

Charges dropped against ANC's Zuma

by UPI

PRETORIA, South Africa -- South Africa's chief prosecutor said Monday he dropped corruption charges against African National Congress leader Jacob Zuma.

Mokotedi Mpshe said it was "neither possible nor desirable" to pursue a case against Zuma, who is expected to become president after elections later in April, the BBC reported.

Mpshe said his decision was one of the most difficult he has ever made.

Zuma was charged in October 2005 but in September 2006 the prosecutors' case against the South African politician collapsed. A year later, a judge ordered that the corruption case against Zuma could not proceed but prosecutors won an appeal in January that allowed them to refile charges.

Mpshe said his decision was related to possible illegal manipulation of the country's prosecution system, based on secretly recorded conversations with the former head of the National Prosecution Authority, the BBC said.

"I have come to the difficult conclusion that it is neither possible nor desirable for the NPA to continue with the prosecution of Mr. Zuma," Mpshe said. "It is a difficult decision because the NPA has expended considerable resources on this matter, and it has been conducted by a committed and dedicated team of

prosecutors and investigators who have handled a difficult case with utmost professionalism and who have not been implicated in any misconduct."

Zuma has said the allegations, which involve a multimillion-dollar arms deal, are part of a political plot against him, the British broadcaster said.

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