

## **Chief Justice Zondo's profile**

Raymond Mnyamezeli Zondo was born on 4 May 1960 in Ixopo, KwaZulu-Natal, where he completed his basic education. He attended St Mary's Seminary in Ixopo for his secondary and high school education. He matriculated at the age of 20.

Judge Zondo studied BJuris at the University of Zululand, where he studied alongside retired Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng. He currently serves as the university's Chancellor.

He further obtained his LLB from the University of Natal. Justice Zondo has three LLM degrees from the University of South Africa. These are LLM (*cum laude*) in Labour Law, LLM in Commercial Law and LLM with specialisation in Patent Law.

Chief Justice Zondo worked at Legal Resources after obtaining his BJuris to secure funding for his LLB. After completing his LLB, Justice Zondo served part of his articles of clerkship at Mxenge, Ngxiweni, and Shezi Attorneys in Durban. He then ceded his articles of clerkship to Mthembu and Partners and later finished his articles at Chennels Alberton Attorneys. After his admission as an attorney in 1989, he became a partner at Mathe and Zondo Incorporated. He practised as an attorney for several years.

In 1991 and 1992, he served in two committees of the Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation (also known as the Goldstone Commission), which investigated violence in South Africa during the early 1990s.

In 1994, Justice Zondo was appointed as a member of the Ministerial Task Team responsible for producing a draft Labour Relations Bill for post-apartheid South Africa. With certain amendments, the Bill was passed into the Labour Relations Act in 1995.

In 1996, Justice Zondo was appointed as the first Chairman of the Governing Body of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) from which he resigned upon his appointment as a Judge.

In November 1997, he was appointed as Judge of the Labour Court, and in April/May 1999, he was appointed as a Judge of the then Transvaal Provincial Division of the High Court (now the Gauteng Division of the High Court). In May 2000, Justice Zondo was appointed Judge President of the Labour Court and the Labour Appeal Court for

a 10-year tenure. During this time, he served in various ad hoc committees established by the heads of courts. These included a committee chaired by the late Justice Pius Langa, which drew up a document to be used by the Judiciary in dealing with complaints about racism and sexism within the Judiciary. Justice Zondo also chaired a committee of the heads of court which looked into the use of official languages in courts.

In March 2011, he was honoured by the KwaZulu-Natal Legal Forum, which consists of many legal bodies, with an award for his contribution to human rights in South Africa. With effect from 1 September 2012 he was appointed as Judge of the Constitutional Court. On 1 June 2017, Justice Zondo was appointed Deputy Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa.

In January 2018, former President Jacob Zuma appointed him as the Chairperson of the Commission of Inquiry into allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector, including Organs of State. That Commission investigated various allegations of state capture, corruption, and fraud in the public sector from 2018 until August 2021. It submitted its Report to President Cyril Ramaphosa in six Parts from 31 December 2021 to 22 June 2022. President Ramaphosa accepted a number of the recommendations made by the Commission.

While he was Deputy Chief Justice, Justice Zondo was also the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the South African Judicial Education Institute (SAJEI). As Chief Justice, he also serves as the Chairperson of the SAJEI Council.

On 10 March 2022, President Ramaphosa announced Justice Zondo's appointment as the 6<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa since the advent of democracy. In his long judicial career, Chief Justice Zondo has significantly contributed to jurisprudence in this country. He has delivered many judgments that have positively impacted the lives of many South Africans. In addition, he has contributed to the strengthening of the judiciary in remarkable ways. He continues to do so in his current position as the Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa.

On 16 July 2022, the General Council of the Bar of South Africa – an organisation of advocates of South Africa – awarded Justice Zondo the Sydney and Felicia Kentridge Award “for service to Law in Southern Africa”. In November 2022, the Congress of Business and Economics awarded Justice Zondo the “Ahmed Kathrada Excellence in

Leadership Award 2022". In December 2022, the South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges gave Justice Zondo an award in recognition of his continued and unwavering support for the SAC-IAWJ.

Justice Zondo has also published articles and written chapters in three books.

The Senate and Council of Rhodes University have voted to confer the degree Doctor of Laws (LLD) (*honoris causa*) in recognition of Chief Justice Zondo's distinguished judicial career and for his outstanding service to the public and society. The honour will be conferred at the Rhodes University graduation ceremony on Wednesday, 29 March 2023.