems here than in the past where a narrative of Luthuli House vs branches/grass routes may be played up.

Eastern Cape

This province experienced its own wave of political killings in the past couple of months. April saw an ANC councillor arrested with three alleged hitmen hired by him to murder a fellow party member. The deceased was reportedly planning on standing against the ward councillor for a council position and it is suspected that he masterminded the murder to avoid that from happening. The deceased was ambushed and gunned down outside his home while attempting to park his car for the night.^{xi}

Also in the Eastern Cape, a candidate for the for the upcoming local elections was stabbed to death at a party meeting in the OR Tambo region. The party released a statement saying the deceased was stabbed by a group of thugs outside the community hall where the meeting was set to take place after it was postponed. ANC provincial secretary Lulama Ngcukayithobi stated: "We [ANC] are deeply worried that political differences are now being resolved through brutal killing, and no longer through established congress movement traditions of political persuasions and robust engagements. This is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated".^{xii}

Two people have since been arrested following the incident, but this a growing issue within the province and again, with only three months from local elections, the potential for intensified violence increases.

The ANC has emphasised the need for greater security at its party meetings across the country to curb such violence, but this seems to be insufficient.

The party's national executive committee (NEC) instructed branches to nominate a maximum of six candidates as they build up to the elections.^{xiii} But there is still a lot of violence around the country with branches unable to agree on who should be on these lists. The ANC recently received a welcome announcement from the IEC that candidate registrations for the upcoming local elections had been extended to the 22nd of September (elections will now be held on 1 November).

The party had failed to register councillor candidates for 93 municipalities, further reflecting the ANC's disarray ahead of local elections.

Poor political leadership

Former Finance Minister Tito Mboweni believes that poor political leadership caused by infighting in councils develops many stumbling blocks to the success of municipalities.^{xiv} His deputy David Maseko also shared the sentiment, saying that even if rules and regulations are changed, if the issue of local government leadership is not improved, then nothing will be achieved.

National Treasury is clearly pushing for change but as outlined above, the challenges are formidable. This is a good step in the right direction – if more key members of the cabinet and

the ruling party are vocal about these issues, more can be done to resolve them, the first step being to implement the recommendations of the Moerane commission.

[Footnotes below disclaimer]

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