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## **Courts, police, defence set for significant budget cuts over next 3 years - FCC**

Financial and Fiscal Commission deputy chairperson Michael Sachs said that allocations to national departments were set to fall in rand terms over the next three years, with defence and the criminal justice system bearing the brunt.

Gaye Davis | 12 November 2020

CAPE TOWN - Defence and the criminal justice system, including the courts, law enforcement agencies, police and prisons, will all see significant cuts to their budgets over the next three years.

The Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) said that these departments will bear the brunt of budgets being reduced to stabilise the country's soaring debt and to shift spending from consumption to capital investment.

The FFC is briefing a joint meeting of Parliament's Appropriations Committees on the Division of Revenue Second Amendment Bill, that was tabled by Finance Minister Tito Mboweni when he unveiled the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement last month.

The cuts come as the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown has deepened inequality, with many people pushed into poverty and unemployment.

Financial and Fiscal Commission deputy chairperson Michael Sachs said that allocations to national departments were set to fall in rand terms over the next three years, with defence and the criminal justice system bearing the brunt.

"So the criminal justice system, which includes the law courts, the law enforcement agencies, the police, the prisons – will all see significant cuts to their budgets over the next three years. The proposals by the National Treasury, by the Minister of Finance, clearly locate the burden of adjustment very strongly on national departments. Because they have negative growth in their budgets, their budgets decline in simple rand terms over the next few years."

Sachs said that allocations for provincial government were set to increase, but at a rate far below inflation, with the impact to fall mostly on health and education services.

Sachs said that although local government was slated to receive a bigger allocation from the division of revenue this year, local government as a whole is facing a fiscal crisis, burdened by obligations in terms of service delivery which it cannot finance.

<https://ewn.co.za/2020/11/11/criminal-justice-system-defence-set-for-significant-budget-cuts-over-next-3-years>