



Supported by SASCOC and FIDE

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT

### Chess South Africa

### High Court Judgement – South African Junior Closed Chess Championship

31 March 2026

Chess South Africa notes the Judgement delivered by the Western Cape High Court on 26 March 2026 in Case No. 2026-051994, concerning the eligibility of permanent residents to be eligible for the award of Federation Colours at the South African Junior Closed Chess Championship (SAJCCC).

This matter arose from a dispute regarding the participation of permanent resident junior players in the 2026 SAJCCC. Upon receiving the urgent application, Chess SA proactively reopened participation in the 2026 SAJCCC to all qualifying permanent residents ahead of the hearing, a step taken in good faith and in the interests of the affected young players.

The remaining issue before the Court concerned whether permanent residents who achieve a qualifying ranking at the SAJCCC are eligible to receive Federation Colours — distinct from National (Protea) Colours, which are and remain restricted to South African citizens.

### The Judgement

The Court found that neither the SASCOC Directive of 1 April 2025 nor the Chess SA Youth Selection Policy prohibits the awarding of Federation Colours to qualifying permanent residents at the SAJCCC. The Court issued a declaratory order to this effect.

Chess SA accepts the Judgement.

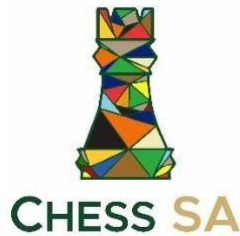
It is important that the chess community understands what the Judgement does — and does not — change:

- **National (Protea) Colours and selection for Team South Africa remain restricted to South African citizens**, in accordance with the SASCOC Directive and national sports governance framework. This has not changed.
- The Judgement concerns **Federation Colours only**, which represent recognition at federation level and do not constitute selection to represent South Africa as a country.

President: [Andre Lewaks](#) – Vice President 1: [Lindokuhle Ngubane](#) – Vice President 2: [Shaun Levitan](#) –

Treasurer: [Liezl Bothma](#) – Secretary: [Chené Jeffries](#) – Provincial Rep: [Janine Fourie](#) – Provincial Rep: [Jeanette Mabitsela](#)

Provincial Rep: [\(Vacant\)](#) – Head Coach: [Reuben Salimu](#) – PRO: [Gerold Neels](#) – SASCA President: [Fungile Ngqenga](#)



Supported by SASCOC and FIDE

- Chess SA's position throughout these proceedings was adopted in good faith, based on its interpretation of the applicable framework and its obligations to SASCOC. The Court has now provided authoritative guidance on the correct interpretation.

## Way Forward

Chess SA will implement the Judgement promptly and in full. We will engage with SASCOC to ensure that our policies and selection procedures are updated to reflect the Court's declaratory order, and to seek guidance on any broader implications for the national sports governance framework.

We recognise that the young players at the centre of this matter are talented, committed members of the South African chess community. Chess SA remains dedicated to providing all registered players — citizens and permanent residents alike — with the opportunity to compete, develop, and achieve recognition commensurate with their ability.

Further communication regarding the implementation of the Judgement and any consequential policy updates will be issued in due course.

**THE END...**

**ISSUED BY THE CHESS SOUTH AFRICA**

**Mr. Gerold Neels**

PRO | Chess South Africa

Email: [girdneels@gmail.com](mailto:girdneels@gmail.com)

Phone: +27 82 708 5583

President: **Andre Lewaks** – Vice President 1: **Lindokuhle Ngubane** – Vice President 2: **Shaun Levitan** –  
Treasurer: **Liezl Bothma** – Secretary: **Chené Jeffries** – Provincial Rep: **Janine Fourie** – Provincial Rep: **Jeanette Mabitsela**  
Provincial Rep: **(Vacant)** – Head Coach: **Reuben Salimu** – PRO: **Gerold Neels** – SASCA President: **Fungile Ngqenga**