

## **SA a failing state on the cusp, stirring analysis from Dr Edward Mienie**

**By Chris Steyn**

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**Published at RIEAS on 28 May 2023**

**Note:** The article reflects the opinion of the author and not necessarily the views of the Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS)

*BizNews speaks to **Dr Edward Mienie**, the Executive Director and Professor of Strategic & Security Studies and External Relations at the University of North Georgia in Atlanta about South Africa’s rapid slide towards a Failed State. He warns that drastic measures are needed to ensure effective governance because a Failed State could descend into a Collapsed State which would leave every man fending for himself. The former diplomat – for both the NP and ANC governments – remains hopeful, however, that it is not too late to turn the ship around.*

### ***Is South Africa a Failing State or a Failed State?***

BizNews asks Dr Edward Mienie, the Executive Director and Professor of Strategic & Security Studies and External Relations at the University of North Georgia in Atlanta for his verdict.

The former diplomat – for both the National Party (NP) and African National Congress (ANC) governments – says the country is in a “fragile” and “failing” state.

“I’m afraid to say that South Africa has moved from what I termed being latently fragile to being fragile.

I would not, in my opinion, term South Africa as being failed at this stage, but we are certainly on track to becoming a failed state.”

Dr Mienie says a failed state would be reached when, “the government has lost its legitimacy, when the citizens no longer have faith, no longer trust, and when the government no longer can project its monopoly on power

over all of South Africa's sovereign territory, when the bureaucracy fails..."

In the worst case scenario, South Africa could then descend into a collapsed state.

"It would be chaotic. You would not have law and order. So you'll have warlords such as what we have in Somalia and they will be in control of certain swathes of land in South Africa. The government buildings will be taken over by vandals – and we will be a non-functioning society, each man to himself."

Dr Mienie says only effective leadership could halt the country's downward trajectory.

"If the leadership realises the nature of the threats, the threats to human security in South Africa and addresses those by way of being effective as governors, I'm sure that the boat could be turned around and we could move towards becoming more stable.

But if that's not done, if we don't have effective leadership, effective government where the government is being respected or at least where the governed respect the governors, where they have full control over law enforcement and the rule of law being respected in the country and applied equally across the board... If that's not addressed in those ways... South Africa can find itself being a failed state."